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# Appreciative Approach to Capacity Building: The Impact of Practice

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**INTRAC**  
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## Introduction

This Praxis Note explores the capacity-building process that took place between Concern Worldwide Haiti and a local Haitian organisation, AAPLAG. It argues that the power of capacity building can easily be undermined by a lack of understanding of the difference between ‘facilitating’ and ‘doing’. In contrast, an appreciative and consistent approach with high levels of facilitation skills can contribute substantially to the sustainability of local organisations.

## Civil Society in Haiti

At one time the most prosperous corner of the French colonial empire, and later the world’s first black-led republic, Haiti’s historical pride has been dented by decades of poverty, environmental degradation, violence and political instability, which have left it the poorest country in the Americas. A mountainous country with a tropical climate, rich history and culture made it a popular tourist spot during the 1980s. It now ranks 153 on the UNDP Human Development Index. Seventy per cent of 8 million people live in poverty; the life expectancy is 53 years.

Although the roots of civil action in Haiti extend back to the slave revolution in the early 1800s, more recent civil society culture has been characterised by religious missionary groups which, alongside their church activities, provide much needed social services. In the 1980s, church-based peasant organisations played a major role in service delivery. Today, however, it is relatively weak — partly as a result of poor collaboration and partly because of the sheer unwillingness or avoidance by the government who have not considered them viable partners in development. Despite this, grassroots and peasants’ organisations are currently larger in number and arguably more important in terms of potential than ever before. Since their early days they have developed with clear political agendas and, through empowerment and institutional strengthening, have a potential role to play as intermediary NGOs.

In terms of the NGO sector, there are slightly over 200 officially recognised organisations, which are largely religious and aid orientated. Concern Worldwide began to work in Haiti with a relief operation following Hurricane Gordon in 1994. This work grew into a long-term development programme in various sectors, including food security, education,

health, HIV/AIDS, microfinance and emergency response and preparedness. One of the areas Concern works in is the island Ile de La Gonâve, one of the remotest and most marginalised rural areas of Haiti.

## A Snapshot of Ile de La Gonâve

Despite the fact that it is surrounded by water, the 750km<sup>2</sup> island of La Gonâve is a dry place. There is little or no infrastructure or services for the island's population. People survive on subsistence farming through harvests, but these are highly unreliable due to inconsistent rainfall and poor soil fertility. The production of charcoal is another income generator, but reckless felling of trees has led to mass deforestation in the area. Other economic activities are traditional fishing and petty trade.

Because of inaccessibility there has been little development activity in the area from NGOs or the government. Concern initiated its work on the island in 1996 with a Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) exercise. The institutional exercise of PLA identified that besides Christian Services (a Protestant Church-based local organisation) and a number of small groups of 20 to 30 people (mainly peasants and fishermen groups), there were no other national or international NGOs in La Gonâve.

Ongoing political crisis, passive attitude from the central government, and lack of clarity on their mission and role has seriously hampered local government functioning in La Gonâve. The mandate of municipal officials expired in 2004 without a new election to fill the posts. Local government shows extremely limited capacity to undertake development initiatives, with only a basic understanding

of their role and few resources. The wider political impasse that has brought all governance and financial aid to a stand-still for the last number of years is clearly reflected in the authorities' lack of motivation and enthusiasm to work for the local communities.

## Concern Worldwide Haiti: Capacity Building of Actors in Local Development

Capacity building of local development actors was the central theme of the first strategic plan (1997–2002) of Concern Worldwide. In line with this strategy and following the findings of the institutional analysis of PLA, the programme design team of Concern Haiti used the following framework<sup>1</sup> in designing the programme for La Gonâve in early 1997:

- **Catalytic approach.** The focus was placed on supporting local capacities to identify and act to solve the critical needs of the community, not on accomplishing tasks driven from outside. Therefore, Concern Haiti aimed to play a facilitative rather than operational role. The responsibility for implementation as well as maintenance stayed with local actors, in order to encourage more self-reliance and sustainability.
- **Pump-priming assistance.** Concern Haiti recognised that external assistance could have no effects or even negative impact, rather than the intended positive results. For developments to occur there must be *positive-sum dynamics* (net gains, with more gains than losses), where net benefits result from investment, training and other activities. The

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<sup>1</sup> Designed by Uphoff, N. (1994).

metaphor that is most vivid in this regard is that of ‘pump-priming’, where one pours a little water into the top of a handpump, to moisten the materials in the valve and help create the vacuum and suction which will draw water from underground supplies. Often there may be ample supplies in the ground, but to get them lifted to the surface where they can be useful, some investment is needed, and the expectation is that a long-lasting flow can be established.

- **Capacity building of local organisations:** To strengthen local organisations, Concern Haiti decided to focus on decision-making roles and processes, resource mobilisation and management, communication and coordination, and conflict resolution. It was expected that with the effective performance of these functions local organisations will build up acceptance, loyalty and commitment which will enable them to function even more effectively, thereby further enhancing their institutional status.
- **Capacity for what?** While emphasizing the importance of local-level capacity building, Concern did not divorce it from substantive tasks. Just as capacity building is best pursued in conjunction with accomplishing specific tasks, it is something to be most appropriately undertaken as part of the development process, rather than as a precursor. Indeed, the productivity of institutional capacity, and hence its sustainability, hinges very much on the benefits it can produce through accomplishing certain tasks, so capacity should be thought of in terms of capacity *for what* . . . rather than just capacity for its own sake.

In line with the above framework, Concern Haiti decided to initiate its development activities in Lower Gonâve, the remotest part of La Gonâve, by working with and through AAPLAG, as it was the only registered local organisation in the area.

## The Story of AAPLAG

AAPLAG is a Creole acronym — Asosyasyon Animate Ak Peyizan Lagonav — that in English means the Association of Community Organisers and Peasants of La Gonâve.

### The birth of a local actor

AAPLAG was born as a peasants association in 1984, with only 11 members, and a simple committee of president, secretary and treasurer running the organisation.

Christian Services supported AAPLAG in securing funding for a number of micro-projects from different donors. Members received a number of trainings from these international organisations on management, accounting, citizen laws, and cooperation. AAPLAG implemented a number of micro-projects on agriculture protection, environmental protection, development of traditional medicines, and community training on citizen laws. Different members of AAPLAG volunteered to coordinate different projects.

AAPLAG started losing its dynamism in the early 1990s with the departure of their key contact person in Christian Services. It fell almost static or functionless by the mid-1990s.

## A new start

The programme design team of Concern Haiti set up a programme office in La Gonâve and started developing a programme management team of multi-disciplinary staff in early 1997. The design team also facilitated a process to mobilise the community by conducting a number of sectoral meetings in Lower Gonâve, which were attended by representatives for agriculture, water, health, education and fishermen. AAPLAG members participated in this community mobilisation process. Special meetings were also organised with women and religious groups. The discussions in these meetings concentrated mainly on their perceptions of local problems and what they could do to solve these problems. The discussion provided alarming indications on the state of drinking water supplies, food security and communication for the island's inhabitants. In the absence of any formal banking services, people were forced to rely on local moneylenders who charged between 20 per cent and 50 per cent monthly interest. At the end of each meeting, each sector identified a number of representatives to attend development training courses in Port-au-Prince. They also received orientation on the role of local government in the area.

After mobilising the community, the design team began to build a partnership with AAPLAG. This began by providing training to its members on project management, with a special focus on the importance of organisational capacity building for successful implementation of micro-projects. Concern and AAPLAG jointly developed a number of micro-projects based on the priorities of the community. At this stage, the design team handed over the responsibility of the programme to the management team for

implementation. By putting 'Capacity Building' as a central theme, the programme management team facilitated a process of implementing a number of development activities in Lower Gonâve by working with and through AAPLAG, which included water, food security, infrastructure, microfinance, and capacity building of local organisations. The impact of these development interventions from 1998 to early 2003 is visible in a number of improvements:

- Protection of springs, construction of new community cisterns and rehabilitation of existing cisterns, ensuring direct access to safe water and saving women's time.
- Establishment of a seed bank and an agricultural tools bank.
- Development of village bank groups, providing loans for small business activities, particularly for women.
- Improvement of extremely steep and rocky pathway, helping communities access water and markets more easily.
- Comprehensive training programme for the community and AAPLAG, including social and environmental awareness raising, farm management, improved farming techniques, preparation and storage of seeds and composting, management and protection of water sources, water treatment and hygiene, and accounts management.
- Construction of school latrines, which contributed to improved hygiene and higher enrolment and attendance rate for girls.
- Increase in number of members of AAPLAG members to 50, including

15 women. Training for members helped them in securing employment.

### **Paradise lost!**

All the micro-projects had the underlying intention of building the capacity of AAPLAG as well as the community, by ensuring their participation in all stages of planning and implementing activities. It was felt then this would lead to improved sustainability. This was a relatively new approach for Concern in Haiti during that period of time, and had not been widely practised by other organisations in Haiti. There were some indications that this approach was leading to greater community ownership of activities. It was also expected that it could provide the basis for further and improved community activities in the area in the longer term.

Concern supported AAPLAG to run a micro-credit project for women. The key activity of this project was to give interest free loans to poor women. Concern employed three members of the Executive Committee of AAPLAG as the staff of the micro-credit project and facilitated the formation of a Credit Committee with these staff, to oversee the micro-credit activity. In consultation with the Credit Committee, Concern also recruited 13 members as field staff for AAPLAG to run the project. Concern provided different forms of trainings to the field staff, and paid salaries and other administrative costs directly to AAPLAG.

In the late 1990s, Concern Worldwide launched its microfinance policy, which emphasised the financial sustainability of all microfinance projects in its country programmes. With the aim of achieving sustainability in the existing micro-credit project, Concern Haiti decided to redesign it. To conform to this direction, the

programme management team developed a new three-year micro-credit project. As part of this, a process was facilitated for AAPLAG to borrow money from a national-level microfinance institution, Fonkoge. As per the agreement, AAPLAG took 2.2% interest from the beneficiary on loan money. Out of this interest rate, AAPLAG paid 1.75% interest rate to Fonkoge and used 0.45% interest to cover their administrative costs. Concern took the risk of this loan. When AAPLAG failed to cover administrative costs from the loan, Concern provided financial assistance. This project was evaluated in early 2003 and the evaluator concluded that the programme team failed to develop the organisational capacity of AAPLAG because of lack of understanding of partnership and capacity-building processes. The evaluator drew conclusions from the following key observations:

- Though capacity building of AAPLAG should be linked with the implementation of micro-projects, the Concern team lost track of the process by placing too much importance on successful completion of the micro-projects without looking at capacity building of the organisation.
- Recruitment of the members of the Executive Committee as micro-credit project staff was harshly criticised by the evaluator. It was argued that this recruitment process clearly demonstrated that the programme team did not have a minimum understanding of the capacity-building process of local organisations.
- Members of the executive committee were not transparent in their actions to AAPLAG members or to the community. They never

revealed that they received a monthly salary from Concern for implementing the project.

Based on these critical observations, the evaluator strongly argued that the micro-credit project could not become financially sustainable and so recommended Concern stop working with AAPLAG. Concern Haiti immediately separated the relationship between AAPLAG and Fonkoge and instead assisted Fonkoge in setting up its own branch in La Gonâve, believing that Fonkoge could run a financially sustainable microfinance programme in the area. It is worth mentioning here that AAPLAG's failure in achieving financial sustainability in the micro-credit project did not mean that the project failed to create positive impact at the community level, as it substantially contributed to enhancing the economic mobility of poor women in the community.

### **Key learning**

To explore this failure of the capacity-building process, the programme design team of Concern Haiti conducted a review, looking both at AAPLAG and the programme management team.

The review found that as part of a service-providing organisation involved in partnership and capacity building by transferring resources and technology, the Concern programme management team were accustomed to hierarchical relationships. The programme team felt comfortable working with AAPLAG as beneficiaries, because they were confident in their role as 'experts'. Because of this mindset, the presence of Concern in the area seriously undermined the role of AAPLAG in the community. Instead of facilitating the implementation of micro-projects through AAPLAG, in most cases

the sectoral experts of the programme team led the micro-projects with the passive participation of AAPLAG. The review strongly argued that the sectoral specialists did not have any understanding of adopting an organisational capacity-building approach when implementing micro-projects. As a result, though the team successfully implemented most of the projects, they failed to build the capacity of AAPLAG to become more capable. A comprehensive organisational capacity-building support to AAPLAG was completely missing in the programme, which was supposed to be the central theme of the programme.

## **An Appreciative Approach<sup>2</sup> to Capacity Assessment**

Based on the findings of the review, the design team arranged an open discussion on the capacity of AAPLAG to achieve its vision. All the members of AAPLAG participated. It emerged that members were unhappy and they made recommendations for structural change in the organisation. Following this discussion, a comprehensive capacity assessment of AAPLAG was conducted in mid-2003. Concern Haiti hired a Port-au-Prince-based organisation to carry out the capacity assessment in an appreciative way (Cooperrider and Whitney 1999).

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<sup>2</sup> Appreciative Inquiry is an approach that selectively seeks to locate, highlight and illuminate the dynamic forces within an organisation. The approach has four phases and is usually referred to as the 4D Model: Discovery, Dream, Design, and Deliver. The discovery phase identifies what gives the organisation life. The dream phase encourages members of the organisation to visualise what a positive future might look like. The design phase looks into designing a process by determining specific short- and long-term targets towards achieving the dream. The delivery phase covers the launching and monitoring of capacity-building action plans.

The key factors considered in selecting the appreciative approach were:

- (1) The need to encompass a wide range of participation of different stakeholders including AAPLAG and the community.
- (2) The need to be sensitive and adaptive to the culture and values of AAPLAG.
- (3) The need to create a learning and sharing environment for the members of AAPLAG.

### **Findings of Capacity Assessment**

The key findings from the capacity assessment were as follows:

- Since Concern did not involve AAPLAG in the project cycle management, AAPLAG as an organisation did not understand the project administration system. AAPLAG was not involved in writing or contributing to project proposals. Concern recruited AAPLAG staff in consultation with the members of AAPLAG's Executive Committee. However, AAPLAG as an organisation did not participate in its staff recruitment process, resulting in a lack of transparency in the recruitment process to the general members.
- Concern focused only on awareness raising and technical capacity-building issues, such as giving training on farm management, health and hygiene. However, they did not look further at organisational issues, including leadership, power structure, policies and procedures.
- The process facilitated by Concern for separating AAPLAG from Fonkoge was not pleasant. Concern promoted

Fonkoge without discussion with AAPLAG. With the support from Concern, Fonkoge started disbursing credit in the AAPLAG working area and even asked AAPLAG to sell their clients to them. When AAPLAG declined, Fonkonge asked for repayment of their loan (which was supported by Concern).

- AAPLAG failed to financially manage the micro-credit project properly because of the lack of capacity in the accounts management system. This was due to Concern staff failing to build the capacity of AAPLAG in this area.
- There was no second line leadership in AAPLAG. The management structure formed at the birth of the organisation continued in place with no change in any leadership position. Furthermore, AAPLAG did not have a clear, transparent reporting system. Reports by the Executive and Credit Committees were never shown to other members of the organisation.
- Roles and responsibilities at AAPLAG were blurred. Some members of the Executive Committee could not play their due governing role as they were also employed as micro-credit specialists on the Credit Committee. These members did not accept any advice from the other members of AAPLAG. In addition, when any problems arose during implementation of the project, the members had no opportunity to raise concerns with staff involved as they were the same personnel who were simultaneously governing the organisation.



## Values and power

The use of an appreciative approach allowed less tangible issues and concerns to be surfaced, such as hope, trust, unity, identity and ownership. This approach enabled members to acknowledge and appreciate the abilities and views of each other, which helped to generate increased self-esteem and ownership within their organisation. As a result, AAPLAG members decided to change their leadership and organisational structure and to develop a new constitution for the organisation in a very constructive way.

Initially, the leaders felt uncomfortable with the decision of change in the leadership positions. However, the appreciative approach opened up their minds to the opportunity for organisational growth that would accrue from the change process. Change in organisational structure as well as in the leadership positions contributed to developing a transparent and accountable system for all the actions of the members of the Executive Committee.

In contrast, a number of Concern programme management staff resisted the change management process all the way. They were in favour of concentrating efforts in implementing micro-projects instead of facilitating a process of organisational change. They were proud about their past achievements in the successful implementation of micro-projects. They did not believe that it was possible to bring any organisational change to AAPLAG. Despite a number of efforts by the senior management team of Concern Haiti to raise awareness of the staff, they failed to see the benefit of an organisational capacity-building approach. In this context, Concern Haiti had to change some staff members.

## Outcomes of capacity-building process

After having received inputs on organisational capacity building over the last two years, the following changes have been noticed, not only in AAPLAG, but also in Concern:

- The new structure of AAPLAG places Congress as the supreme authority of the organisation in which all members can participate. Under the Congress sits the General Assembly, which includes all members who pay regular fees and regularly attend organisational meetings. Under the General Assembly are two committees: the Executive Committee and Follow-up Committee. The Executive Committee has three Commissions: Agriculture and Environment, Education and Finance. The general members elect the members of the Executive Committee who take office for three years. The purpose of the Follow-up Committee is to supervise the work of the Executive Committee on a regular basis.
- Previously, Concern had no interest in the internal life of AAPLAG. Once it was recognised that they needed to focus on this, Concern's wholehearted facilitation allowed AAPLAG to develop a new organisational structure, a democratically elected new Executive Committee, a written constitution and a strategic plan.
- Members of AAPLAG are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Everybody can easily differentiate between members of the operational structure and the constitutional structure.

- Concern facilitated a process to develop a collective leadership approach in AAPLAG. Instead of discussing with individuals, Concern now discusses with the Committee. Some members of the Committee are still weak but their capacity is increasing by participating in different discussions and meetings, and improving negotiation skills.
- AAPLAG now has good clear accounting systems. This has contributed to increasing trust among members, who now feel that the organisation is transparent.
- AAPLAG now participates in the project design process, and Concern values their opinion. It is not only AAPLAG staff but also Concern staff who are now more qualified both at the field and head office levels.

Along with these activities of building organisational capacity, Concern also facilitated a process for developing a more comprehensive food security project for La Gonâve in late 2003 through AAPLAG. The project was launched in early 2004 with two components of Environment Protection (activities such as sensitizing school students on the environment, protecting water sources, and planting trees) and Agriculture Protection (community training on sustainable agriculture, proper spraying of insecticide and production of cereals). Later AAPLAG actively participated in designing and recruiting for a disaster preparedness project. AAPLAG is now responsible for monitoring and evaluating the projects.

AAPLAG is trying to diversify its funding sources by reducing its dependency on Concern. It has already established partnership with a church-based

organisation, Beyond Borders, for an education programme, and is searching for prospective partners to implement two more projects related to income generation and water.

### **Impact of capacity building**

It is too early to give a considered reflection on the impact of this capacity-building process. However, it can be stated confidently that the capacity building of AAPLAG has significantly contributed to developing the ownership of the community in micro-projects, in raising awareness of the community on environmental issues, and mobilising community resources in long-term management of infrastructure.

The impact of the capacity building of AAPLAG can be seen in their contribution to improving the environment and raising awareness of the community in conservation issues. They have facilitated the formation of 20 agricultural groups who are now responsible for producing seedlings. They have facilitated the plantation of more than 1100 mango trees in the island. They have formed a local committee with the required knowledge and experience to organise and maintain the reforestation of the island.

Improving the provision of drinking water in a sustainable way is always of high importance. Though Concern assisted in constructing a number of cisterns and community wells, it is AAPLAG who is now taking the lead in protecting these water sources by facilitating the setting up of a community management committee that will eventually be responsible for the protection and equitable use of each water point.

As part of this programme, there has been improved access to roads and pathways, whilst capacity building of AAPLAG has directly contributed to the long-term maintenance of this infrastructure. Now the community does not knock on the door of Concern when repairs are required. AAPLAG supplies tools and the community mobilises labourers to undertake maintenance programmes.

## **Learning from the Experience: Improving Capacity-Building Practice**

One of the most common questions raised by members of the programme management team during the capacity assessment process of AAPLAG was, 'If Concern Haiti can implement a project better than AAPLAG, should Concern be the implementer? Isn't that the best way to contribute to development?' The answer should be considered in terms of the broader perspective. In the short term, Concern could be the better implementer, but in the longer term, by virtue of building local capacity and experience, AAPLAG has the potential to be a more effective actor for sustainable local development than Concern.

Capacity building of local organisations is an approach aimed at creating conditions in which change can take place from within an organisation. It is a process by which Concern aims to facilitate the growth of a local organisation's capacity 'to self-reflect, to self-regulate and to take control of its own processes of improvement and learning' (Kaplan 1996 and 1997). Capacity building is not simply a matter of identifying gaps and 'plugging' them through training and resource provision. In essence, it involves promoting and supporting a process of strategic organisational transformation

undertaken by local organisations; that is, identifying strengths and building upon them, as well as identifying and addressing weaknesses. This process should be undertaken strategically as a planned coherent process with clearly agreed objectives. The nature of support should be determined through a (self) analysis by the local organisations of their current capacity to fulfil their mission and their vision. Rather than comprising a series of ad hoc training sessions or a generic curriculum, support should be tailored to the specific needs of each local organisation to serve overall organisational development. Care must be taken to ensure that the effect of support provided results in improved ways of working, rather than just more skilled individuals.

To ensure the local organisation retains ownership of the project, Concern initiates open dialogue on project activities, budget details, decision-making processes and partnership issues, and develops mechanisms to safeguard the organisation's voice in decision-making processes. In addition, Concern clearly sets out the purpose of the partnership, as well as the delineation of roles and responsibilities of Concern and the local organisations. In a nutshell, Concern now acts as a facilitator of support to the locally owned projects.

Concern Haiti is trying to develop monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for capacity building at the programme design stage, with the intent of understanding the relationship between capacity-building interventions, capacity and performance, and to focus strategies used for improving performance (James 2001). More specifically, Concern aims to monitor the *process* of capacity change (how capacity building takes place), capacity as an *intermediate step towards*

*performance* (what elements of capacity are needed to ensure adequate performance) and capacity as an *outcome* (whether capacity building has improved capacity). It is hoped that such a focus on capacity-building M&E will require staff to think of the 'how' much more than the 'what'. It should result in more strategic thinking, which would serve to put the capacity building of local organisations at the centre of development processes, and Concern staff will begin to see their own roles in this light.

Concern Haiti ascribes importance to investment in building new skills and systems that will help to develop new management and facilitation expertise. It will substantially contribute to enhancing staff understanding of organisational behaviour and processes, as well as encouraging a fundamental shift from being an 'expert' to being a 'facilitator'.

## Recommendations to Practitioners

The following are some practical recommendations to capacity-building practitioners arising from this experience:

- It is important to involve partners not only in developing projects but also in identifying the roles and responsibilities of project-related staff. The local organisation should have the ownership of the project in terms of recruitment and budgetary control.
- It is important to acknowledge that many local organisations in the South and East do not have good management systems and policies. Many local leaders are not always transparent to the community. When leaders gain power they can lose their judgement and decency (James 2005). They can resist putting democratic processes in practice for selecting new leaders, especially for membership based organisations. Therefore, influencing change at higher levels of the organisation to make it more transparent and democratic is not an easy task. It requires a coordinated effort with other local stakeholders, sensitisation of leaders and a consistent appreciative organisational capacity-building approach to bring about long-term changes in the organisation.
- Developing M&E systems for capacity building should be an essential part of the capacity-building strategy of local organisations.
- The role of the external agency needs to be clearly examined and monitored. It is important to ensure that their staff members are not 'doing' but 'facilitating' the development process, which should be lead by the local organisation. Local organisations need different forms of support at different stages of their growth, so it is important to understand the need for staff with different skills and capacities at different stages of its organisational growth.
- Staff members of external agencies need to be sensitised to the difference between the capacity building of an organisation, and the provision of training to build the technical capacity of local organisations to implement projects.
- On a general level, openness and good communication are essential to build effective partnerships with local organisations. A more formal approach can help to avoid confusion and to build trust within the relationship. More specifically,

important decisions need to be well documented in the local language and should be preserved. Making decisions over the telephone or verbally should be avoided as much as possible.

- While working with local organisations, it is important to make a balance between professionalism and volunteerism. For example, it was not wise for Concern to recruit Executive Committee members of AAPLAG as core staff on the micro-credit project. It is also critical to clarify the relationship between an organisation's operational structure and its constitutional structure to avoid conflict and confusion.
- Implementation of any organisational policy in an ongoing programme context needs to be carefully examined and negotiated with partners, with an open discussion on possible implications.

## Finally...

One of the core values of Concern is to reach the extreme poor, living in the remotest and most environmentally vulnerable areas of the world. Concern is committed to building the capacity of the local organisations operating in these areas. In most cases, these local organisations are very weak and deserve special attention from qualified personnel who can facilitate a capacity-building

process. Unfortunately, finding qualified staff who are willing to work in remote areas on a long-term basis is extremely difficult. This is one of the fundamental and very practical challenges in the capacity-building process, which still remains to be addressed.

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The purpose of this Note is not only to document a capacity-building success story but also to respond to the challenge set by INTRAC's Praxis Programme - capacity-building success stories: impact from practice - to capacity-building practitioners, in particular those from the South. The Note expresses that organisational capacity building is a complex process and there is no blueprint to manage this process: we are learning by doing. **However, the views expressed in this Note are those of the author, and do not necessarily represent those of Concern Worldwide, or any of its country programmes and their partners.**

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