

”The interrelationship
between Service Delivery,
Capacity Development and
Advocacy in development
work”

Esi Johnson’s slides for her
presentation at the conference on
26th-27th October, 2007.

- Some experiences
- Some observations about
 - NGOs & CBOs
 - Ibis' practice
- Some ideas about what would work

The interrelationship between Service Delivery, Capacity Building and Advocacy - In NGOs & CBOs – Ibis Ghana

- Most NGOs and CBOs affirm that the 3 are inter-connected
- Few have programs that reflect this inter-connection
- Service-delivery & Advocacy are largely carried out separately especially in the smaller NGOs
- Could be useful to offer a clear articulation of the link... A model or framework
- Conceptual level

- **The Ark Foundation**
 - Shelter for survivors of domestic violence
 - Training on law, human rights
 - Policy advocacy
- **ABANTU**
 - Capacity building for women in politics
 - Policy advocacy
- **IDEG**
 - Capacity building for women in politics re. democratic governance
 - Policy re. democratic governance
- **Strength of women foundation**
 - Establishment of re-treatment centres for mosquito-nets
 - Advocacy on domestic violence
- **GSPD**
 - Training for physically disabled
 - Advocacy re. needs of physically disabled

- Few organisations have shifted from service to advocacy.... Problematic but could be a plus
- Most have added-on Advocacy to their portfolio of programs to be attractive to funders...
- If given support at strategic level to integrate their programs, this inter-linkage could work better.
- Strategic level
- What would work would be to offer support to integrate better across organisations and/or to focus more within organisations.

Practical level

- Few organizations have the capacity or the inclination to do advocacy. Especially at community level
 - too close to power-brokers
 - policy/national advocacy is ‘easier’
 - A lot of training in advocacy, but who is doing???
- Advocacy... A vague concept for many who purport to do advocacy
 - Few organisations able to pick specific issues, mobilize critical mass of support, strategize, advocate & follow-through till a change takes place.
- Facilitations skills for
 - Participation
 - Ownership
 - Sustainability

- It works when there is support
 - In identifying issues
 - Engaging with duty-bearers (power-brokers)
 - Determining next step
- Withdrawing this support shows up whether the advocacy approach adopted is
 - Sustainable
 - Owned at community/target group level
 - Responsible
 - Fosters self-reliance

EXAMPLES:

- WACAM (mining communities)
 - Seems to be working re. Ownership an sustainability
- RUMNET (working with civic groups – community score card for social accountability)
 - Seems not to be working re. sustainability and ownership.

Some observations

- At the community/grassroots level advocacy "on behalf of" doesn't seem to work for sustainability, self-reliance, cost effectiveness
- Advocacy on behalf of others seems to work better at national level
- Passion is needed. Find it with:
 - Think tanks
 - Civic groups
- Generally NGOs seem to be better structured and positioned for service delivery & capacity building than for advocacy
- Civic groups are affected directly by the issue(s)
- Civic groupings & associations have always existed, so have government agencies
- NGOs are the "new entrants"
- Their adopted positioning, role & approach is crucial for making or breaking:
 - Empowerment
 - Self reliance
 - Ownership
 - sustainability

What could work

- Work with civic group rather than smaller NGOs for advocacy
- Discourage certain organizations from getting into advocacy work
- National organisations -> policy advocacy
- NGOs -> service delivery and capacity building
- Grassroots/"true" CBOs -> community level advocacy
- Encourage integration across, not within organisations
- Work through & with existing platforms & structures rather than create new ones for CS-local government interaction
- Maintain the external facilitation role & presence

Ibis Ghana's approach

- Our practice tends to reinforce the separation of the 3 elements at the organisational level
 - We fund advocacy mainly
 - Don't like to fund organisational operations
- We do seek to encourage integration at the inter-organisational level (networks, coalitions)
- Or practice tends to turn a blind eye on certain realities about NGOs:
 - Most NGOs are service deliverers (services, capacity building, advocacy)
 - They need to earn a living
 - They are competing for funds
 - Are shifting from supporting economic activity
 - Much of the above is in response to donor's funding practice

Ibis Ghana's approach (cont.)

- Perhaps we should accept NGOs for what they are (what they've become) and work with them with that awareness

OR

- Reflect upon our funding practice & the response it elicits out there...
 - Take responsibility for the unintended impact of our practice...
 - Begin to modify our practice..????
- Maintain facilitation competence & value for OD principles are key...