



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Organization Development and Systems Strengthening (ODSS) is a strategic capacity-building methodology or process that enhances local organizations' capacity to address community problems by designing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating their intervention's impact.

It is a dynamic and outcomes-based participatory process that emphasizes organizational ownership.





Organizational development (OD) is a planned and efficient approach to facilitating continuous organizational performance through its people's involvement.

Every organization is different with unique problems, goals, context and is likely at a different stage in its development.

The process of organizational development is a consciously planned, systematic and controlled attempt to make an organization more efficient by staging interventions in the systems and methods through which it is formed.

This model originated from Amref Health Africa's experience in working with CSOs, over time and subsequently operations research and testing of capacity building approaches on local organizations.

ODSS is also informed by experiences of other research bodies and organizations on institutional strengthening, e.g. WHO, MDGs, GAVI, MOH, NHSSP & USAID. Over the years, Amref Health Africa has invested resources in organizational development and systems strengthening (ODSS) to its community-based partner organizations. It believes that ODSS is about the organization and people in that organization and how they function.

Because growth is inevitable in every organization, each organization needs to have a clear roadmap of planned change; getting individuals, teams and the entire organization to function better and deliver on their core mandate.



OUR EXPERIENCE IN ODSS

Strengthening grassroots organization is done through a twin approach; Capacity building and grant making which gives the communities a voice to take charge of their health-related issues.

Organizational capacity is critical for sustaining health outcomes, reducing reliance on a single source or external assistance. Experience suggests that achieving better health outcomes requires both an injection of resources and adequate local capacity to use these resources effectively. Capacity building is thus an endogenous process best done when led from within the CSOs.

Organizational development (OD) is a form of capacity building that addresses changes within an organization and is a planned change that aims at increasing an organization's capacity for learning, awareness and self-understanding. It seeks to develop strong, independent organizations with good self-insight, a self-critical attitude, competence and the power to act for change both within the organization and in the surrounding society. The result of the OD process is an increased organizational ability to achieve objectives.

Further, OD is a long-term and thorough process that aims at building basic competence within the organization. This competence gives the organization the ability to solve existing problems and increased readiness to meet future challenges and changes. The ODSS model enhances the capacity of implementing sub-grants. Continuous Coaching and mentoring help them to develop collaborative relationships and networks with government structures and other stakeholders.

CRITICAL APPROACHES TOWARDS CAPACITY STRENGTHENING OF GRASSROOTS ORGANIZATIONS.

APPROACHES USED TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEM.

The Y-ACT project used three methods to address the problem; sharing feedback on capacity assessment results, developing capacity improvement plans and mentorship & coaching.

- **Sharing feedback on capacity assessment results** -This laid the foundation by giving the sub-grantees an accurate picture of their organizations, with a particular focus on their strengths and weaknesses. With this, the project got buy-in from the organizations on areas identified for improvement.

- **Development of improvement plans:** By sharing the OCA results, the Sub-grantees developed capacity improvement plans based on the gaps identified. This exercise demonstrated the SGs commitment to address the gaps and lead the process, resulting in the adoption and implementation of the developed plans to improve the systems/structures in their organizations.

- **Mentorship and Coaching** is the most critical element in capacity strengthening of sub-grantees. The ten **SGs; NDI, NEST, Connect to Retain, DAYO, Nairobites Trust, MYSA, Kisumu Progressive Youth, Sustainable Rural initiative, Youth Leaders Stakeholders and Youth Alive Kenya** were mentored and coached on the essential aspects of ODSS based on the gaps identified during capacity assessment and the unique needs and set up of the organizations.





There has been a tremendous improvement/ change in all the Sub-grantee organizations, particularly on governance and leadership, the presence of strategic plans, strengthened internal controls on financial management, resource mobilization/ additional funding, sustainability plans, increased partnerships and stakeholder involvement.

■ THE CHANGE

A case in point is Connect to Retain in Kilifi County which had weak internal systems/ structures. However, following the mentorship and training offered by the Y-ACT project, the SG has improved organizational systems through the development of strategic plans, financial and procurement policies, a sustainability plan, and better cash management by use of e-banking to conduct transactions thus minimizing the risks of loss of funds.

With these systems/ structures in place, the organization has received additional funding from Welcome Trust UK- Youth Against Antimicrobial Resistance (USD 4000) and Access Mashinani by the American Embassy Nairobi (USD 15,000).

The organization has also exhibited enormous human resource growth, with its staff capacity increasing from five full-time staff to thirteen full-time staff exclusive of over 90 contracted personnel on stipends and functioning Administration and Communications departments in one year. Increased media visibility through its online base has exponentially grown with registered accounts on all major social media platforms, a functional website, and an extension of programs in Kwale County.

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Nassim Jahangir, Executive Director

“It's very exciting and fulfilling to see how with time we have been able to secure grants from other sources based on the assessment of our organisational capacity that has been made possible through organisational development and systems strengthening.

The communications structure within the staff unit has greatly improved, which has in turn enabled the organization to realise desired changes and development goals. The organization's management has also taken up the mandate to regularly enhance employee skills to meet evolving programming requirements.”

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ODSS addresses the following areas of organisational competence for effective community interventions.





GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Good leadership and governance are essential elements of the practical implementation of SRHR interventions. The SGs leaders are responsible for providing vision and strategic direction, safeguarding the organization's values, ensuring accountability and transparency, and adequately planning implementation activities. It is paramount for the sub-grantees to ensure that they are governing structures and bodies in the organization. For instance, a well-established organization must have a constitution/by-laws to guide the organization's operations and, on the other hand, have board members/a management committee to offer an oversight role within the organization, particularly in policymaking and resource mobilization.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

Financial management involves planning, organizing, controlling and reporting on the financial resources of an organization. The central and most critical element in an organization, this element can make or break an organization. It is therefore essential for the SGs to ensure that they have all the control measures in place to ensure that donated funds and other resources are appropriately used to achieve their purpose. Moreover, to achieve organizational mission and objectives SGs leaders are responsible and accountable for the care and proper use of financial resources. Therefore, the SGs must have the following, a financial policy, procurement policy, standard operating procedures, and cash management mechanisms.

PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Project management involves planning, scheduling and carrying out all the tasks to achieve the project objectives. A standard project typically has four major phases (each with its plan of tasks and issues) initiation, planning, implementation, and closure. These phases represent the path a project takes from the beginning to its end, referred to as a project life cycle.

ADMINISTRATION AND HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

For effective project implementation, SG leaders, staff and volunteers should be organized and facilitated with the necessary physical, material and information resources. They should be clear on their roles and responsibilities in the organization and what they are expected to do, when, and how. It is also essential for the organization to ensure that they have a human resources department to guide in managing the staff and that comprehensively covers staff retention, remuneration, recruitment, career development among others.

NETWORKING AND ADVOCACY

The battle for pushing for policy change and inclusion of youth to be part of decision-making on issues affecting them cannot be won by one organisation alone. The SGs must build relationships and collaborate with others at the local, national and international levels using a multi-sectoral approach. Besides, advocacy is a vital activity in raising awareness, promoting new ways of thinking and acting at community, national and international levels.



SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability refers to the long-term continuation of an organization or project. SGs should strive to be sustainable and design and implement projects whose benefits will be sustained in the long-term. The sub-grantee can address this aspect by building relationships with the key stakeholders, especially relevant governmental agencies, by involving them in project planning, designing and implementing, and signing team agreements. On organizational sustainability, they must put up fundraising mechanisms, start income-generating activities, and have a resource mobilization plan to guide them.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Organisations should routinely monitor and evaluate their activities' progress to ensure that resources are used efficiently, and that goals are achieved.

TECHNICAL CAPACITY

Community-based implementing organizations should have a certain level of technical capacity in their advocacy, SRHR and gender equality areas of intervention. The SGs must at all times ensure that they have qualified staff to handle the interventions in the organizations and should always strive at providing the team with skills through training on the core areas of their mandate for the achievements of the set objectives





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