

## Personal reflection 2010: Who needs Capacity Development?

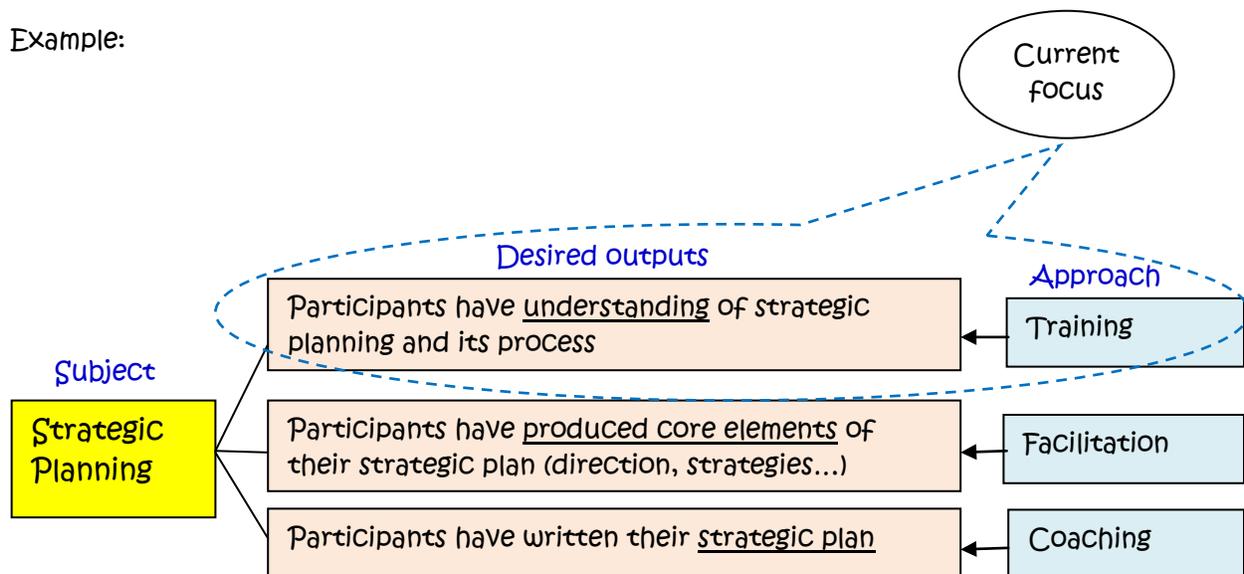
This is a personal reflection from Mr. Leng Chhay and his team drawing from working experiences in 2010 with many people from different organizations. It is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of his life as freelance consultant working to support learning and Capacity development in Cambodia.



When the question “who needs capacity development?” is asked, the obvious answer is “those people and organizations who are undertaking development work to support the poor become less poor”. This answer underlies an assumption that Capacity developers or Capacity development facilitators already have sufficient Capacity to develop the Capacity of development workers. My experience confirmed that there are more focus on the provision of Capacity development interventions to individuals and organizations to implement projects and programs, but fewer attentions were made to develop Capacity of Capacity developers, and indeed it determines the level of effectiveness of Capacity development. A concrete example: in order to develop individual and organizational capacity of 193 district, municipality and Khan Administrations, 193 National Program Advisors were recruited to place in each entity with Capacity development roles. Those advisors require enormous support for their Capacity development from higher levels or from other sources, i.e. their Capacity needs to be developed to be effective Capacity development facilitators.

I was often told by other people that “training is Capacity development”. So, most interventions were designed in a training and information dissemination mode. The interventions (training) were provided as a supplier-driven approach. This perception and practice represent a lack of understanding and practice of “holistic” Capacity development approaches, and this will limit the outcomes of the Capacity development process. In fact, effective learning facilitators need to be able to play different roles such as a skillful analyzer, diagnostician, evaluator, participatory trainer, confident facilitator, who can think on their feet; professional coach, mentor, advisor; Capable monitor/evaluator etc. including when to wear a certain hat. They need to be confident in using different Capacity development approaches to respond to different circumstances and needs. Capacity development should be supported in a demand-driven manner and normally the desired Capacity development outputs drive the approach or tool.

Example:



Many cases, I heard that advisors were recruited, and after they have been working for a number of years, their practical experiences in doing the job increased significantly, but the people that they supposed to help doing the job, still cannot do the job properly leading to an endless advisory needs. What we have learned is: a person who is very capable in doing a specific job is not necessarily means that s/he is good at facilitating others to learn doing good job. Often it is too easy to do the job rather than helping other to have capacity to do the job.



Measuring capacity development results is still a challenge for capacity development facilitators. The question is where will be the focus of measurement. The more people focus on results (outputs/services to poor target beneficiaries to improve their lives), the less focus on capacity and learning issues that help people to better perform (performance leads to results, but they are not the same).

### The highlights of the year

I have been working on a consultancy basis for several months with NCDD to support the development of capacity development framework and organizational development manual, including raising awareness of key people on organizational development aspect. I have learned different new things such as organic law and other related regulation, democratic development at sub-national administration (former decentralization and deconcentration), National plan for sub-national democratic development (NP-NSDD), and many other related documents. I also

explored to world-wide capacity development and organizational development resources to draw useful parts for application. On other occasion, I had the opportunity to work with InWEnt to provide two training courses to alumni members in Cambodia, and to co-chair the regional conference in Hanoi with 250 participants from 10 countries. A human right organization remains an important client and requested different pieces of work every year. I also have the opportunity to work with some Christian-based organizations to support their organizational development.



Throughout the year, I have worked with 640 people, sponsored by 15 (host) organizations. All the work is capacity development related. The total consultancy days are 208 with some days extended to January 2011 as the contract was not completed in December. The vast majority of the interventions are: consultancy 67%, training 24%, facilitation 7% and coaching 2%.



For my self-development, I was invited by DAAD Germany, my ex-scholarship sponsor, to attend a two-week training course on proposal writing for international research projects, conducted in Hanoi (part I) and in Ho Chi Minh City (part II). I also attend other network and board meeting, plus a number of informal contacts for learning/networking purposes.

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March 2011

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