

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Action Plan: Programming NGOs for Effective Community Development A Working Outline

VISION

Establish Global Vision for the NGO's Community Development Programming

- Interview key staff and draft NGO community development vision statement
- Define geographic focus and scale
- Define NGO's thematic focus
- Determine if NGO is interested in single sector or multi-sector community development
- Development philosophy: Top down or bottom up?
- Compare how the organizational vision relates to internationally recognized development goals

STRATEGY

Define Implementation Strategy

- Number of communities
- Determine whether clustered or dispersed
- Establish timeline for results
- Establish plan for community engagement, empowerment and disengagement
- Define project design team and responsibilities
- Policy on new development themes: partnering with specialists or in-house training?
- Establish an ideal profile for field staff
- Develop a monitoring plan to facilitate learning and gain a better understanding of impact
- Incorporate Lessons Learned into programming
- Establish community mentoring and follow-up programs
- Evaluate effectiveness of U. S. volunteer programs

TOOLS

Package the Program Strategy

- Staff handbook on project management
- Staff handbook for community engagement and participation
- Staff handbook for NGO's standard products and interventions
- Lesson plans and workshop materials for field staff to use in community workshops
- Take-home learning materials for beneficiaries

TRAINING

Training the Trainer Workshops

- Staff workshops/courses for developing job skills
- NGO staff organizational vision workshop; 3 days
- [1 week training course](#) in community participation and project design for Field and Project staff
- Mentoring and follow-up program
- Training in monitoring and evaluation
- Training in efficiently launching a development project
- Training in specialized skills for project implementation
- [Management training](#) in personal and interpersonal management skills and techniques
- 3 hour packaged presentation for visiting overseas volunteer teams on community development

SUSTAINABILITY

Funding and Community Support

- Revise funding plan for community development programming
- Define how projects can become increasingly sustainable. Engaging communities, government, business
- Evaluate whether a overseas volunteer program can contribute to sustainability
- Define the size of a typical proposal
- Establish fundraising and proposal writing team
- Develop and list appropriate donors to approach
- Begin the process of the next funding cycle so that funds are available in one or two years

IMPLEMENTATION

Developing trusting relationships with the community
Engage field staff members from the same culture/language group as the beneficiaries
Engage community members in exit strategy.
Provide field staff with copies of budgets, logframes and schedules
Conduct baseline surveys
Put a monitoring and evaluation plan in place
Contract specialized staff
Make materials ready and available. Put logistics in place for distributing materials
Complete training materials and train the trainers
Schedule community workshops
Develop a community feedback mechanism that allows field staff to know if information is understood and appreciated
Schedule periodic in-house evaluations to see if the project is working or if it needs fine-tuning
Incorporate lessons learned as the project continues
At project milestones, keep donors and evaluators informed. Review impact indicators
Send periodic, informal, fun reports to the donor. Invite the donors to meet the community
Make head office staff accessible to the field staff for support
Ensure that the community is ready to take over at the end of a project. Make sure mentoring and follow-up are in place