JADEITE SOLUTIONS

WHAT MATTERS TO PEOPLE' TO SHAPE 'PEOPLE WHO MATTER

'SKILL TO SUCCEED' PROGRAM

EPISODE II

Challenges and opportunities for the development sector

Introduction

Jadeite Solutions organized the second edition of 'Skills to succeed'program in partnership with IMPRI and the Dialogueon 16th January 2019 at the office of PRIA NGO, Delhi. The theme was 'Challenges and opportunities for the development sector' aiming to reflect on various parameters of project lifecycle that are used by international organizations. The event was designed having two sections

1.Chalk-talk: that had reflections from experts to understand the phases of project lifecycle and

2.Avsar: focused workshop thatshowcased examples from various international projects lifecycles.

More than 25 participants from civil society and academia participated in the event.

Objectives

1. Showcase examples from various sectors with emphasis on how they are managing their international projects and lifecycle;

2. Identify challenges that exist in international project life cycle, that are difficult to manage by national organisations

3. Help create a conducive network platform for NGOs, startups, MSMEs and international organizations to promote sustainable and socially relevant business practices.

The event started with the introduction of Jadeite Solutions by Director, Omar Pervez. He stated that the flagship program – 'Skills to succeed' isaimedat providing balanced solutions of project management mechanisms and framework to the development sector including civil society organisations, startups, micro enterprises and community based organisations to manage and operate their projects effectively and efficiently.

Chalk talk : Identifying challenges & opportunities that exist in the cycle of project

Distinguished speakers

Meenakshi Batra
CEO,
Charity Aid Foundation (CAF) India

Jayalakshmi Chittoor Parameswaran
Former Senior Consultant, Policy & Strategy-NISG (National Institute of Smart Governance)

Subhendu Bhattacharjee
Head Development
Support – North India CRY

Augustine Veliath
Chairman of the Board for India,
The Non-Violence
Project Foundation

Dr. K. K. Upadhyay
Former Head - Corporate Social
Responsibility, FICCI,
Advisor – Denmark Embassy

Participating organizations included

Score Foundation	Sarthak Prayas	Jan Vikas Kendra
CREA	Social Work organisation	IHDI & IMPRI.
Labournet	Samarth-The Professionals	Sarimal Seva Society

The objective of Chalk Talk was to understand funding guidelines of various international agencies and how we can plan our funds strategically. Ms. Jaya Chittoor, Advisor, Jadeite Solutions moderated and facilitated the session. Meenakshi Batra, CEO of Charities Aid Foundation (CAF), India, started the session with stating that we should learn from our challenges. It is vital to document each aspect of the project whether positive or negative. Baseline is required to understand the present situation of the region prior to starting any project. The baseline helps to understand the objective of any project and enables monitoring at regular intervals. Collecting quantitative and qualitative data will help measure the impact of the project. Meenakshi stressed the importance of capturing real time data as an enabling tool to identify opportunities that exist on the ground.

Mr. Subhendu Bhattacharjee, Head Development Support – North India CRY highlighted the role of compliances. Organizational processes and professionalism of staff members are important elements to implement any project efficiently. Maintaining the financial compliances such as fixed deposits of grant money, TDS, FCRA filing and gratuity are required for any project. There are various scientific processes to measure the impact of project. For example, Niti Aayog has launched117 aspirational districts programme in January 2018. So, a project officer can identify the project location based on thesecriteria. Management Information System (MIS) can be leveragedfor collecting datato be usedfor measuringthe output, outcome and impact. Subhenduhighlighted that periodic measurement of project progress helps document the impact.

Ms. Jaya then invited Dr. K. K. Upadhyay, Former Head - Corporate Social Responsibility, FICCI to share his perspective on project lifecycle and ways to manage it efficiently. Mr. Upadhyay shared an example where while working with sex workers, they had linked the national and international policies aligning with their stakeholders. We need to apply 'Theory of Change' to measure the larger outcome of the project. To initiate any project, it is required that the project's objective and its challenges are well defined. Stakeholders are not limited to beneficiaries and there is a need to engageother stakeholders such as government, donors and partner organizations for success of the project.

1. Communication needs to be implemented efficiently at every stage

2. There are various local auditors available in the country, which may provide accounting and auditing services.

3. Ground organisations can collaborate with national organisations like CAF and receive the funds.

4. It is important to be innovating while raising funds. We should look at our own surroundings to raise funds strategically

Augustine Veliath, Former UNICEF Officer & Chairman, The Non-Violence Project Foundationhighlightedrisk management and risk control as the two main aspects of project lifecycle. It is good to take risks for implementing the project. He stated that when we are making the log-frame, it is also important to implement a good log-frame. When we are evaluating the project, we should ask 'what is the ultimate plan?' and understand the core objective of the project. We need toask questions like 'what is the direct and indirect impact of the program?'. Auditing allows for proper documentation of the project processes.

The session enabled the participants to understand the different phases of lifecycle and its importance. These phases include the planning, monitoring, evaluation, risk management and control, stakeholder management and documentation. At the end, Jaya acting as a moderator, opened the floor for questions and answers. The first question centered around internal conflict within departments. 'Marketing team' is connecting point between funders and operations team and is held accountable by the funder. However, the operations team is responsible for executing the project. There is miscommunication and lack of information sharingthat leads to harmony challenge between operations and marketing team. How to resolve this issue? In reply, Meenakshi pointed that it is an internal management issue. Mostly organization head is face of the project, which is incorrect. It is good to form project advisory committee including members from finance, program staff, quality team and marketing team. This helps to develop the confidence of the team. Another question was how important isto make project objectives during the time of project proposal. Answering that question, panelistssuggested that while thinking about project proposal, we need to see project lifecycle; measure the quantitative and qualitative objectives. There were also few questions around the applicability of GST and the ability of NGOs to engage into commercial activities. At the end of the session, panelists focused on the following points:

AVSAR: FOCUSED WORKSHOP ON LIFE-CYCLE OF PROJECT

The focused workshop was meant to familiarize the participants with the various types of lifecycles that exist and how one should choose the appropriate one based on the specifics of the project.

Various tools and methods were deployed to make the workshop more engaging and participative. The use of flash cards to enable the participants to interpret pictures in line with their project experiences, the sharing of project learnings and the effective use of modeling techniques to structure the project were well received by the audiences. The group activities and getting to know the other participants helped introduce the fun element within the framework of collective learning.

The sharing of personal experiences by Augustine Veliath and Jaya Chittoor helped highlight important concepts like blackspots in project selection and execution among other things. "Rural development - putting the last first" – by Robert Chambers is a good read for all project managers. Differences between objectives, goals and strategy were discussed and how they are relevant to any project. Tools like log frame analysis (LFA) were also covered during the workshop.

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