

## Human Resource Management and Development

### Key Lessons Summary

The Primary Sources of lessons in this summary sheet are projects within DFID's Rural Livelihoods Programme (RLP)\*. The evidence for these lessons come from evaluations of the projects carried out by the Rural Livelihoods Evaluation Partnership (RLEP). The full version of the Thematic Lessons

Thematic Lessons Papers (TLP) are intended for stakeholders who are involved in policy or programme design and influencing, in order to assist them in making informed decisions in

The TLPs draw together experiences of livelihoods in a particular thematic context. This sheet includes key lessons summary with the way forward on the Human Resource Management and Development theme. The TLP series has more sheets available on rural

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1. All aspects of strategic HRM/D, training management, HR planning, personnel development and performance management require a committed and sustained public sector reform process to become a reality at the organisational level. A project located within a single department can not do this.
2. The lengthy process of strategy development is a productive learning process for concerned personnel, the legacy of which, may be future initiatives once junior and middle ranking staff become promoted to senior decision and policy-making ranks.
3. Policies and strategies demanded by Ministries will be readily accepted by the relevant Ministry with less consultation between stakeholders but as long as these are not implemented (i.e. box ticking exercise) the learning process and long term potential strategy development and implementation is lost.
4. Reform in training management was successfully demonstrated within the boundaries of Rural Livelihoods Programme project log frames but was never successfully institutionalised. Too many barriers exist to coordinate projects and the organisations knowledge and skill development under one training management system.
5. Similarly two projects attempted to develop strategic HRD with one project (ASIRP) succeeding by getting the HRM/D strategic plan approved at Ministerial level. Upon implementation (as with partnership funds) this worked best with the lower administration units and junior ranking officers.
6. Nevertheless, projects efforts demonstrated that new systems are possible, staff are capable and with effective leadership, overarching commitment at the highest levels supported with a reasonable budget, reform can be a reality.
7. Organisations find it increasingly more difficult to respond to the ever more complex systems in which they work. Lessons from the RLP (i.e. 8 DFID funded projects) reveal that organisations require a more diverse skill base [e.g. social science, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), Management Information System (MIS), Information Technology (IT), community management, gender, livelihoods analysis etc.) but the technical skill base should not be neglected (reiterating the value of a HRM/D strategy vertically integrated with an organisational strategy).
8. Although the developments of coordinating units (Training or HRD Wings) were enhanced by projects mandated to reform HRD, they never really went beyond merely coordinating the projects' own training programme in a reformed systematic manner.
9. Furthermore, if 'Wings' are to be successful they must be credible in the eyes of the whole organisation by employing competent staff at least with formal training in HRM/D. Further elevation of its profile and intent can be attained by the 'Wing' being steered by a senior level committee headed by the organisational executive.
10. The functions and purpose of government training centres are dependent on paradigmatic shift in training management systems which are on element of and dependent on a HRM/D strategy. Therefore, despite substantial staff training, training centre refurbishment and re-equipping the management processes and structures at training centres remains largely unchanged.
11. If projects not labeled as 'training projects' utilized the services of professional trainers then quality of training and evaluation of training could be better assured.
12. Resource allocation and training material development may become less repetitive and more

#### \*8 projects within DFID's Rural Livelihoods Programme (RLP)

1. Fisheries Training and Extension Project- II (FTEP II)
2. Agricultural Services Innovation Reform Project (ASIRP)
3. Research and Extension in Farm Power Issues (REFPI)
4. Poverty Elimination Through Rice Research Assistance (PETRRA)
5. Support For University Fisheries Education and Research (SUFER)
6. Fourth Fisheries Project (FFP)
7. CARE Rural Livelihoods Programme (CARE RLP)
8. Community Based Fisheries Management (CBFM2)

The basic tenet for Human Resource Management and Development (HRM/D) is that the people working in an organisation are its greatest asset for achieving objectives. HRM is a coherent and holistic approach to the management of people that requires and develops organisational structures and systems, individual attitudes and behaviour. Commonly, HRD refers to 'training' or development of skills and is regarded as part of HRM. Other principle elements ascribed to HRM may be; recruitment, induction, performance management, career development, reward and recognition.

HRM/D is described as process governed and directed by policies, strategies, rules and culture. A simple strategic model is comprised of four key components viz; Mission, Objectives, Strategy, Implementation and Review. The term 'strategic management' defines the process by which these long term aims, the strategy and implementation are managed. 'Strategic HRM' deals with the longer-term people issues, as part of the strategic management of human resources, in accordance with its organizational strategy and mission statement.

Implementation of strategic HRM is dependent on efficient vertical integration

## Way Forward?

- 1. Public sector and institutional reform.** A coherent sector strategy is a prerequisite for sustainable HR strategy and supporting structures. Since this is probably at least a ten year process; Departments need to develop improved in-house training management practices and utilization of training resources especially training centres and, effectively utilize their own resource persons (developed over more than a decade of donor supported capacity building) to improve and update the skills of junior staff and new entrants thus, preventing knowledge erosion in the organisation. Donors may support an overarching reform of HRM/D in the public sector but with concurrent funding to Departments that have established fully functional HRM/D units guided by an organisational strategy e.g. HRD strategy responds to a national fisheries/research/agriculture strategy (i.e. for DoF, Bangladesh Rice Research Institute, DAE)
- 2. Strategic groups.** The formation of a high-level strategic HRM policy group, and a lower level working group, to support the change process. The strategy group would be led by the MOE and contain members from the Public Service Commission (PSC) and MOF who are highly influential in HR management. In addition, there would be private sector/NGO representation to expand the knowledge base of HRM and share good practice.
- 3. Institutional Analysis.** Linking the Local Consultative Groups (LCG) to the 'Strategic Groups' is an opportunity to develop an institutional analysis study funded by the LCG donor representatives which may provide strategic direction for overarching public service reform for HR in the civil service. This would set in motion a programme to address HRM/D and could develop better performing Departments working in accordance with the reformation process. This provides donors with an opportunity to support skill development once again but this time as part of a public sector reform initiative.
- 4. Support for in-country HRM development.** The Bangladesh Society of HRM (BASHRM) has established itself as the only forum for HRM professionals within Bangladesh. If the Society were well developed, it could become the professional body for HRM in the country. Support could include a small scoping study to examine how the Society could be developed, where and how the public sector would fit, timescale for any support and long-term sustainability. The professionals affiliated with BASHRM may be utilized for the analysis recommended above and advise strategic groups.
- 5. Co-ordinated support for MIS Development.** There is currently duplication of MIS development for HRM systems. This could be established as a standardised system to meet all HRM needs. Support could include an initial review of current systems and an agreed plan on an integrated approach to MIS development.
- 6. Developing a Code of Conduct.** The purpose of a code of conduct is to provide a framework

More details on each of the lessons can be found in TLP master document on Human Resource Management and Development or the lessons paper produced under the Thematic Lessons Paper Series-4. Both are accessible at

### Further Reading

**ASIRP & ASSP (2003).** Human Resource Interventions with the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) Bangladesh: A Ten Year Review. 1992-2003 (Volume 2). November 2003. Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**Brooks, A.C. & Brown, D.W. (2003).** Training and Extension in the Department of Fisheries, The FTET-II Experience. June 2003. Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**DAE:** Strategic Plan of Department of Agricultural Extension (2002-2006).

**DOF (2004):** Human Resources Development Strategy (draft). Department of Fisheries. May 2004, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

**RLEP (2003-2004).** End of Project Reports of FTET II, ASIRP, REFPI and Output to Purpose Reports of