

The Change Triangle

Report from a learning visit to Ghana

by Maria Molde

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1 Background

The Project Advice and Training Centre (PATC) has as part of its ongoing method development published a position paper on “The Change Triangle” focusing on the relationships between strategic services, capacity development and advocacy in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development projects.

PATC has during recent years strived at strengthening south partner input to methodology development processes. This learning visit on the Change Triangle has in line with the PATC effort analyzed selected local experiences in Ghana on how to make use of the Change Triangle.

The learning visit was carried out jointly with a monitoring visit to Ghana with Nina Lauritzen. See separate TOR’s and report for the monitoring visit.

This learning visit has focused primarily on a visit to Axis’ partner NORSAAC. However the monitoring visit focused on FØB’s partner ICA and NOAHs partner FOE, and reflections from the use of the Change Triangle from these two visits have been incorporated in the report.

The learning visit to NORSAAC was not part of PATC monitoring or evaluation of individual projects or partners. However, an assessment form was completed during the visit.

2 Objective

The objective of the learning visit was to explore the strategic use of the Change Triangle in planning, implementation and monitoring of ongoing projects funded by the Project Fund from the local partner(s) perspective.

More specifically the visit has focused on:

- Exploring if and how the Change Triangle has been used in the planning of ongoing projects – especially “Innovative Sexual Education Project” (NORSAAC/AXIS)
- Exploring the local partners appreciation of the Change Triangle and the concepts used.
- Exploring if and how the Change Triangle is used in implementation, monitoring and further strategic planning of present and future projects

3 Observations on the Change Triangle

Northern Sector Action on Awareness Centre (NORSAAC)

Background

NORSAAC is an organization that works primarily with Women’s right and governance and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights. Currently NORSAAC together with AXIS is implementing the project “Innovative Sexual Education Project” (ISEP) funded by the project

fund. The ISEP project is a follow-up on an earlier project “Community Base Sexual Education Project” (CBSEP) also funded by the Project Fund.

The Change Triangle

NORSAAC is a young organization with young and apparently very competent staff members, who all seemed highly motivated in relation to their work and eager to learn new things. All staff from director to administrative assistant participated in a joint 3 hour workshop concerning the Change Triangle.

The Change triangle and its different aspects were introduced, and NORSAAC analyzed their current project ISEP funded by the Project Fund. The strategy of the project is to develop context sensitive tools for sexuality education based on a thorough regional research (questionnaire) on young peoples attitude, knowledge and behavior towards sexuality. Apparently the structure of the ISEP project seemed to fall perfectly within the logic of the Change Triangle. The research – and later on the tools – served as strategic services, the capacity building of NORSAAC has an objective of its own, and advocacy is covered with an objective of disseminating the tools to a wider range of schools and communities. However, going slowly through the different components, analyzing the relations back and forth, revealed certain links, that could be strengthened or improved. A central discussion focused on the way all NORSAAC activities continuously were increasing their organizational capacity besides the more formal capacity building activities. Furthermore the analysis of the Change Triangle drew attention to two specific issues:

1) The link from advocacy to strategic services seemed to be a bit to vague. The project has goals for advocacy (40 schools and 20 communities are using the tools)l. However the activities chosen to reach this objective (press releases and press conferences) were not specific enough in order to claim a strong relation between advocacy implemented, and the possibility of better services for the communities.

2) NORSAAC’s activities at community level in the beginning of the project took the form of filling in questionnaires, providing the organization with a lot of information, but not really strengthening their *legitimacy* towards the communities. NORSAAC considered using the Change Triangle for another comprehensive analysis compiling all activities implemented by the organization in order to discuss their overall legitimacy towards the communities both before, during and after implementation of this and other projects.

NORSAAC was very positive about the use of the Change Triangle and emphasized how, it has given them another perspective of the way they were working, and a tool to focus on areas, that might be improved.

Institute of Cultural affairs Ghana (ICA)

Background

Institute of Cultural Affairs Ghana is an awareness creating organisation, who sees their primary ability in community mobilization and sensitization.

ICA has together with FØB implemented the project “Sustainable Construction in Ghana “, which officially ended 28th of February 2011. The project focused on introducing and training local villagers in using a clay brick machine, which they could use for building cheap, durable and sustainable houses.

The Change Triangle

At the debriefing with ICA, the Change Triangle was used to illustrate the strong presence of strategic service activities (the clay brick machine and training local villagers as well as local technical school teachers in its use), the relatively weak components of strengthening organizational capacity (a few workshops with elder committees in the beginning of the project, no activities targeting ICA), and the non-existing link to advocacy activities (although not required for a small project like this). The Change Triangle illustrated the point of how a further strategic development of the project could strengthen the diffusion of the machine and its use beyond the two villages and in this way actually make the service of the machine *strategic* and not just a limited service delivery. The advocacy component could take many forms (ex. Convincing the district authorities to make use of the clay bricks for municipal buildings, networking with other technical schools or maybe even linking with a B2B project with the object of producing the machine in Ghana).

The important point in using the Change Triangle wasn't to give ideas on *how* to diffuse the machine, but to focus on the importance of making a strategic and focused plan for the further use and dissemination of the experiences gained with the machine in this project. The use of the Change Triangle showed that quite clearly.

However, introducing the Change Triangle at a limited debriefing session, didn't leave much room for reflection on ICA's behalf. The output was more in the form of suggestions for future strategic direction based on a Change Triangle analysis undertaken by the PATC consultant (Maria).

Friends of the Earth Ghana (FOE)

Background

Friends of the Earth Ghana is an environmental NGO working with conservation, preservation, and rational use of Ghana natural resources.

FOE together with NOAH (Friends of the Earth Denmark) is currently implementing the project “Towards sustainable forest management and utilization through community-based actions” (The CBA project). The project was planned to end 1st of March 2011 but has got a no-cost extension of 7 months.

TheChangeTriangle

The current project funded by the project fund is designed very much in link with the principles of the Change Triangle with clear linkages between training and awareness raising at community level (strategic services), strengthening FOE's organizational capacity (capacity building), and efforts to influence the current legislation on forest management (advocacy). However, in practice the project didn't work out very well due to a very low level of implemented activities.

Since the primary challenge for the project was another than the actual project design, in this case it didn't seem useful to introduce the Change Triangle at a debriefing session. If time had allowed, it would have been interesting though, to see whether FOE would have benefitted from the same thorough analytical process, which NORSAAC went through and appreciated.

4 Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

None of the organizations visited were currently using a model like the Change Triangle in their analytical work (for FOE, this is an unconfirmed assumption). With the always present risk of deducting general conclusions from a few specific experiences, the Change Triangle has proved to be a useful tool in various ways.

NORSAAC had apparently used the "old" triangle (service delivery – capacity building – advocacy), when planning the ISEP project with Axis, but hadn't used it since the initial planning phase. The workshop with the revised triangle revealed details, they hadn't been aware of before, and as a consequence, NORSAAC considered using the Triangle as a more general analytical tool in their ongoing work.

A conclusion from this must be that the Change Triangle not only serves to draw attention to the importance of linking the three "corners" but also serves to deepen the understanding, pointing out new strategic direction even when the overall design is already in place. In this way even organizations, whose work apparently is in line with the logic of the Change Triangle, seem to be able to benefit from using the Change Triangle as an analytical tool.

Besides this, the Change Triangle still serves as an overall graphic introduction to the importance of linking Strategic Services, Capacity Building and Advocacy for organizations, who haven't been introduced to this concept before. However, in order to fully understand this approach, it was my experience with ICA that more time was needed for ICA themselves to work with the Triangle. An overall introduction at a debriefing session didn't make a lot of difference to the organization.

Recommendations for PATC consultants

- Continue urging Danish as well as local partners to use the Change Triangle in planning, implementing and monitoring of projects
- If possible allow time for analysis of specific projects instead of just discussing the Change Triangle at a theoretical level
- Consider using the Change Triangle even in situations, where it seems the project design is more or less in accordance with the principles of the Triangle.

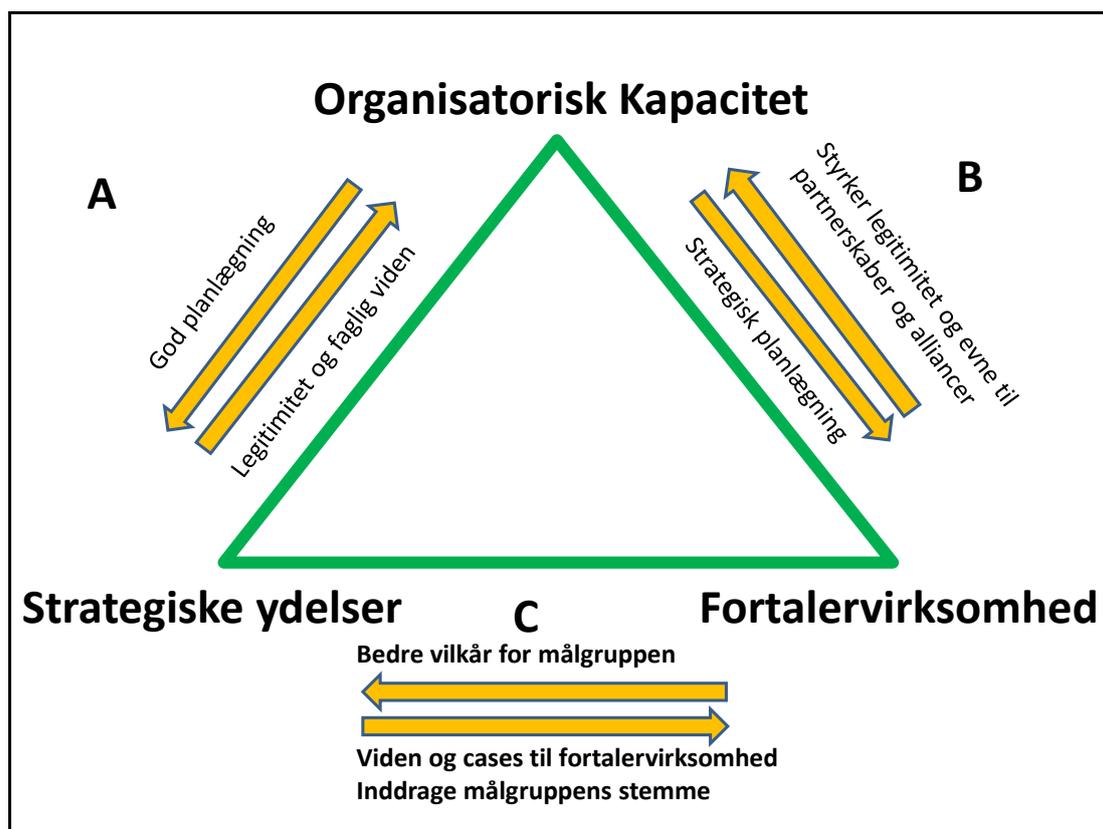
Before departure from Ghana, debriefing meetings were held with all three organizations. Meetings with the Danish organizations will be held at the end of March.

For other observations regarding ICA and FOE see separate report from monitoring visit.

Annex 1 – The Change Triangle (will be available in English April 2011)

Udviklingstrekanten illustrerer relationen mellem Strategiske ydelser, Organisatorisk kapacitet og Fortalervirksomhed:

- A) Strategiske ydelser kan give en organisation legitimitet og styrket faglig viden i forhold til målgruppen, medlemmerne og det faglige område, der arbejdes med. Samtidig vil god organisatorisk kapacitet styrke planlægningen og kvaliteten af de strategiske ydelser.
- B) God organisatorisk kapacitet vil også være grundlag for god strategisk planlægning af fortalervirksomhedsaktiviteter. Vellykket fortalervirksomhed vil igen styrke organisationen yderligere til at udvide strategier, evt. i form af nye alliancer og netværk.
- C) Effektiv fortalervirksomhed kan føre til, at beslutningstagere forbedrer forhold for målgruppen. Samtidig vil de strategiske ydelser, projektet indeholder, bidrage med viden og cases til arbejdet med fortalervirksomhed.



Annex 2 – People met and itinerary

For FOEB AND ICA visits 28.02-09.03 se separate report.

DAY & DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	PURPOSE and focus of discussions	PERSONS MET
10/03/2011 THURSDAY	7:00am	Pick up from airport		Rauf (Driver),
	8:54am	Introduction with Director	To have an insight of the visit	Alhassan M. Awal (director) Hafsah Sey Sumani (Program Coordinator)
	9:00am	Formal meeting with NORSAAC staff	Introduction to NORSAAC's projects and activities and current situation on ISEP.	All staff present, XX persons
	11:00am	Discussion on presentation of NORSAAC activities.	Discussion on advocacy strategies, interaction with other organisations and other aspects of NORSAAC's work	All staff
	12:00-1:00pm	Introduction and discussion of The Change Triangle	Presentation from Maria	All staff
	1:00	Lunch break		
	2:00-4:00pm	The Change Triangle continued	Thorough analysis of the ISEP project based on The Change Triangle	All staff
	4:00 – 5:00 pm	Monitoring session	Filling out the monitoring form	Awal (director) and Mohammed Muaweya (Finance and admin officer)

11/03/2011 FRIDAY	10:00am	Visit to semi urban community	To observe a sexuality education session with a CBO facilitated by a youth leader	Appr. 30 people, some young, but most middleaged.
	12:00	Visit to Tamale Islamic secondary School	To observe school session on sexuality education	Mixed male/female class, appr. 50 students aged 15-17
	1:30 pm	LUNCH		
	2:30 pm	Visit to Gbullung community	To meet with a youth group telling about their experiences with sexuality education sessions.	A group of 20 youth, mixed male/female and a youth leader
	4:00-5:00 pm	Debriefing	To discuss findings, successes and challenges	All staff

Annex 3 – Monitoring Format NORSAAC

1. Overview

Project title:	<i>Innovative Sexcual Education Project</i>
Danish partner:	<i>AXIS</i>
Local partner(s)	<i>NORSAAC</i>
J.no. and grant type:	09-775-SP-dec
Total budget:	2.408.852
Project period:	<i>01.05.2010 – 01.11.2012</i>
Date for visit:	<i>9th-10th of March 2011</i>
PATC consultant(s):	<i>Maria Molde</i>

1 Project status

Activities: All activities implemented on time so far, except for a half yearly internal review meeting at NORSAAC

Project strategy: The Project strategy hasn't been revised so far, but will be analyzed and maybe revised in the near future as a result of partly the workshop carried out using the Change Triangle, partly due to the two directors visiting Axis in the end of March 2011.

Objectives:

Objective 1: By 01.12.2012 new knowledge on young people's attitudes and sexual behaviour in Ghana has been uncovered and this knowledge forms part of the public debate on SRHR including HIV/Aids.

The data of a research carried out is currently being analysed by Bjarne Rasmussen, Axis' Danish consultant, and is expected to be completed by June 2011 and published in January 2012.

Objective 2: By 01.12.2012 new participatory, dialogue-based methods have been developed, validated and implemented in 40 schools as well as youth groups in 20 communities in 4 districts in Northern Region, Ghana and the methods have gained support from local and regional authorities.

The development of new participatory, dialogue-based methods for sexual education will take point of departure in the findings of the research. The next step which is activating and involving teachers and youth leaders from the prior project will be taken in March.

Objective 3: By 01.12.2012 NORSAAC has been strengthened and has improved its project management, collaboration with partners, logistics, project implementation and strategies regarding advocacy, networking and community mobilisation.

NORSAAC has elaborated and implemented coordination with all its main donors including formats for administration and reporting. NORSAAC has become more mobile. The vehicle bought has helped a lot in monitoring and implementation of activities. The finance officer now uses soft ware known as quick books. Relevant staff know manages SPSS and uses SPSS in their reports

Unintended outcomes (positive or negative): None so far

Sustainability: NORSAAC has a strong relationship with the district health authorities, hereby making the objective of using the tool in a wider range of schools and youth groups seem realistic.

2 Partnership

Type of relationship: Project partnership with Axis since 2008

Partner reflections on collaboration with Danish partner: NORSAAC highly appreciates its partnership with Axis, highlighting them as different from other partners who mostly act as donors. According to NORSAAC there has been no serious conflicts between the partners so far. The only area for improvement mentioned was the use of interns, which hadn't been of great advantage to NORSAAC so far. The interns have mostly been students coming to learn without having that much to contribute with on their own. However NORSAAC has discussed this issue with Axis, and the next intern will be recruited on the basis of some specific IT skills needed to support the organisations website

Partner reflections on 'added value' of Danish partner: Axis has contributed with many organizational issues, ideas for strengthening NORSAAC in different ways, as well as technical expertise on the specific subject of innovative materials for sexual education.

3 Accountability

Short visits (less than 2 days):

Project document available: Yes

MoU or partnership agreement: Yes

Reporting system and practice:
Wellfunctioning

Procedure for local auditing: Audited annual accounts

Separate account for Danida funds: Yes

Longer visits (2+ days) will also include:

Overall assessment of MANGO

Specific themes from MANGO

4 Summary of PATC observations

NORSAAC seems as an organisation, who is competent, engaged and eager to improve the professional capabilities of the staff. Besides their different projects on women's rights and

governance and Sexual and reproductive health and rights, they have initiated a network of 32 local ngo's. The network coordinates different local and regional initiatives such as a recent campaign monitoring the election of women into the district assemblies.

Recommendations discussed at debriefing.

- 1) Continue to strengthen their skills and strategies within advocacy, considering whether the current activities implemented are specific enough, and targeting the right decision makers
- 2) Analysing NORSAAC's work as a whole, focussing on the organisations legitimacy towards the schools and communities, where they are working
- 3) Formalising the possibilities for NORSAAC staff to seek advice from professional health practitioners, when confronted with questions related to sexuality, they can't answer.

Furthermore NORSAAC received a few copies of the MANGO self assessment tool to use in one of their coming staff meetings.

5 Persons met

ALhassan M. Awal (Director)

Hafsah Sey Sumani (Programme Coordinator)

Mohammed Muaweya (Finance and administrative Officer)

Bala Mariatu Kibitiyya (Programme Officer)

Ben Hussein Rashida (Monitoring and Evaluation officer)

Other programme-, field- and administrative staff

Annex 4



Project Advice and Training Centre (PATC)

- Danish Platform for popular development co-operation

ToR for learning visit on “Change Triangle” to Ghana for Maria Molde

1. Background

The Project Advice and Training Centre (PATC) has as part of its ongoing method development published a position paper on “The Change Triangle” focusing on the relationships between strategic services, capacity development and advocacy in the planning, implementation and monitoring of development projects.

PATC has during recent years strived at strengthening south partner input to methodology development processes. The present learning visit on “The Change Triangle” will in line with the PATC effort analyse selected local experiences in Ghana on how to make use of “The Change Triangle”.

The learning visit will be carried out jointly with a monitoring visit to Ghana by Maria Molde and Nina Lauritzen.

The monitoring visit (separate TOR’s) will focus on two organisations (FØB/ICA and NOAH/FOE), whereas this learning visit will focus on AXIS/NORSAAC. However reflections from the ICA and FOE monitoring visits will be involved in the learning objective to the extent possible.

The learning visit to NORSAAC is not part of PACT monitoring or evaluation of individual projects or partners. However, a small assessment form will be filled during the visit.

2. Objective

The objective of the learning visit is to **explore the strategic use of the Change Triangle in planning, implementation and monitoring of ongoing projects funded by the Project Fund from the local partner(s) perspective.**

3. Thematic issues for the visit

More specifically the objective for the trip will be approached through:

- Exploring if and how the Change Triangle has been used in the planning of ongoing projects – especially “Innovative Sexual Education Project” (NORSAAC/AXIS)
- Exploring the local partners appreciation of the Change Triangle and the concepts used.
- Explore if and how the Change Triangle is used in implementation, monitoring and further strategic planning of present and future projects

The intent is to have a mutual learning process together with the local partner NORSAAC, where both PATC and NORSAAC, will have benefitted from the process afterwards.

4. Project portfolio

The following project will be visited:

- “Innovate Sexual Education” , NORSAAC (AXIS)

To the extent possible reflections from the following project(monitoring)visits will be incorporated:

- “Towards Sustainable forest management and utilization through community-base actions”, FOE (NOAH)
- “Developing of the concept: Sustainable construction in Ghana), ICA (FØB)

5. Plan of work

The visit will be based on the following main activities:

Prior to departure:

- Desk study of available project documentation.
- Interview with Danish partner organisation(s)

In Ghana:

- Partner visit with focus on discussing the main elements in the Triangle in relation to the above mentioned project(s)
- Field visit with focus on exploring the actual use of the triangle in the implementation of activities
- Debriefing with Ghanaian partner on major observations

Above will be further developed based on discussions with Danish partner(s).

Upon return:

- Finalisation of report.
- Debriefing meeting(s) with Danish partner(s)

6. Travel schedule

See terms for joint monitoring visit with Nina Lauritzen for travel schedule 28.02.11-09.03.11

DAY & DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	PURPOSE	RESPONSIBILITY
10/03/2011 THURSDAY	8:00am	Pick up from airport		Rauf (Driver)
	8:54am	Introduction with Director	To have an insight with of the visit	Hafsah
	9:00am	Open interaction with staff in their offices		Hafsah
	9:20am	Formal meeting with NORSAAC staff	Introduction to NORSAAC's projects and activities and current situation on ISEP.	ISEP TEAM and Director
	11:00am	Discussion on presentation of NORSAAC activities.	For clarifications if any.	All
	12:30-	LUNCH BREAK		All
Afternoon session	1:35 pm	Change triangle	Introduction and discussion of "the change triangle".	Maria from Denmark
	3:00-5:00pm	Small monitoring session		Maria from Denmark
11/03/2011	10:00am	Visit to Gbullung community	To observe a youth group session on sexuality education.	Maria from NORSAAC
Afternoon	2:00pm	Visit to Moglaa Junior High School	To observe school session on sexuality education	Maria from NORSAAC
	3:30pm-5.00pm	Debriefing	To discuss gaps and successes	Hafsah

7. Outputs and Dissemination

The output will be:

- Travel report, focusing on overall observations, lessons learned and potential recommendations for change in practice of PACT and PACT members in relation to use of the Change Triangle.

The findings will be disseminated:

- To the involved organisations through debriefing meetings
- Internally in PATC through a presentation to colleagues
- Externally to members by inclusion of general lessons learned in future courses

8. Budget (in Danish Kroner)

Aeroplane Billund Accra retur	6.700
Aeroplane Accra-Tamale retur	2.500
Local transport	1.000
Visa	500
Malarone	650
Accomodation	5.000
Per Diem	6.370
Misc.	1.000
Total	23.720

9. Contact details

During the visit the consultant can be contacted on these details:

NORSAAC	AREWA Sunshine Hotel
P.O box 366 E/R	65 Rice City Residential Layout
GUMANI Main Road – Tamale N/R	Off Gumani Road
NORSAAC@yahoo.com	Tamale, Ghana
Tel: 233 243415938 or 233 244818936	Tel: 233 07123991