University of the West of England

BRISTOL

University of the
West of England
BRISTOL

Alternative approaches to capacity building – emerging practices abroad

September 8th 2009

JOANNA HOWARD, LUCY GRIMSHAW, BRENDA LIPSON, MARILYN TAYLOR and MANDY WILSON

Cities Research Centre   **COGS**

University of the West of England

Commissioned by

capacity
builders

Contents

Executive Summary

This study was undertaken to identify alternative approaches to third sector capacity building in countries outside of the UK. Principally desk-based, it draws on the insight and recommendations of the research team's contacts which span Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, and the International Development context. The research has been undertaken in two main stages. The first scoping phase involved an email request for information on third sector and civil society capacity building. Respondents were asked to identify examples of capacity building that met with a number of good practice principles. The second phase took a more in-depth look at some selected cases: a funding brokerage partnership model from Australia; a variety of methods from the US; a number of approaches used or promoted by Dutch third sector organisations (TSOs) working in international development; a thematic study of leadership programmes; and a review of some networking approaches to capacity building.

The information is presented in the following way: Section 1 provides an introduction to the research process and the methodology. Section 2 introduces some key debates on third sector or civil society capacity building from the international literature and offers a conceptual framework for thinking about the models and approaches described in the case studies. We describe a spectrum of approaches, which implies progression from skill-based to holistic and systemic approaches. We suggest that this is not necessarily linear: some approaches overlap, and the different levels of intervention may be appropriate at different stages and circumstances. The case studies are woven into this discussion in box form, and can be found in full in the appendices.

Section 3 identifies learning from the case studies, framed around the questions on which our conceptual framework was based: What is capacity building for? Who is it for? Who provides it? In terms of purpose, this study suggests that capacity building works best when its purpose is clearly rooted in a particular goal: this may be values- or ideologically based, or relating to improvements in a particular service area or funding programme. Secondly, capacity building may be about increasing organisational efficiency and effectiveness, but it is also about leadership and adaptive capacities, which develop organisational resilience. Thirdly, design is important: good capacity building practices start with a 'theory of change' and diagnosis is an essential part of capacity building – effectiveness depends on getting this right.

As regards the beneficiaries of capacity building, leadership and multi-level, multi-sector working emerged as critical in a number of our case studies. There is scope for working with a wide range of providers, but it is essential to build the capacity of the capacity builders themselves and to address issues of trust, especially where capacity builders are employed by funders. In terms of approach, a number of the case studies point to a networking approach as having significant added value in combining external inputs with peer support and learning.

Section 4 offers some recommendations for policy makers should they wish to consider piloting any of the approaches described. Policy makers need to be clear about the *purpose* of the planned intervention and the need that it addresses, as the choice of approach will vary accordingly. Key recommendations include:

- combining methods for a multi-layered approach that gives both depth and breadth and enables working at and across different levels;

- building links between government departments and capacity building providers in the UK to achieve a less fragmented and multi-sectoral approach;

- building links internationally and learning from approaches in international development;

- building the capacity of the funder – promote learning and dialogue with organisations and networks within and outside the UK, including networking staff, and peer to peer learning and support;

- promoting the importance of leadership and networking, and supporting innovative social entrepreneurs.

The appendices provide documentation of the research process and summaries of the core case studies. The complete case study documents have been provided separately to Capacitybuilders.

1.   Introduction

Background to the research

The research conducted for this report was commissioned by Capacitybuilders, with a view to investigating new ways of building the capacity of the Third Sector. It complements other studies which have explored innovative approaches across England. In this study, we have looked at methods for delivering capacity building which have been developed abroad.

There are a vast number of third sector capacity-building activities across the world. This desk research study can only provide a glimpse of the diversity and richness of approaches, and the contexts in which they have developed. Each country has its own policies towards the sector and varying relationships between governments and non-government organisations. We were tasked with identifying practices with potential for piloting in England in countries 'most similar to England'. We looked at OECD[1] countries, but also decided from the outset that we would be missing a central part of capacity building practices if we did not consider countries from the global South, and Central and Eastern Europe. While the policy contexts and historical state-civil society relations differ hugely, we feel that there is significant learning to be gained from looking at the principles and practices that have emerged in the international development context.

The core issues of good practice in capacity building have been intensely debated over the last decade in the international development sector. We have drawn on this debate and especially Intrac's publications on capacity building to develop our own framework and good practice principles for this study (see sections 1 and 2). By bringing together information on capacity building practices from diverse settings such as Australia, Brazil, East Africa, the Netherlands and the United States, we highlight common challenges and issues for capacity building practitioners and funders across these contexts. By considering approaches which are framed around rights or democracy building, we bring a 'bigger picture' perspective to what can often become an overly technical debate about toolkits and training modules. We

---

[1] The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development is an international organisation of countries that accept the principles of representative democracy and free market economy.

frame our study with the question, 'capacity for what?' and argue that the purpose of any capacity building intervention needs to be clearly articulated, and the methods will follow on from this.

Methodology

This study was principally desk based. It draws on the insight and recommendations of the research team's contacts which span Europe, North America, Australia and New Zealand, and the International Development context. The research has been undertaken in two main stages. The first scoping phase involved sending out an email requesting information on third sector and civil society capacity building. We used both these terms because third sector is not commonly used in many non-OECD countries.

We looked for the following in the scoping phase (documentation from this phase can be found in Appendix A):

- a. Good practice in capacity building (see below)
- b. Examples of innovation in capacity building approaches and methods
- c. Concrete initiatives to build the capacity of the support providers
- d. Specific examples of impact i.e. how capacity building efforts have led to real changes in people's lives.

In selecting our case studies, we adapted the principles of good practice that have been debated by capacity building practitioners in diverse conferences, referenced by Lipson & Warren (2006) in their study of international NGOs working in capacity building, and are succinctly expressed in James and Hailey's (2007) book for NGOs on capacity building. These principles are:

A. People Centred
- Ensures TSO/CSO ownership of process
- Holistic approaches
- Recognises gender and other power dynamics
- Builds trust with and gives control to TSOs/CSOs

B. Locally appropriate and sustainable provision
- Uses a variety of methods

- Adapts methods to culture and context
- Acknowledges existing capacities
- Builds capacity of local support providers

C. Careful Planning and Management

- Has a strategy that is planned and adapted to context
- Has clearly defined roles
- Recognises that the provider is also part of the process
- Has a systematic approach to assessing and learning from the capacity building intervention

The scoping phase resulted in a 'long list' of capacity building practices from 11 countries and 6 cross-national or international approaches (see Appendix B). The practices and approaches included diverse frames and delivery agents, ranging from long-term participatory planning and organisational processes for empowerment of marginalised groups (World Vision) to a national 'funding brokerage' model (Australia, Communities for Children programme). Some approaches work across sectors (civic driven change), some are bottom up (community leadership), some top-down (funding brokerage model).

We selected our cases prioritising innovative approaches and also to get a range of top-down, bottom-up, holistic etc. We also aimed to access learning from North and South, and to take into account some areas of particular interest to Capacitybuilders. We selected one 'country' study (USA) and other cases focusing on specific approaches: Networking; Leadership; civic driven change; funding brokerage partnership. We also included some additional data on capacity building partnerships with universities, and an example where a capacity building approach from the international development context is being used in Holland (logical framework analysis).

The case studies were developed through analysis of available documentation and further email exchange and telephone/skype conversations with the relevant respondents. We built up a case study for each initiative around a series of questions, the first of which we examined in section 3 above. Broadly, these questions were grouped into four sections: a) Logic of the approach (rationale and assumptions); b) Methods and processes; c) Outcomes; and d) Learning (especially with a view to transferability) (see Appendix C for the full topic guide).

The completed case studies were shared with respondents for validation.

The research team met at the end of the case study phase to discuss the case studies, identify lessons and recommendations, and further develop the conceptual framework.

2.   Approaches to capacity building: a conceptual framework

In this section we discuss the various ways in which the term capacity building is understood. We then develop a spectrum of capacity building approaches based on four dimensions: What is provided? To whom? Who provides? How is it provided? We also indicate where each case study fits within this spectrum. Brief descriptions of the case studies are included in this and the following section. A fuller description of each case study can be found in Appendix D.

What is capacity building for?

Capacity building is a highly contested term nationally and internationally. It is promoted by diverse organisations - from CIVICUS to the World Bank. It has its supporters and its critics; some practitioners prefer to talk of empowerment or use Amartya Sen's language of the development of capabilities (Sen, 1999). Others reject the term as one which has been devalued through inappropriate external interventions; one of our respondents argued that in his experience of capacity building interventions in the international development arena, 'the best capacity building is when there is no capacity building'[2]. It is therefore a term to use advisedly. The international development literature offers some guidance on this. For example, INTRAC differentiates between capacity *building* and capacity *development*:

> 'We therefore use the two terms – capacity building when we wish to more specifically focus on the aspect of 'agency' and capacity development when we wish to describe the overall process of how capacity develops' (INTRAC, 2006).

In developing a framework for this study, we have adopted INTRAC's reference to capacity building as 'a structured process that has a clear purpose and set of specific objectives…. framed around the answer to the question 'capacity for what?'[3] A capacity building intervention may have a functional/instrumental or intrinsic approach. In the former case, the

---

[2] Phone interview, June 2009

[3] For a presentation of the conceptual underpinnings of capacity building and their application in practice, see Capacity Building Framework: A values-based programming guide, Lipson & Hunt, INTRAC 2008.

intervention aims to increase the capacity of TSOs to deliver agendas which are important to the funder (e.g. improving access to health services, reducing the incidence of HIV/AIDs etc). In the latter case, the emphasis is on building *intrinsic* capacity in the sector and can also be understood as building civic agency or strengthening TSOs to achieve their own goals. Here, the specific application of the increased capacity may not necessarily be predefined.

In OECD countries and in the developing world, functional approaches to capacity building tend to dominate. Governments and other funders are motivated to build the capacity of the third sector/civil society in order to address particular societal issues. Global policy trends have had a profound influence on capacity building, impacting on how governments perceive the potential role of the sector. These include for example,

- Reduction of state role/privatisation of public services – strengthening civil society capacity for service delivery; contracting; compacts/social partnerships

- Decentralisation / devolving of decision making – strengthening capacity of community based organisations; local TSO engagement in policy influencing

- Climate change – strengthening civil society capacity for natural disaster management/risk reduction.

- Security concerns – strengthening civil society capacity to carry out civic roles and engage in democratic processes[4].

Conceptual framework

Whose capacity is to be built?

The model below reflects the perspective on 'capacity' which understands that it is located at different **levels**, or 'scales of human action' - from the individual through many forms of collective organised endeavours to sectors and social institutions. It follows that, when
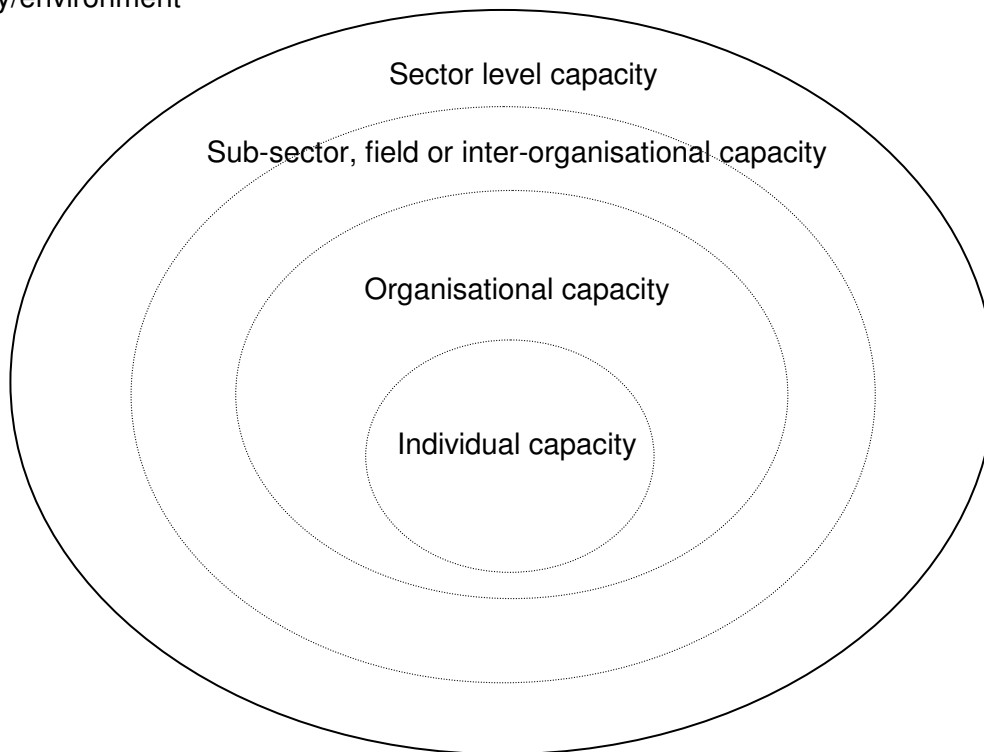
---

[4] See Lipson & Hunt, 2008, page 86.

designing or supporting specific initiatives to build capacity, it is important to consider the level/s at which the initiative is directed and the linkages with the other levels. It is also critical to consider the extent to which the wider context – the policy environment and societal trends - shape the nature of the capacity building intervention.

Figure II: Whose capacity

Society/environment

Sector level capacity

Sub-sector, field or inter-organisational capacity

Organisational capacity

Individual capacity

Capacity building initiatives usually target organisations. But they may target individuals within those organisations – many of the leadership initiatives described here come into this category, while de facto many training initiatives only access one or two people in an organisation. They may focus on participants in a particular funding Programme or field of operation – in this report we describe initiatives in the field of child care (Australia), social enterprise and in relation to the Roma community.

The Australian government's Department of Family and Children's Services and Indigenous Affairs set up a four year programme targeting early years provision in deprived areas. The

programme builds capacity of third sector and public and private providers of children's services at the local level, through intermediary TSOs which act as 'funding brokers' and capacity builders These TSOs or 'Facilitating Partners' manage the consultation and planning process, tendering and contract management and manage the reporting between the government department and the community partners. They bring together a consortium of local stakeholders into a 'community committee' to identify local need. They provide funding and training to Community Partners to provide new services, and also support them to 'join up' existing services by increasing service coordination and cooperation. These local groups have developed organisational networks for peer support and collaboration around early years services.

They may target the sector more generally, working with existing networks or building new ones. One of our case studies, for example, was an initiative to build the capacity of the capacity builders themselves through a learning network approach.

The Dutch Association of Development NGOs (PSO)

PSO is an association that consists of fifty Dutch development organisations. The association focuses on capacity development of civil society organisations in developing countries. Their mandate has shifted from financing capacity building activities to stimulating learning about capacity building in the non-profit Dutch development cooperation sector. PSO's core areas of work are knowledge development and the funding of activities in the field of capacity building. Through strengthening the capacity of Dutch development organisations, PSO aims to build the capacity of civil society organisations in developing countries. Their network strengthening work is carried out through action research, e-networking and knowledge exchange. They also run an award programme to highlight good practice in capacity building in the field.

It is not always appropriate to classify an initiative according to whether it is targeted at individuals or the sector more widely. Some initiatives specifically focus on leaders in order not only to benefit their organisations but also the sector more generally with a view that they will then support others and raise the profile of the field more generally (see box on Ashoka in Section 3).

11

What is provided?

The different types of capacity building can be summarised as follows[5]:

- Access to repositories of information and resources (databases, libraries and websites)

- Publications (tool-kits, best practice case studies, how-to guides etc.).

- Training opportunities (public, customised or on-line)

- Consultation (coaching, facilitating, expert advice, evaluation and research)

- Holistic organisational development programmes

- Supporting peer learning networks/alliance building

These are not mutually exclusive, but this generally represents a spectrum from extensive methods based on the transfer of specific skills to intensive methods based on holistic development. It also moves from resources accessed directly by TSOs through to those delivered through an intermediary – who may be selected by the TSO or a funder – to capacitybuilding approaches developed with peers. In this it draws on a spectrum of approaches as depicted in Figure I, with an indication of where the case studies are located. Although a progression is implied from skill-based to holistic and systemic approaches - along the lines of Alan Fowler's model in Figure II - it is not necessarily a linear model. Some approaches overlap, while different levels of intervention may be appropriate at different stages of development and for different purposes.

---

[5] This list is based on a classification in Authenticity Consulting (March 2006, Minneapolis, Minnesota) *Field Guide to Consulting and Organisational Development with Non-profits: a collaborative and systems approach to performance, change and learning*, but adds material from our own case studies.

Figure I: The capacity building spectrum

Extensive, skill-based

Who provides To whom	Self-accessed	Intermediaries	Peer learning
Individuals **Organisations** **Field (may be multi-sector)** **Sector**	**Toolkits** **programmes**	**Consultation** **Model promotion (MDF)** **Funder/Programme led holistic development** **(Venture philanthropy and similar US models)** **Funding brokerage (Australia)** **Civic driven change (US: IAF, CCC, ACORN; CDC)** **Participatory development (Roma)**	**Leadership development and fellowship (Brazil; Ashoka; Interaction); University Community Collaborative Philadelphia)** **Training networks (PSO)** **Network strengthening (Citi Network)** **Research based networks (HIVOS; ELC)** **Social treasury and other asset based approaches (US)**

Intensive, holistic and systemic

Who provides?

Organisations and individuals may pick and mix capacity building tools and resources themselves based on their own diagnosis of what they need. But most of our case studies were driven by outside bodies. In the US, for example, the more innovative funders build capacity building into their grants or investments, funding grantees to buy in their own resources/consultants, providing a bank of consultants that grantees can draw on as required, or developing programmes which bring grantees together in a learning network, often facilitated by an intermediary organisation.

A particularly valuable model in the US is demonstrated by the **James Irvine Foundation** and **the California Wellness Foundation** who both build capacity building resources into funding agreements or investments, working directly or through experienced third parties to build the capacity of a cohort of funding recipients in a particular field or region. This allows trust to be built up over time and encourages peer networking as well as being firmly focused on what the capacity is being built for.

Mindful of the complexity of the tasks we were asking our community action grantees to undertake, we have included resources specifically for technical assistance or capacity building in each of our initiatives. We have tried a number of mechanisms along the way. We have created a pool of dollars that community action programs could access to buy the time of a prescribed cohort of consultants. We have also built funds directly into community action grants so that agencies could diagnose their own needs and purchase whatever consultation they deemed most necessary on the open market. We have also funded intermediary organizations specifically to provide technical support across the entire cohort of community action grantees in an initiative. In some cases they also played the role of "coordinating grantees," in essence managing the entire process for the Foundation.

California Wellness Foundation

This raises questions about the dynamic between funder, change agent and the 'recipient' organisation, an issue to which we will return.

In the US, it is also more common to see Universities engaged with communities than in the UK[6].

> **The University Community Collaborative of Philadelphia** works with grass roots and citywide nonprofit organizations, youth councils, philanthropic organizations and educational institutions to promote youth leadership both within those organisations and within the communities they serve. Through project-based collaborations, they employ an experiential learning approach to technical assistance across a broad spectrum of categories including: youth driven-project conceptualization, development, and implementation; youth leadership development; board development; youth led research; youth philanthropy; youth driven multi-media; and youth organizing, networking and coalition building. Involving young people as "trainers", they help other organisations to more effectively recruit and engage older youth in their communities.

How is it provided?

As we have seen, some capacity building programmes are **investment driven** by funders, who wish to ensure that their investment is put to optimal use.

> **Venture Philanthropy (US model)**
>
> A number of foundations and funds have been developed to support 'patient capital' and extra-financial support to NPOs. Venture Philanthropy Partners in particular have focused on a small number of exemplary organisations in one service field in the US. Other initiatives operate in developing countries supplying small amounts of philanthropic capital combined with large doses of business acumen either to front-line social enterprises (The Acumen Fund) or to intermediary bodies (Grassroots Business Fund). The common message from these initiatives is the belief that rather than running programmes they should be supporting a pool of organisations to develop their own capacity. Key lessons are the

---

[6] With the exception of the University of Brighton's Community University Partnership Programme, which was based on the US model.

need to use an **investment** rather than a grants model, which accompanies funding (loans and equity as well as – or rather than – direct investment) with **support** and is in it for the **long-term.**

Some interventions may promote **a particular approach**: in the Netherlands, MDF has launched an initiative to promote in its home country the logframe approach which was developed by the US Army and widely implemented throughout the South.

Bringing 'the logframe' back home

The Dutch development NGO MDF has focused on development cooperation for over two decades. In the last two years, MDF has looked into expanding into the Dutch domestic market. They consider that many of their tools and approaches can also be applied to typical Dutch situations. MDF works with decentralised government structures at municipal and province level, and with TSOs, to assist them in shaping participatory processes. They use a well known capacity building tool widely used in the South, the 'logical framework analysis' as a means of collectively identifying local problems to be addressed, and designing effective and relevant ways of addressing these problems. It is particularly useful for ensuring clarity of purpose and the identification of appropriate capacity building interventions.

Some programmes are driven by **values**. In the US, for example, the alliance building approach of organisations like the Industrial Areas Foundation, ACORN or the Center for Community Change are overtly political, while the CDC initiative in East Africa is explicitly aimed at promoting civic activism and creating civic driven change.

The **Industrial Areas Foundation** in the US is based on the writings of Saul Alinsky, and emphasises the need to link intensive grass-roots support with national campaigns that can address the wider causes of exclusion. It is strongly linked with religious congregations and looks beyond the community to build coalitions with social movements, the labour movement

etc. It is 'proudly political' and works with power and social change to identify, recruit, train and develop leaders, through a foundational 10 day training programme plus tailored training as needed[7].   It also works internationally – London Citizens in the UK is part of its family.

Some initiatives are explicitly **research based**, bringing academics together with practitioners to develop evidence-based practice. Thus the Evaluation Learning Circle in Canada provides a space for public engagement practitioners to share ideas, practices, resources and challenges, while the Dutch Aid agency, HIVOs is working with the Institute of Social Sciences there to set up a Knowledge Network focused on the theme of civil society.

While all the interventions we have studied could be seen as 'top-down', many – especially of the more 'holistic' approaches - engage the individuals and organisations whose capacity is being 'built' in the development of a participatory approach, which can have many spin-offs in addition to the original capacity building intentions.

Advance Human Rights for Roma minority: Bosnia and Herezogivina.

The Roma population constitutes the largest ethnic or national minority in BiH but continue to be the most likely to suffer multiple forms of deprivation and exclusion. The Government's National Strategy for Roma in 2005 was not successful in providing meaningful institutional support for Roma. The international NGO World Vision first set out to work with Roma groups in Bosnia and Herezogivina (BiH) to produce national action plans. However, multiple capacity building needs of Roma organisations and their networks became evident, and World Vision began a participatory action planning process together with Roma participants. This was a very divided community represented by a small number of men with gaps in involvement from women and young people. Capacity building led to the strengthening of networks and collaboration between different Roma groups. The process brought leaders together from a range of Roma organisations and combined skills training with networking to build individual and organisational capacity, and to reduce conflict between groups.

---

[7] An example of its work in the UK is London Citizens.

The 'social treasury' approach in the US also represents an attempt to reduce dependence on outside professionals and build on community assets and is another example of a University community initiative.

> The concept of a 'social treasury', was developed to counter dependence on outside professionals and instead build the capacity of individuals to identify problems, create movements, form mutual support networks to mobilize resources and build local assets. It focuses on building networks (social capital), supporting and attracting moral entrepreneurs (leaders), and identifying, protecting and channelling resources that can be leveraged within the community.

Often capacity building is provided through networks which provide peer to peer learning (which in itself builds confidence) and can address the fragmentation that is often a problem in the third sector. Sometimes participants in a capacity building programme will develop their own networks to provide peer support. Thus networking was not a conscious part of the Funding Brokerage approach in Australia but funding partners created their own space for learning and collaboration without funder support and despite the competitive environment within which they were working.

3.   What can we learn from these approaches?

In this section we summarise the conclusions we have drawn from our case studies and the issues that they raise, framed around the questions on which our conceptual framework was based: What is capacity building for? Who is it for? Who provides it?

What is capacity building for?

Our research suggests a need for clarity and coherence when designing a capacity building programme.

3.1 Need for clarity of purpose

Purpose: Capacity building works best when its purpose is clear.

This purpose may be functional/instrumental or intrinsic:

- The Australian funding brokerage model, for example was clearly focused on increasing capacity in a particular field. It grounded its ideas of partnership and brokerage in the particular field of early years services and enabled relational capacity building to take place both within and between the sites.

- The CDC case was designed to strengthen citizenship and civic agency to engage in local, national and global governance for the deepening of democracy. To achieve this it engages in capacity building at all levels (individual, organisation, sector, society) – see below.

A functional purpose can provide clarity but intrinsic capacity is an essential foundation for this and often the two overlap in practice, especially with more intensive programmes. So:

Content: Capacity building is about more than transferring techniques.

In the US, for example, there is a tendency to equate capacity building with increased organisational efficiency and effectiveness (often viewed as technical assistance and related to service delivery). However, there is also a growing field of study and practice that is pushing the boundaries of third sector capacity building, by calling for a greater focus on leadership and adaptive capacities, which develop organisational resilience. These are defined as follows:
- Leadership capacity: the ability of all organizational leaders to create and sustain the vision, inspire, model, prioritize, make decisions, provide direction, and innovate, all in an effort to achieve the organizational mission', and
- Adaptive capacity: the ability of a non-profit organization to monitor, assess, and respond to internal and external changes.

Relational capacities also emerged as critical in our case studies, which help to build the credibility of the sector at large and develop collective accountability. We will return to this later.

Design: Good capacity building practices start with a 'theory of change' and locally identified needs.

Bolton & Abdy (2007) observe that in the US, organisational development programmes tend to be based on a 'theory of change', which means that foundations identify the change they would like to bring about through their funding and then consider which kinds of support are most likely to achieve this change. In particular, they note that "logic models" are

increasingly being used in the US international development grant making community, to plan the process of a particular organisational development initiative. "Logic models" help to clarify the underlying assumptions being made about the programme. They can be used to determine outcome measures, and monitor and evaluate progress.' (2007, 43). These models in their more extreme version of the logical framework (see MDF box) have been criticised for being too rigid, for assuming too linear a relationship between purpose, outcomes and inputs and not allowing for the emergence of innovatory and unplanned activities and outcomes or for the complexity of the environment in which much development work is taking place. However, perhaps in the absence of an alternative, they continue to be widely used today (Bakewell & Garbutt 2005). The usefulness of the logical framework approach is that it aids clarity of purpose and facilitates identification of appropriate interventions and methods – if you know what specific capacities you are aiming to strengthen, some approaches are more appropriate. The danger is the potential for dogmatism.

However, a top-down model can be effective if sufficient capacity is built in to allow outcomes and strategies to change along the way. In the case of the Australian funding brokerage model, while the model was a centrally designed blueprint, the approach was site specific, which allowed for the 'facilitating partners' to change from channelling funding to capacity development interventions with Community Partners where appropriate. This need to adapt fits with the idea that capacity building is non-linear, emergent and relational. People develop capacity through action, and through interaction. Alan Fowler warns that

> concern for linear results leads to narrow official perceptions of capacity building as transferable, trainable modules to organisations as machines. The importance of intangibles and carefully crafted evolutionary processes is not easily appreciated or valued for capacity investment. Linearity also works against valuing the crucial relational dimensions of capacity itself.

Design: Diagnosis is an essential part of capacity building – effectiveness depends on getting this right.

This underlines the importance of diagnosis in capacity building. One of the paradoxes of capacity building is that, in order to access appropriate support, an organisation needs to be able to identify what it needs. But often organisations do not have this capacity. For this reason the support of an intermediary can be crucial[8]. However, the intermediary must be willing to adopt a participatory approach that takes full account of the local situation and the views of the people they are working with, rather than coming into the situation with a ready-made answer. Indeed this process of shared diagnosis can be an important part of the learning process. Many of the capacity building assessment tools (see, for example, McKinsey…) are designed exactly for this purpose.

3.2 Who is capacity building for?

The beneficiaries: leadership and multi-level, multi-sector working emerged as critical in a number of our case studies.

We have already mentioned the importance attached to leadership skills and several of our case studies focused on leadership, because it enables individuals to position themselves as change agents within their organisations and the sector and to cascade learning out more widely. Ideologically driven programmes like ACORN and the Center for Community Change cultivate leaders as change agents in the wider society. But while a central theme in US capacity building it was not confined to the US.

Leadership

Ashoka is an international network with a variety of methods for capacity building, predominantly by supporting leadership skills and development but also by supporting sector infrastructure. Ashoka Brazil supports individual social entrepreneurs through funding and through identifying and bridging connections across sectors. In this way, they try to build capacity in the wider sector as well as in organisations and individuals. The Ashoka McKinsey Center for Social Entrepreneurship (CSE) provides Ashoka Fellows, the citizen

---

[8] This was a central finding of the UK-based Joseph Rowntree Foundation Neighbourhoods Programme.

sector and the private sector in Brazil with a range of opportunities for knowledge and skills-transfer, training, contacts and cross-sectoral understanding.

However, it is important in these approaches that the approach to leaders is not just individualistic and that they include the ability to work with and empower their wider organisation. The assessment of the evaluator of World Vision's programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina – was that 'while group training of individual representatives from organisations is a highly effective means of individual capacity building, it is poorly suited to building organisational capacity'[9]. Instead he argues that organisational capacity building is best carried out in-house with larger groups according to specifically tailored agendas. When intervening at the organisational level, skill development has its value but ultimately, holistic/systemic approaches are needed which see the organisation in the round and appreciate how different capacities balance each other. A tension in one part of the system is likely to produce tensions across the whole.

The **Cypriot Civil Society Strengthening Programme** aimed at deepening trust and cooperation between Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities. A strong and engaged civil society was viewed as essential to building a lasting solution to the Cyprus problem. The programme worked with individual leaders to improve conceptual understanding and practical skills; with organisations to develop knowledge and skills in designing, planning and managing their own organisational development processes; with CSOs to develop broader and stronger relationships with each other, inter-communally, and with authorities and policy-makers, and raise the visibility and profile of the sector as a whole; and with local trainers and consultants to develop civil society capacity building skills.

International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC).

[9] Bill Sterland, 2009. Advance Human Rights for Roma Minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Final evaluation for World Vision Bosnia and Herzegovina.

For this reason, our research also underlined the importance of multi-level and multi-sector approaches. These approaches are born out of the understanding that capacity is relational, and that capacity building needs to strengthen the links between people and the organisations and sectors in which they work. Many third sector organisations interact on a regular basis with government and private sector organisations. Building skills and networks that transcend sector boundaries is an approach to capacity building that can have greater societal impact.

A strength of the funding brokerage partnership model in Australia and MDF's work in the Netherlands is that they work across different sectors and aim to join up services locally. Similarly, while the civic driven change approach in East Africa has the citizen at the centre of its strategy, it builds strategic partnerships with organisations and institutions from all sectors that are interested in/relevant to its mission.

Civic Driven Change takes a whole system approach to civil society capacity building. It works at all levels to enhance citizens' possibilities of taking action to improve their environment. The East Africa programme *Twaweza,* supports large-scale partnerships and initiatives and works with them as brokers to create space for direct engagement with citizens. Twaweza brokers relationships across a range of institutions and networks that ordinary citizens already use to meet and share information (e.g. mass media, private businesses, commercial product distribution networks, religious organisations, trade unions as well as TSOs). The approach is to build 'strategic' partnerships around achieving a focused goal that has real meaning for ordinary citizens, such as increasing availability of basic medical supplies at local clinics, or making sure that public funds arrive at schools and are properly used. The diagnostic phase maps the existing networks and institutions that are important to people's lives and from this develops a strategy which piggybacks on these to create spaces in which people can act.

This helps to develop understanding and transparency between the sectors and to secure allies as well as embedding action in the wider context.

Another conceptualisation of a capacity building spectrum has been developed in the South by Alan Fowler (2006). He suggests an evolution of capacity development as practised by international development agencies through increasing levels of sophistication from the provision of material resources through to more systemic approaches and building capacity

through cross-sector engagement. The relative importance of each approach depends on, Fowler argues, (a) the nature of the problem (for example is it at an organisational or societal level of resolution); (b) specific country or lower level conditions; and (c) the demand-awareness and sophistication among funders and prospective 'demanders' (Fowler, 2006)

Figure II: Fowler's evolutionary approach

Material -> Hardware	Training -> and Skills	Organis-ational -> Processes	Sector focussed -> Approaches	System-Aware -> Capacitation[10]	Multi-sector Engagement

Fowler, 2006

Who provides?

Providers: There is scope for working with a wide range of providers, but it is essential to build the capacity of the capacity builders themselves and to address issues of trust, especially where capacitybuilders are employed by funders.

Two particular issues arose in connection with the providers. The first related to trust in the use of intermediaries by funders; the second to the capacity of the capacity builders themselves.

Trust

A very common finding from our case studies was that effective capacity building relies on trust.   But this can be compromised where consultants are appointed and managed by funders. Cornforth et al (2008) ask whether it is possible for a small TSO to be open about its organisational weaknesses to a 'partner' who reports back to the funder? And Bolton and Abdy (2007: 33) suggest that this creates problems for the consultant as well: who is their primary client – their employer or the TSO.

INTRAC address this issue in a publication of debates in the INGO sector on capacity building, 'Power & Partnership' (2001).

---

10 From the draft proposal for a Community Capacitation Initiative, South Africa, November 2005. Capacitation is understood to "distinguish a normative approach to facilitation of learning and organization to address poverty."

Compromise Accountability before Ownership – A northern NGO strategy on capacity-building must also address the very real tension between the **need for confidentiality** in the primary relationship between provider and client and the **need to measure the impact** of the capacity-building programme. To ensure trust is maintained there should be no direct contact between the provider of the capacity-building and the ultimate payer. Any reports of capacity-building must be confidential to the client. If the NGO wishes to share such information with the donor that is a bonus, not a requirement, otherwise there would be incentives for the client to hide real problems which need confronting. Donors have to be prepared to fund and let go of the process. If you try and maintain a measure of control, there will be a direct trade-off in terms of less local ownership and more superficial change.

Building the capacity of the capacity builders

Often the capacity of the support service organisation is assumed. The Australian funding brokerage model assumed capacity of the intermediary organisations, which was not always the case since the brokerage role was new to them. The necessary structures, skills and expertise needed to be developed and values explored. The flexibility of the model enabled local evaluators in some sites to provide capacity building to the Facilitating Partners, but this depended on these individuals having the appropriate organisational development skills to work with staff through action learning methodologies. It appears in this case, that the Facilitating Partners (intermediary organisations) were networked if they were part of the same national TSO, but otherwise there was little stimulus from the national level for them to share learning and build collaborative capacity. It would be interesting to learn from the FPs that set up their own networking event, what they felt they learnt from this.

The network example of the learning circle in Canada and the knowledge exchange of PSO in the Netherlands are examples of how peer learning and networking are being used to build the capacity of those organisations which provide capacity building support to others and thus strengthen the sector as a whole. In both cases, an area was identified around which this exchange could be structured (in Canada, learning evaluation tools, and in the Netherlands, planning, monitoring and evaluation) but the greater objective was to build capacity across the sector (horizontally) as well as within individual organisations (vertically).

The **Evaluation Learning Circle** (ELC) was developed by the Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC), a coalition of Canadian third sector organizations.

The ELC was developed as a result of learning from the CCIC's previous experience in delivering workshop-based capacity building and a programme of action research to develop participatory evaluation practices (known as the PEP pilots).The learning circle combines theory and practice of alternative evaluation approaches and provides a space for peers to share ideas, practices, resources, and challenges. It brought TSO public engagement practitioners together over a period of time with the aim of building a sense of community amongst them as well as delivering training. Some meetings were face-to-face, The others were virtual meetings or mixed meetings (some face-to-face and some web-conferencing).

How is capacity building provided?

Approach: a networking approach to capacitybuilding has significant added value in combining external inputs with peer support and learning.

The value of a holistic, multi-level and multi-sector approach has already been emphasised in this report. Often this has involved networking. Networking develops the relational skills that are critical for effective TSO practice. It reinforces the practices of individual actors by disseminating them across the sector. It can also reduce the competition between TSOs which is bred by their fear of sharing knowledge / contacts / expertise lest others beat them to the next pot of funding. We have seen how in the Australian case, organisations in the Programme took their own initiative to network. The World Vision capacity building programme with Roma organisations suggest that networking is particularly useful when:

- based upon a process of careful negotiation of joint interests and ambitions can be effective means of conflict resolution and development of unity.

- galvanised by the establishment of an agreed purpose, backed up by a programme of work whose design all participants have contributed to and participated in. TSO ownership of capacity building processes is fundamental (see 'good practice principles' in Section 1).

Networking is also important in applying a multi-sector, multi-level approach. In its Saturn approach, Intrac has developed what it calls a Saturn model to illustrate the different linkages that are needed. Connections need to be made across each level (shown by the vertically oriented circle):
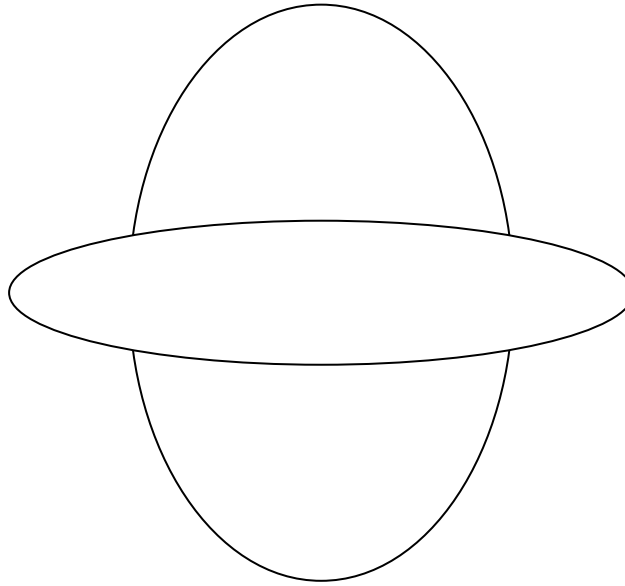
Some examples of ways to do this are:

- When engaged in a capacity building intervention at the level of an individual organisation, it may be appropriate to involve representatives of a relevant sector network or from another sector (private sector, local government) in particular activities, for example at a panel discussion with staff of that organisation. (Linking cross-sector level work with individual organisational capacity building)
- If involved in active citizenship, advocacy or campaigning at the level of the individual community member or group, build in exposure visits to larger /higher profile TSOs working on similar issues. (Linking individual level work with organisational level capacity building)
- Make sure that the content of training taking place with individual organisations contains sufficient reference to sector-wide issues. For example, advocacy training that draws on concrete case studies from initiatives undertaken by other networks. This could include exposure visits to discuss the specific issues of undertaking advocacy within a coalition. (Linking individual organisational level work with sub-sector capacity building)
- If working on strengthening grassroots capacity builders, consider whether the work builds relationships between capacity builders and intermediate NGOs or support organisations working locally.

There is also a need to make connections across groups within the same level (shown by the horizontally oriented circle), for example capacity building work with specific networks linked to work with similar networks elsewhere. Some examples of ways to do this are:

- When working within a geographically focused programme, consider how to make linkages between your target organisations and similar organisations in other areas.
- Consider how far your analysis and mapping is taking into account the effect that your programme may have on CSOs in a neighbouring geographic area (in the case of geographically prioritised programmes), or in a different sector (in the case of thematically focused programmes)?
- Consider the possibility of supporting the development of horizontal federations of grassroots capacity builders.

4. Recommendations

This research identifies a range of models, approaches and potential tensions inherent in different capacity building strategies. In selecting practices and approaches that may have some potential for implementation, or at least piloting, in England, policy makers need to have a clear understanding both of the purpose for which capacity is being built (and this will influence the choice of target beneficiary organisations), and of the capacity of delivery agencies to effectively organise new approaches to delivery. For example, some approaches in this study have been designed to address the lack of civic agency in the face of poor public services; others address the need for greater coordination and capacity of frontline organisations delivering specialist services e.g. to young children and their parents; another addresses the need to build greater voice for a particular marginalised group. Each found an appropriate approach through which to operationalise this purpose - though they aren't necessarily without their own issues and questions.

Themes and questions for policy makers.

In addition to identifying learning about effectiveness of the ChangeUp programme to date, there are a number of themes and questions that policy makers and agencies such as Capacitybuilders could usefully address when looking at adaptation of models and approaches implemented in other parts of the world. These include:

- **Purpose:** There appears to be a shift in capacity building strategies and approaches over the last five years – both from national funders and from international aid agencies. There is a move away from provider driven 'logic' models that tend to focus on imparting 'technical aid' through knowledge and skills based toolkits, to an increased emphasis on flexible and participatory approaches around such things as leadership development, relationship building or civic agency. US literature points to the need to understand and build capacity for organisational leadership and adaptability as the key focus. Government may therefore want to review its central agenda for the coming years e.g. Is it greater effectiveness in particular service areas? Is it the creation of a commission ready third sector? Is it the generation of self sustaining / self financing organisations? Is it civic renewal? Is it leadership skills

for frontline organisations? Is it greater equity within, and voice from across the third sector?

- **Understanding need:** Are there different needs surfacing as a result of economic recession (e.g. less public funding, greater strains on communities) and a changing political and democratic context? For example, the BiH case study illustrates how national resources were partially redirected to meet the particular needs of the marginalised Roma community so that it could strengthen its voice, improve networking and collaboration and build its own organisational capacity.

- **Depth and breadth:** Some approaches invest in a few in the belief that this will create the required step change. The Ashoka Fellows model prioritises the development of individual leadership skills and the building of peer networks as a method of building capacity in civil society. Whilst this can be perceived as a risky strategy (investment in a few, little control over outcomes etc), it could become part of a multi-layered approach in national interventions. Fowler's (2006) evolutionary model of capacity building may make sense in the English context for practitioners to think about where they sit in this spectrum. Given that many TSOs in England are working to address complex social problems such as social exclusion and working in areas of multiple deprivation, it would be interesting to consider how some of these more sophisticated **multi-sector and multi-layered** approaches might be used in England.

- **Working with other government departments**: Current capacity building approaches could be brought together enabling a more targeted, less fragmented approach, for example meshing Capacitybuilders and ChangeUp resources and strategies with other national and regional capacity building programmes such as the National Empowerment programme, the DIUS Transformation Fund and other capacity focused programmes. This would enable greater cohesion and would facilitate multi-sectoral approaches across sectors. The learning from the brokerage partnership model in Australia which cuts across sectors and builds capacity of childcare providers in the community and public sectors may be a useful model here, as may be the Civic Driven Change initiative which works across sectors to find ways of engaging citizens.

- **Multi-layered - a holistic approach**: Some funders of capacity building, particularly in the US, support more holistic capacity building / capacity development packages based on an initial organisational assessment or 'diagnosis'. These packages often include peer learning and networking e.g. California Wellness, rather than targeted one off interventions of particular knowledge and skills provision. The extent to which these packages are driven / formulated by the funder, or are more ad hoc in that they evolve through organisational need, vary. Policy makers could think about how to combine some of the approaches reported in this document, and how to work at and across different levels, as suggested by the Cyprus civil society strengthening initiative.

- **Learning from other approaches in international development**: This study has evidenced the innovative approaches to capacity building that are emerging in the international development field (PSO, Civic Driven Change). We have also seen how the UK government's Department for International Development, which funds and supports British NGOs to build capacity in developing country contexts, along with other international donors has reflected on, and shifted, strategy over the last decade - moving away from funding British NGOs to deliver services, towards funding them to build capacity of local organisations to deliver those services themselves. We recommend therefore that Capacitybuilders forges stronger links with DfID as well as with other UK capacity building programmes to share thinking and learning.

- **Building the capacity and learning of the funder:** This includes having up to date knowledge around the state of the third sector and the sector's changing needs as identified from the grassroots, as well as the learning to be gained through networking with other domestic and international capacity building providers. Bolton & Abdy (2007) recommend that UK grant making organisations (including Capacitybuilders) forge stronger links with organisations and networks outside the UK e.g. with Grantmakers for Effective Organisations (GEO) - a US-based organisation that promotes learning and dialogue amongst its members.

To promote learning and dialogue between funders and practitioners of capacity building, we also recommend that policy makers engage with some of the international development capacity building networks such as Praxis; Impact Alliance; Capacity.Org; PSO (as described in the Dutch case study); and LenCD. As

part of this research we have invited respondents to join an email list if they are interested in sharing learning – particularly in the global North, where there has been less dialogue and networking on the subject. The list of respondents is in Appendix E.

Within the UK, links could be made between the four nations to encourage learning and exchange. There is a need to invest in capacity building organisations for their sustainability. This can be done through networking staff, and through promoting peer to peer learning and support.

- We recommend a shift away from an instrumental approach to capacity building towards a more holistic approach based on local needs analysis.

- **Good practice principles**: In this report we suggest a grid for analysing cases against good principles. We recommend that agencies delivering national interventions create a similar grid to assess capacity building practices – both ones they currently support, and potential new methods. This can form the basis for quality assurance and sustainability of third sector support services (from whichever sector).

- In terms of **specific approaches to be piloted**, the cases/approaches which best meet our good practice principles are the best cases to pilot (BiH Roma networking, Civic Driven Change, various US and Brazilian models supporting leadership and networking). Some other approaches may be of interest and can be piloted as long as the caveats we have raised are given due attention (e.g. funding brokerage model). There may be elements of different approaches which can be combined or 'cherry picked', as long as the purpose of the capacity building intervention remains clear.

- **Networking**: Promoting the importance of leadership and supporting innovative social entrepreneurs might be transferable to the UK. Developing a network of inspirational leaders who in turn develop and support third sector organisations might be an effective way of building capacity in the third sector. However it would need to be well resourced since the Ashoka Fellows are financially supported for three years.

- **Partnership with universities** to develop an action learning approach to capacity building with support providers. Government could support local and regional partnerships between support providers and universities to pilot new approaches to capacity building and develop action learning practices amongst staff.

5 Bibliography

Bakewell, O and Garbutt, A. (2005) The use and abuse of the logical framework approach. SEKA – Resultatredovisningsprojekt. SIDA, November 2005

Bolton, M. and Abdy, M. (2007) *Foundations for Organisational Development: Practice in the UK and USA*, London and Newcastle on Tyne: Baring Foundation and Northern Rock Foundation.

Brandsen, T., Kendall, J. Nordfeldt, M. and Olsson, L. (2008) Third Sector Policy Communities in Europe: a comparison of the UK, the Netherlands and Sweden. May 2008. Belgian Federal Ministry for Social Integration.

Cairns, B., Harris, M. and Young, P. (2005) 'Building the Capacity of the Voluntary Nonprofit Sector: Challenges of Theory and Practice', *International Journal of Public Administration*, 28: 869-885.

Fowler, Alan (2006) 'Systemic change for promoting local capacity development, brainstorming session'. Impact Alliance resource paper. Johannesburg, November 2006.

James, R. and Hailey, J. (2007) Capacity Building for NGOs: Making it Work, INTRAC, Praxis Series No. 2

Lipson, Brenda (2006) capacity building PRACTICE, CHANGE AND QUALITY. Working Paper, INTRAC.

Lipson, B. and Hunt, M. (2008) Capacity Building Framework: A values-based programming guide. INTRAC, Praxis Series No.3.

Lipson, B. and Warren, H. (2006) International Non-Governmental Organisations' Approaches to Civil Society Capacity Building: Overview Survey, INTRAC Paper for Capacity Building Conference, Oxford

Sen, A (1999) *Development as Freedom* Oxford, Oxford University Press

6 Appendices

Appendix A: Scoping letter and good practice principles

Civil society/third sector capacity building practices – learning from overseas

Dear

We are writing to you to ask for your help with a study of capacity building practices that we are carrying out. This study aims to identify learning about third sector/civil society capacity building from other countries that could inform and improve practice in England. This study has been commissioned by 'Capacitybuilders' - an agency set up by the UK government to strengthen the capacity of intermediary third sector/civil society organisations so that they can provide better support to frontline/grassroots organisations.

This international study has an initial scoping phase and will then select a number of country case studies to study in greater depth. We are contacting you with reference to the scoping phase. We are looking for examples of good third sector/civil society capacity building practice (please see attachment on principles of good practice) around the world. This might be good practice working with support service organisations and networks of the third sector/civil society, with grassroots organisations, or with the third sector/civil society as a whole. We would be particularly interested in examples of approaches which are working at more than one level. The capacity building services providers might be national or local government, international NGO or other international agency; third sector/civil society or private sector organisation, or individual consultants.

We would be very grateful if you could either briefly respond to the questions below, or forward this email to a colleague who you think might be able to help.

1. If you are based or do research in one country, do you think your country would provide a range of interesting cases which illustrate any, or all, of the following:
    e. Good practice in capacity building (as per annexed description)
    f. Examples of innovation in capacity building approaches and methods
    g. Concrete initiatives to build the capacity of the support providers
    h. Specific examples of impact i.e. how capacity building efforts have led to real changes in people's lives.

If you cover a range of countries, can you name a country/countries which might provide such examples?

Please can you give us a brief paragraph on why you think these countries/country would make a good case study, with if possible some links and references for us to follow up?

2. In addition, can you provide us with a brief four-line description of any individual capacity building initiatives which may be worth including as specific examples of interesting work?

Please could you indicate, in your reply, where grassroots or frontline third sector organisations go to obtain their capacity building support.

Finally, we would welcome any relevant documentation (reports, studies links etc) that you believe illustrate these cases.

We will be reviewing the replies to this email, and collating the responses against our research framework. Our next step will then be to select the three country cases for more in-depth study as well as the interesting individual examples. We may well be back in touch with you for further information, contacts, telephone interview etc if your examples are chosen. We will of course acknowledge your contributions fully.

We hope that you will be able to point us towards some good capacity building practices. As part of this study we will be creating an email list of people interested in international knowledge exchange about third sector capacity building that could expand upon existing international development networks and link them into domestic and more Northern-based ones. Please let us know if you would like to be part of this list.

We would be grateful if you could respond to us by 28th April.

Many thanks for your help with this research.

Principles of Good Practice in Third Sector/Civil Society Capacity Building[11]

    D. People Centred

    1. Ensures TSO/CSO ownership of process
    2. Holistic approaches
    3. Recognises gender and other power dynamics
    4. Builds trust with and gives control to TSOs/CSOs

    E. Locally appropriate and sustainable provision

    5. Uses a variety of methods
    6. Adapts methods to culture and context
    7. Acknowledges existing capacities
    8. Builds capacity of local support providers

    F. Careful Planning and Management

    9. Has a strategy that is planned and adapted to context
    10. Has clearly defined roles
    11. Recognises that the provider is also part of the process
    12. Has a systematic approach to assessing and learning from the CB intervention

---

[11] Drawn from Brenda Lipson and H Warren (2006) International Non-Governmental Organisations' Approaches to Civil Society Capacity Building: Overview Survey, INTRAC Paper for Capacity Building Conference, Oxford; and Rick James and John Hailey (2007) Capacity Building for NGOs: Making it Work, INTRAC, Praxis Series No. 2

Appendix B: Long list of capacity building practices

Appendix C: Topic guide for case study research.

➢ This study is about approaches to capacity building from outside of the UK, and as such will throw up different / alternative approaches that are not part of what Capacitybuilders already do.

➢ where **relevant**, we can relate aspects of our case studies to Capacitybuilders' priority areas [12][in bid] and other UK/England policies such as community empowerment and active citizenship

➢ where the approach is significantly different, we need to explain why

➢ We should think about gender inclusion and access for marginalised groups throughout

➢ Suggested length 5000 words – 7 pages

Section A

o Box/ Brief summary of case/approach

o Context of the initiative – how it came about, environmental enabling factors (e.g. policies, rights, and if data available, political culture, mutual expectations of state and civil society actors)

Section B: Logic of the approach (rationale and assumptions)

1. How is capacity building being defined/problematised? What is the framing discourse?
2. What is the capacity being built *for* – what is the problem that it will address?
3. Who are the target organisations? Whose capacity do they attempt to build? Are the beneficiaries themselves intermediaries (national, regional or local)?
4. Is it supply or demand led?
5. How is change expected to happen? E.g. how are beneficiaries expected to pass on the benefits of their increased capacity (trickle down?)
6. Is there a clear strategy? Is this based on a diagnostic? Is it 'mapping and gapping?' Does it build on existing capacities?
7. How do the needs that are to be addressed relate to the context?
8. Who are the change agents?

---

[12] Improving the quality and effectiveness of infrastructure support for third sector organisations; demonstrating to key stakeholders the benefits of support services to frontline organisations; ensuring equal access for all third sector organisations to mainstream support services, and targeting resources where necessary; developing and influencing funding practice to sustain support for third sector organisations; and engaging with the public sector.

Section C: Methods and processes

9. How is the logic operationalised?
10. What are the techniques and methods? (e.g. mentoring & hand-holding, participatory learning, knowledge-based, etc)
11. Over what period of time?
12. How is learning encouraged?
13. How is ownership/buy-in achieved?
14. How is trust built?
15. How are marginalised groups involved?

Section D: Outcomes

16. How do the providers assess if the intervention is working?
17. What evidence is there of change?
18. Is capacity identified in the sector, sub-sector, networks, organisations or individuals?
19. Is the intervention creating capacity in new areas (finding the gaps)?
20. Is it reaching the right groups?

Section E: Learning (especially with a view to transferability)

21. Does the initiative meet our 'good practice principles'?
22. Does it work across different levels? Does it provide lessons for coordinating third sector support services?
23. Does it provide insight into how CB brings about societal change?
24. Are there any issues for transferability of this initiative?

Appendix D: Case study summaries

Funding brokerage partnership model -Australia

Context

This model is a national programme that aims to build the capacity of early years service providers in deprived areas across Australia. It reflects the context of managerial and market reforms of the public sector in Australia, which has led to a shift towards a contracting relationship with the third sector, and the increasing interest in partnership working, recognising the value of long-term, collaborative relationships between the 'purchaser' and the 'supplier' of services. The programme targets areas of high levels of economic and social disadvantage.

Approach and Methods

The initiative is described as a 'layered funding brokerage model' in which the Department of Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs contracts with third sector organisations (called Facilitating Partners) to manage site-specific Communities for Children (CfC) initiative funding. These organisations may have a national, state or local remit, and in some cases are a consortium of TSOs. The Facilitating Partner is required to establish contracts with local agencies, called Community Partners, to deliver specific activities. Community Partners can be non-profit or governmental. The Facilitating Partners as the intermediary or broker organisations, are funded to build the capacity of local Community Partners, partly through funding and partly through networking and joining up. It is an instrumental approach which aims to build third (and public and private) sector capacity in order to improve services to children.

The Facilitating Partners are responsible for managing the consultation and planning process, tendering and contract management and managing the reporting between the government department and the community partners. Facilitating partners bring together a consortium of local stakeholders into a 'community committee' to identify local need. They provide funding and training to Community Partners to provide new services, and also support them to 'join up' existing services by increasing service coordination and cooperation. These local groups developed organisational networks for peer support and collaboration around early years services.

Outcomes

While the model is very much a top-down one, there has been potential for local definition of priorities, and a strength of this model is its flexibility which enabled funding for services to be redirected into capacity building services to frontline organisations. The local groups that were established brought together child and family services and other stakeholders which was especially important in sites where no other early years network existed. At the level of intervention and individual worker (grounded) there was considerable internalisation of change, through the capacity building interventions from the FP through training and

mentoring and from the CP group which developed collaboration and partnership building. In the smaller organisations this flowed through to impact on management and governance.

This initiative raises the issue of the relationship between the funder, capacity building provider and client - the frontline organisation. It assumes that the capacity-builders have the necessary capacity to act as brokers and partners, and simply require funding to carry out this work. In practice, some FPs needed support or training to fulfil this role (see below). The funder (government department) held annual FP conferences, but much of the horizontal networking and peer learning was left to the initiative of the FPs. There remains the problem that at FP level the ground is still very competitive as they must tender to be FPs. There may also be an issue of confidentiality between the Facilitating Partner as capacity building provider and the client, as the FP is accountable to the funder. How was confidentiality and the building of trust between provider and client allowed for in the process? There is also a tension in the FP's dual role as capacity builder and funding broker.

The difference made having a third sector FP brokering between national government and local government and non-governmental organisations, has not been investigated. A question to consider is how the CPs that are government organisations take to getting funding from a TSO? Is it helping to break down the 'us and them'?

Differing approaches in the Netherlands

The Dutch case study evolved from looking at the differing capacity building approaches of a number of Dutch aid agencies, which each a bit difeerent. One is 'civic driven change', which is an approach that has come out of collaborative working beween the Institute of Social Studies in the Hague and a group of Dutch international aid agencies. We describe the East African programme Twaweza as an example of CDC in action. Second is the practice of bringing international development practice back to Holland in the shape of logical framework analysis. Third is the collaboration between the aid agency HIVOS and the ISS within a programme for civil society strengthening (society-wide capacity building). Fourth is the work of PSO to promote networking and peer learning across the international development community in Holland.

Civic Driven Change

The Civic-Driven Change (CDC) Initiative is a collective effort to explore and communicate a perspective of change in societies that stems from citizens rather than states or markets. It was initiated by a group of Dutch private aid agencies (Hivos, Cordaid, ICCO Oxfam-Novib, SNV, IKV-Pax Christi, Context) and is co-ordinated and hosted by the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) in The Hague (Netherlands). Their premise is that mainstream aid development interventions do not address the underlying systemic problems which keep the majority of people in poverty and unable to influence change. CDC proposes concerted programmes of action that can generate new methods and language of civic action to help (re)claim citizen control of the institutions that influence their lives. The logic of capacity building in these terms is that of strengthening citizenship and civic agency to engage in local, national and global governance for the deepening of democracy. Such an approach is also taken by PRIA in India.

Context

Twaweza is a programme supported by HIVOS, a Dutch aid agency, which attempts to address the enduring problems of social injustice and deprivation in East Africa. Decades of international aid have not significantly changed the patterns of exclusion and poor public services. East African states are failing to deliver basic services, and while NGOs and TSOs are partially filling this gap, they are working often to short-term goals and are poorly coordinated with each other. There is a critical absence of long-term development strategies for real change and reflective learning-oriented practices that can generate lessons about what works.

The approach

The programme aims to make accessible the information and skills for citizens to become informed and motivated to hold their governments to account and to play an active role in improving the quality and delivery of local services and public resource management. Twaweza's analysis is that the problem is not the individual's lack of capacity, rather it is the institutional setting that prevents people from acting, or makes their actions unsuccessful. The diagnostic identifies these constraints at each level and develops strategies to work at these levels. The premise is that if citizens are able to exercise 'agency' i.e. gain access to information, express their views, take initiative to improve their lives, and hold government accountable, this will lead to the positive changes that they seek –Through strategic interventions, the programme aims to improve citizens' access to information, ability to voice, opportunity to monitor, and capability to make change. This is an intrinsic approach which aims to build capacity at all levels of society so that citizens can play an active role in improving their own environments.

Methods

The Twaweza programme supports large-scale partnerships and initiatives (intermediaries) and works with them as brokers to create space for direct engagement with citizens. They work by brokering relationships across a range of institutions and networks that ordinary citizens already use to meet and share information (mass media, private businesses, commercial product distribution networks, religious organisations, teachers and other trade unions, and other groups not traditionally included in 'development' efforts, as well as TSOs and their networks). The approach is to build 'strategic' partnerships around achieving a focused goal that has real meaning for ordinary citizens, such as increasing availability of basic medical supplies at local clinics, or making sure that public funds arrive at schools and are properly used. The diagnostic phase maps the existing networks and institutions that are important to people's lives and from this develops a strategy which piggybacks on these to create spaces in which people can act.

Outcomes

The programme runs for ten years, and is currently in its first year. We therefore cannot report on outcomes, but include Twaweza as a case study for its innovative approach to addressing citizen empowerment through building strategic partnerships and linking citizens

into these as sites through which they can build their own capacity through taking action around issues that are important to them.

This initiative meets the 'good practice principles' (as described in the methodolgy section) at least in its discourse – it is too early in its programme to judge how well it puts these principles into practice. It is a bottom-up approach that identifies local concerns and analyses them at local, national and regional levels. It may provide lessons on how to coordinate capacity building and learning across localities and countries.

The CDC case has some similarities with the DfID programme 'Coalitions of Interest' i.e. change will happen if groups come together across sectors around a particular interest. Capacity builders support or become strategic brokering partners, building partnerships or coalitions around issues that cut across sectors.

MDF / bringing international development methods back home

Context

Since its establishment in 1984 MDF has been focused on development cooperation. Over the last couple of years, MDF has looked into expanding into the Dutch domestic market. They consider that many of their tools and approaches can also be applied to typical Dutch situations. Recently, the Dutch government has put participation high on the political agenda. MDF believes it has the means to respond to this trend and can assist decentralised government structures at municipal and province level, and other Dutch stakeholders, in shaping participatory processes and translating community desires into policy.

The approach
MDF talks about capacity *development* of the third sector in terms of civic engagement and of strengthening the capacity of the third sector to participate in governance processes. This involves working with the sector and with government institutions to

> a) improve communication capacities and develop more constructive dialogue between actors in local development, and

> b) build on existing capacities and connect what an organisation does with the wider environment

The rationale is that (civic) actors have capacity, are doing useful things, but might need help to communicate what they do, and to give their work strategic direction.

Methods
MDF have seconded a member of their staff to an organisation in Utrecht: Greeven & Van der Ven advies. This organisation works with government and third sector organisations that aim to build citizen participation into policy making and project design. They use one of

MDF's core activities of: 'objective oriented project planning' (Logical Framework Planning - see section X below for a discussion of the log-frame)[13]. A SWOT analysis or other participatory problem analysis tools is used to identify areas to work on. This feeds into the logical framework process which in turn feeds into policy development (TSO board or local government council discussions) and finally into an action plan.

Snapshot studies

HIVOS and capacity building through collaboration with universities

Link to website: Knowledge Programme Civil Society Building

In 2005, the Dutch aid agency HIVOS and the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) launched a collaborative project to set up a Knowledge Network focused on the theme of civil society strengthening in developing countries. The Knowledge Programme aims to better understand and improve the contribution of CSB efforts to bring about changes in the unequal balance of power in favour of vulnerable and marginalised groups.

At the core of this collaboration between Hivos and ISS is the interaction between practitioners and researchers to facilitate stronger knowledge development, dissemination and application. This process – also called knowledge integration – has the potential to be of enormous value to the development sector involved in civil society building. Both organisations have the ambition to contribute to the debate and further strengthen civil society building efforts. The idea of academic-practitioner collaboration is to strengthen the analytical capacities of NGOs through the academic platform for learning and improving, and to strengthen academia through practitioner links to practical expertise and an opportunity to test ideas and theories or gather case material.

The next phase of the Civil Society Building Knowledge Programme (2008-2010) will further develop and transform new and existing knowledge, thereby contributing to the debates on the main challenges facing the international development sector.

The Knowledge Programme has research, outreach and capacity-building components. The focus is on fundamental questions and themes related to the dynamics of civil society formation; the role of external actors in strengthening civil society; and the contribution of CSB to structural changes in unequal power balances.

---

[13] We can provide an example log-frame if Capacitybuilders is not familiar with this method.

PSO: networking capacity builders

PSO is an association that consists of fifty Dutch development organisations. The association focuses on capacity development of civil society organisations in developing countries. Their mandate has shifted from financing capacity building activities to stimulating learning about capacity building in the non-profit Dutch development cooperation sector. PSO's core areas of work are knowledge development and the funding of activities in the field of capacity building. Through strengthening the capacity of Dutch development organisations, PSO aims to build the capacity of civil society organisations in developing countries.

Their network strengthening work is carried out through a number of methods and activities:
- action research
- a programme to award excellence in capacity building. It is in the process of selecting cases of innovative capacity development practices that merit being rewarded (through a 'Quality Bonus System'). They plan to document and publish these cases. The cases of the 2008 Innovation Award can be found on the website: http://www.pso.nl/en/content/innovation-award
- an e-network which supports knowledge exchange between Dutch NGOs, and in their cooperation with their southern partners. This network organises meetings, communicates through a discussion list in order to exchange knowledge and ask questions, and records lessons learned on its blog http://icollaborate.blogspot.com.

- Knowledge exchange on planning, monitoring and evaluation in international relationships. This was selected by a number of PSO member organisations as an area around which to share information. As well as discussing a number of operational topics (types of partners, aggregating data, attribution, etc.), there is also room to discuss theories of change, personal competency and attitudes of employees.

The US

Context

According to a 2007 GAO (Government Accountability Office) report, the US non-profit sector produces 11-12% of the nation's GDP and employs 9% of its workforce. This is significantly larger than the UK though there is perhaps less of a sense of a coherent sector in the US – with a huge gulf separating out professionalised NGOs from grass-roots associations.

The US, as a federalist country with a presumption against state intervention, has no national policy for supporting capacity building. However, there has been a significant growth in investment in capacity building in recent years in response to growing demands for efficiency and accountability. Foundations and some private philanthropists have taken a leading role in developing holistic and blended capacity building initiatives for their grantees. There is also a network of state associations of nonprofit, membership-based bodies that

provide a number of resources that might be described as capacity building (comparable to councils for voluntary service in the UK but at regional level). Beneath this level, there is a growing population of non-profit management support organizations.

Methods

Capacity building remains a vague term, used interchangeably with terms like *technical assistance* and *organizational effectiveness* (McKinsey and Company 2001). There are many approaches to capacity building, which will be familiar to a UK audience. One source has summarized them as follows[14]:

- Providing access to repositories of information and resources (databases, libraries and websites
- Publications
- Training opportunities (public, customized or on-line)
- Consultation (coaching, facilitating, expert advice and conducting research
- Co-ordinating alliances.

Non profit organisations can shop around for the services they need, with lists of resources available on many websites, including those of any infrastructure organisations they belong to. However, there are more holistic, more strategic approaches being adopted e.g. a number of foundations are encouraging and resourcing capacity building through the programme and project funding agreements.

Understanding of how people learn and the need to build learning capacity is a frequent theme in literature related to capacity building. This includes the ability to observe, seek information and guidance, and absorb what has been learned into organisational strategy and operations. The James Irvine Foundation, for example, has a Long-Term Capacity Building (LTCB) Programme which directs support to a cohort of organizations over a defined time period to address specific capacity-building needs. By working across multiple organisations, the foundation achieves economies of scale and also provides additional benefits to participating grantees by linking them through meetings, peer exchange, and training opportunities[15].

---

[14] Authenticity Consulting: Field Guide to Consulting and Organizational Development with Nonprofits: a collaborative and systems approach to performance, change and learning

[15] Paul M. Connolly (2007) Deeper Capacity Building for Greater Impact; Designing a Long-term Initiative to Strengthen a Set of Nonprofit Organizations

Two particular areas of intervention identified in US literature are the need to support leadership, which features as a priority across very different approaches, and the need to build alliances and networks across organisations. Both are particular features, too, of capacity building in disadvantaged communities.

The concept of a 'social treasury' (Milofsky) was developed to counter dependence on outside professionals and instead build the capacity of individuals to identify problems, create movements, form mutual support networks to mobilize resources and build local assets. It focuses on building networks (social capital), supporting and attracting moral entrepreneurs (leaders), and identifying, protecting and channeling resources that can be leveraged within the community. This alliance building approach is popular amongst a number of ideologically committed community organising organizations bodies

Outcomes

The fragmented nature of capacity building support in the US does not allow for an overall analysis of its effectiveness or indeed generalisation across the whole pattern of provision. However, there is evidence of a great deal of activity from a variety of sources, including foundations, for whom ensuring that the organisations they support get maximum benefit out of the resources they are given is a particular issue. The best US practice certainly meets the good practice principles outlined in section 1, as it is developed in partnership with and responsive to the needs of the targeted groups, holistic, and acknowledging existing capacities. There are also examples of coaching and peer networking approaches which recognize what third sector organisations themselves have to offer.

A particularly valuable model is the one whereby funders build capacity building resources into funding agreements or investments, working directly or through experienced third parties to build the capacity of a cohort of funding recipients in a particular field or region. This allows trust to be built over time and encourages peer networking as well as being firmly focused on what the capacity is being built for.

Questions have been raised about the reach of such approaches and the coherence of capacity building support more generally. Some of the most effective capacity building programmes are very intensive and there are many organisations that fall out of the loop.   Is it appropriate to provide these levels of intensive support to relatively few organisations and how can it be cascaded out effectively? In relation to evaluation, Light and Hubbard argue that 'relatively little research is available that clearly demonstrates the value of nonprofit capacity building or links it to improved programme outcomes.[16] Elizabeth Boris argues that:

---

[16] Light, P. and Hubbard, E. (2004) *The Capacity Building Challenge: a research perspective*, Foundations Centre

Organisations are always in the process of becoming more capable. Because no one indicator shows when absolute capacity has been achieved, we must look for signposts that tell us the direction in which we are moving and the distance we have traveled

Capacity Building through Networking

Evaluaton Learning Circle - Canada

Context

The Canadian Council for International Co-operation (CCIC) is a coalition of Canadian voluntary sector organizations working globally to achieve sustainable human development. The CCIC seeks to end global poverty, and to promote social justice and human dignity for all. http://www.ccic.ca/ CCIC is an umbrella organisation for NGOs with a membership comprising about 100 Canadian voluntary sector organizations working to end global poverty.

CCIC launched an Evaluation Learning Circle for public engagement practitioners (PEP) in Autumn 2008. The ELC was developed as a result of learning from the CCIC's previous experience in delivering workshop-based capacity building and a programme of action research to develop participatory evaluation practices (known as the PEP pilots).The learning circle combines theory and practice of alternative approaches for evaluating public engagement, and provides a space for peers to share ideas, practices, resources, and challenges.

Methods
Twelve member organisations were selected and a range of organisations were chosen based on interest and geographical spread. Due to the geographical spread and large distances involved the workshops were a mix of face-to-face and virtual meetings. Six meetings were held over eight months including an initial meeting that was face-to-face and included a meal which aimed to build a sense of community amongst the public engagement practitioners. The next meetings were a mixture of virtual meetings where all five sites were connected so they could see each other; mixed meetings with some attending and others video/web conferencing. These meetings took half a day once a month. Through this participatory approach participants defined four out of five of the ELC's objectives. Participants were expected to reflect and carry out pieces of 'homework' in between meetings.

Outcomes

The ELC focuses on capacity building though peer learning, collaboration and networking. Individuals benefits but it as yet unclear how this builds capacity in their organisations. The ELC was formally evaluated by its participants. The majority felt that the Learning Circle is a useful model' and that they would like to participate in another. These were positive

responses given that the Co-ordinator described the ELC as an "exhaustive" process with lots of commitment required, work in between sessions as well as having to deal with practical and technological difficulties..

The survey also assessed progress in building individual and organisational capacity to appropriately evaluate public engagement programs/activities'. The majority of respondents felt more motivated and more confident to evaluate their public engagement work.

Evidence of sharing knowledge and information with others appears to be limited though there have been some 'unintended consequences' of the Learning Circle. In a couple of cases there have been follow-up phone conferences sharing information about public engagement practices and practitioners working with young people have formed a network. Another Learning Circle around campaigning will begin in 2010.

Redesenvolivimento Programme - Brazil

Context

ABDL is the Brazilian Association for the Development of Leadership. It is a non profit organisation which aims to promote leadership for a more sustainable world. It develops leadership training and capacity building projects for those interested in sustainable development. It was founded in 1991, a partnership between the University of Sao Paulo and the Rockerfeller Institute, andis now an independent organisation. ABDL delivers programmes which focus on networks, participation, leadership for climate security and sustainability.

Redesenvolvimento was developed by ABDL in partnership with AVINA Foundation which promotes sustainable development in Latin America by collaborating with -partners, leaders of civil society and the business sector. Redesenvolvimento builds on the lessons learnt from ABDL's involvement in the LEAD network's (Leadership for Environment and Development) Fellowship Programme.

Methods

Redesenvolvimento is a training programme which was launched in 2005 and lasted one year. It consisted of four five day sessions, face-to-face interaction combined with virtual interaction between training sessions. Twenty four participants were chosen from six networks in diverse fields – business, poverty, women, indigenous population; renewable energy, marine, coastal and waters. The selection of networks was based on a consideration of the relevance of networks as well as representation of ethnicity, age and gender.

A public conference 'Networks for Development' was held at the end of the programme in July 2006. The conference was an integral part of programme and was included to counterbalance the small-scale nature of the training programme.

Presentations, case studies and findings from Redesenvolvimento Programme have also been published and ABDL has developed a second training course and short courses plus there is an ongoing forum.

Outcomes

A review of the programme suggests that:

> "*the outcomes were substantial, producing changes in the way they understood their work and the issues they promote. Even more significantly, the programme made a contribution to the issues the participating networks chose to address.*"[17]

The training course highlighted some challenges for capacity building within networks. There was a variance in the type and strength of connections between individuals and their network; if an individual has strong connections then their participation can outweigh that of other participants, if weak then their legitimacy and their capacity to introduce change can be limited. The programme also highlighted the need to reach broader audience.

As a result of the lessons learnt from the Redesenvolvimento Programme a second roll out of the programme began in 2007.18 This was a nine week course which focused more on coaching and mentoring and combined face-to-face meetings, peer learning and reflective activities with 'homework' in between meetings..

There appears to be some evidence to suggest that individuals benefited from this programme and some network strengthening occurred as a result of this programme. A second roll out of the programme albeit a revised version suggests that this is a useful method of capacity building for networks. However the extent of outcomes would need further investigation before being transferred to the UK.

One of the lessons from the first programme is the length of time needed for capacity building. Like the Evaluation Learning Circle in Canada it was thought that a shorter more intensive time period was necessary –the programme is now nine weeks rather than one year. Another lesson is the need for networks to 'buy-in' and commit to the programme.

---

[17] Falconer, A. P and Adulis, D. (2006) *Redesenvolvimento: training and empowering networks for development.* KM4D Journal, 2 (2), pp 64-71

[18] http://www.lead.org.br/article/view/2910

Advance human rights for Roma minority - Bosnia and Herezegovina

Context

The Roma population constitutes the largest ethnic or national minority in BiH but continue to be the most likely to suffer income poverty, marginalisation, discrimination, deterioration of well-being, social exclusion and an inability to access state services. A National Strategy for Roma was adopted by the Government in 2005 yet institutional support for Roma and minority rights is seen to have been tokenistic. There are also low levels of capacity amongst Roma associations and networks, with women pretty much invisible.

The project's original aim was to build Roma institutional and organisational capacity through a policy process with Roma participation. This would produce National Action Plans (on health, housing and employment). However during the process it became clear that building the capacity within the Roma community and its networks and improving the organisational capacity in the Roma NGOs needed to be prioritised before focusing on the outputs.

Methods

The approach was participatory and included:

- Capacity building of Roma Associations through a participatory action planning process where the training was delivered in large groups with each association represented by one or two individuals.
- Creating a Roma Network (achieved early on in the process through joint training which established methods for teamwork and constructive discussions) and developing National Action Plans.
- Building advocacy skills through two day training sessions for Roma Associations which led to campaigns and raising awareness events.

Outcomes

An evaluation was carried out in January 2009 by an external consultant.[19] Whilst, it is too early to assess the impact of the project on the overall well-being of Roma community, there is some evidence of change. For example, a network of women emerged "unexpectedly" from the training process and a subsequent strategic plan for Roma Women. In addition a Roma Network formed leading to improved collaboration. This in turn resulted in a population survey carried out by the associations within their own communities. In the absence of census data this became the basis for costing the Action Plans.

The establishment of a Roma Network has achieved a number of outcomes:

---

[19] Sterland, B. (2009) *Final Evaluation: Project 'Advance Human Rights for Roma Minority in Bosnia and Herzegovina.* For World Vision Bosnia and Herzegovina.

- Solidarity amongst Roma leaders who are united around a piece of work with agreed goals -two years before they could barely face being in the same room together due to their differences and poor communication skills.
- Effective structuring of the Roma NGO sector with the BiH government at involving representation and co-ordination by the Roma Network (members include key individuals and resource centres who communicate with associations at the grassroots).
- A set of regulations codifies these arrangements and enables more effective political representation of Roma interests at various levels.
- Increased communication between Roma Associations
- Integration of Roma communities into the wider community and generally higher levels of information exchange.

Individual capacities are also reported to have improved. Men continue to dominate but the project has promoted opportunities for young people, women and ordinary community members through its participative, inclusive, group-based methodology.

This project demonstrates how marginalised groups (minority ethnic groups, women and young people) can benefit from capacity building within networks. It also focussed on the importance on defending and supporting the human rights of a marginalised and impoverished group. It works across different levels - individuals and networks at local and national levels, and the national government who were included in the Action Planning process and are now more engaged in with the Roma community as a result.

Lessons (from the evaluation):

- Networking when based upon a process of careful negotiation of joint interests and ambitions can be effective means of conflict resolution and development of unity.
- Networks are galvanised by the establishment of an agreed purpose, backed up by a programme of work whose design all participants have contributed to and participated in.
- Group training of individual representatives from organisations is a highly effective means of individual capacity building but is poorly suited to building organisational capacity. Organisational capacity strengthening is best carried out in-house with larger groups according to a specifically tailored agenda.

This began as a project focussing on developing Action Plans - however these Action Plans could only be written by first building the capacity of networks. This was a very divided community represented by a small number of men with gaps in involvement from women and young people. Capacity building led to the strengthening of networks and collaboration between different Roma groups.

Citi Network strengthening programme: Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network and the Citi Foundation

Context

The Citi Network Strengthening Program is a $11.2 million grant program launched in 2008 in collaboration with the Small Enterprise Education and Promotion (SEEP) Network with assistance from local employees of Citi and its affiliates around the world.

The mission of the Citi Network Strengthening Program is to increase the capacity and scale of the microfinance sector by strengthening the operational, technical, and financial capacity of twelve national and regional microfinance networks, addressing the challenges which the sector is facing and promoting growth and development in the sector.

Methods

This is a three-year programme which aims to strengthen microfinance networks' capacity at the national and regional level to:

- Provide demand driven services to member MFIs, so that they may be better equipped to provide high-quality financial products and services to their clients, including attracting, training and retaining high quality human resources and talent.
- Become influential representatives on behalf of the national or regional microfinance sector, including developing strong ties with relevant government and regulatory agencies, the mainstream financial sector, and other relevant stakeholders leading to an enabling legal and regulatory environment for microfinance.
- Develop industry infrastructure, setting standards and processes such as credit bureaus or investment funds; promoting best practices such as transparent and consistent performance indicators; and engaging in more comprehensive monitoring and reporting.
- Build cross-sector support and help stimulate progress among microfinance networks in other countries, as well as contribute to international innovations in the field through peer learning and sharing.

The programme will engage the networks through a range of activities such as strategic business planning; goal setting; management training; partnership building; thought leadership, product development; peer learning, and ongoing evaluation.

SEEP also have a network capacity assessment tool which it uses to support and strengthen networks.[20]

Outcomes

---

[20] An outline of the tool is available at http://networks.seepnetwork.org/en/node/1256

This is a recently launched programme so it is difficult to comment on the success of the approach or outcomes. However it builds on the experience of SEEP which suggests a need for the strengthening of networks through capacity building. The existence of the programme perhaps indicates the importance of the network strengthening approach.

In terms of the principles of good practice (see section 1 of the report) this programme appears to take a holistic approach and uses a variety of approaches to capacity building networks including peer learning, management training, partnership development and ongoing evaluation.

Capacity Building through Leadership

Ashoka

Context

Ashoka is a TSO that supports organisations and individuals as social entrepreneurs. This case study focuses on the international work of Ashoka and the work of Ashoka Brazil in particular. Ashoka Brazil supports the social entrepreneurs elected as Ashoka Fellows. It also has a mandate to help "build the citizen sector infrastructure", which extends beyond the one-on-one support to individual social entrepreneurs.

The Ashoka McKinsey Center for Social Entrepreneurship (CSE) has also recently been launched and is managed in Sao Paulo, Brazil. This Center provides Ashoka Fellows, the citizen sector and the private sector with a range of opportunities for knowledge and skills-transfer, training, contacts and cross-sectoral understanding.

Methods

There are five types of Fellows – Ashoka Fellows; Senior Fellows; Global Fellows; Social Investment Entreprenuerial Fellows; and Invention and Technology Fellows.

All Ashoka Fellows must demonstrate that they fully meet Ashoka's five selection criteria. Candidates undergo a rigorous selection procedure which starts with a nomination and ends with election as a Fellow. Candidates go through an extensive series of in-depth interviews, a judging panel, and a final executive board vote. the Nominees are questioned about practical implementation—the blueprints that will make their ideas come to life—as well as personal background, values, motivations and aspirations. At the end of the selection process Ashoka considers and meets financial needs of applicants as appropriate.

Ashoka Fellows are supported in their country by Ashoka organisations. For example Ashoka Brazil is continuously sourcing and bridging connections - pro-bono and otherwise - with people and organisations that can leverage the impact of the organisations that the fellows have founded or the causes that they champion. Ashoka Brazil also has a mandate to help build the citizen sector infrastructure, which extends beyond the one-on-one support to individual social entrepreneurs.

The aim of the Ashoka McKinsey Center for Social Entrepreneurship (CSE) is to strengthen the profession of social entrepreneurship and innovation by building a community of cross-sectoral leaders, programs and innovations. The CSE builds a business-social bridge through Ashoka programs such as the Citizen Base Initiative[21] and the Entrepreneur to Entrepreneur programme[22], as well as the Ashoka-McKinsey and Company partnership which is a strategic planning initiative carried out in partnership with McKinsey & Co, the consulting firm, which now has a considerable level of expertise in adapting "business solutions" to the third sector and social enterprise.

Outcomes

The effectiveness and impact of the Ashoka Fellows is evaluated using surveys and in-depth interviews. 23 Fellows are reported to have had an impact in terms of systemic change— shifting societal perceptions, encouraging new behaviour patterns, and revolutionizing entire fields.

Ashoka is an international network with a variety of methods for capacity building, predominantly by supporting leadership skills and development but also by supporting sector infrastructure.

These cross-sectoral activities are seen to provide mutual benefits to - and deepen the ties between - the social and business sectors, and may engage the academic and public sectors as participants as well.

---

[21] http://www.citizenbase.org/ see also
http://www.citizenbase.org/sites/citizenbase.ashoka.org/files/CBI%20White%20Paper.pdf

[22] http://www.ashoka.org/e2e

[23] http://www.ashoka.org/impact

Appendix E: List of research respondents

Name	Institution	Case cited	Interested in joining an email list (if email given)
Wendy Earles	Cairns Institute, James Cook University	Funding Brokerage Model: Communities for Children Programme	Wendy.earles@jcu.edu.au
Andres Falconer ABDL Dalberto Adulis	Ashoka	Ashoka leadership programme	Brazil
Michael Stephens	Canadian Council for International Cooperation	Learning Circle	Canada mstephens@ccic.ca
Lars Skov Henriksen	Department of Sociology, Social Work and Organization, Aalborg University	Volunteering Centres	Denmark larsskov@socsci.aau.dk
Linda Lundgaard Anderson Lise Bisballe	Centre for Social Entrepreneurship www.socialt-entreprenorskab.dk , Dept of Psychology and Educational Studies. Roskilde University, Denmark		lla@ruc.dk liseb@ruc.dk
Kristina Mand	Network of Estonian Nonprofit	NENO	Estonia

	Organisations (NENO)		
Zsuzsanna Pikó	Nonprofit Information and Training Centre (NIOK) Hungary		program@niok.hu
Silke Franke	(Through cinefogo network)	www.sdl-inform.de www.wir-fuer-uns.de www.stmas.bayern.de/sozial politik/ehrenamt/index.htm	Germany
Adalbert Evers	(Through cinefogo network)	Conceptual suggestions	Germany
Udan Fernando		Civic Driven Change (CDC)	Holland
Rakesh Rajani	Head, Twaweza Programme	Twaweza	East Africa
Rob Van Poelje	PSO		poelje@pso.nl The Netherlands
Marj Mayo (UK)	Goldsmiths College	PRIA, India	India
Giovanna Rossi Lucia Boccacin Stefania Meda	Sociologia della Famiglia Facoltà di Psicologia Catholic University of Milan		giovanna.rossi@unicatt.it lucia.boccacin@unicatt.it stefania.meda@unicatt.it

Stefano Stortone			stefano.stortone@unicatt.it
Ben Gidron Rachel Liel	Shatil (capacity building organization)	Shatil	Israel Rachel@shatil.nif.org.il
Vijay Krishnarayan	Commonwealth Institute	Community Development Resource Association CDRA	South Africa
Tosca Bruno	Transnational NGO Initiative Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, USA		tmbruno@maxwell.syr.edu
John Casey	School of Public Affairs Baruch College, City University of New York (CUNY), USA http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/spa/home.php		john.casey@baruch.cuny.edu
Carl Milofsky	Bucknell University, USA	Social Treasury	
Akwugo Emejulo	Deparment of Education University of Strathclyde, Scotland	ACORN	a.emejulu@strath.ac.uk

Bill Sterland	Independent	Evaluator of the Roma networking programme	bill@sterland.biz
Angelo Gasparre	University of Genoa, Italy	Slum Dwellers International	Italy
Diane Vinokur	University of Michigan, USA	US incubators	dkv@umich.edu
Kirsten Gronbjerg	School of Public and Environmental Affairs Indiana University, USA		kgronbj@indiana.edu
Robyn Munford	Massey University, New Zealand		R.Munford@massey.ac.nz