Hiring managers for adaptive management - from recruitment to retainment

BEAM Exchange webinar
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Adaptive management

An approach to programme design, tender, implementation, and evaluation that involves:

- Deliberately gathering and processing new information
- Purposeful experimentation
- Pivots in strategy, interventions, and work plans

Assumes that the system in which the programme intervenes is dynamic and partially ‘unknowable’

- Patterns of behavior, motivations
- Market and political changes
- Cultural beliefs and norms
The focus of this webinar is one aspect of enabling adaptive management: recruiting team managers.
David Ratliff
What we are doing!
What we should be doing!
How do we get there?
Alison Hemberger
BUILDING ADAPTIVE TEAMS

Agency-level Efforts

Alison Hemberger
Senior Advisor: Markets and Learning
Flexible funding and trusted relationships
Dynamic teams
Appropriate analysis
Responsive decision making
Agile operations
Flexible funding and trusted relationships
Dynamic teams

- Hire local and adaptive
- Foster an open communication culture
- Provide mentorship and coaching
Programs: Dynamic teams

- Collecting examples
- Showcasing programs
- Sharing (multiple channels!)
Agency: Dynamic teams

• Build on existing resources
• Remember the basics
• People team efforts
• Internal collaboration!
Champion adaptive leadership
Challenges to tackle

- Policy into practice
- Syncing up systems and processes
Matthias Herr
An implementer’s view on hiring & retaining managers

The ‘WHAT’
Outlining challenges and personnel needs towards adaptive management

The ‘HOW’
Experiences on recruitment and retaining shared from HELVETAS

The ‘SO WHAT’
A few lessons learnt so far and conclusions

Matthias Herr
Co-Team Leader Eastern Europe regional programme
Bern (Switzerland),
30.03.2017
The ‘WHAT’: context and challenge

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT
Complex programmes with systemic change ambitions require facilitative projects that are responsive to changing realities, upcoming opportunities and continuous learning.

Finding superman/-woman
Implementers and donors tend to look for managers with super-natural skills in a thin market: a few stars, little upward mobility and willingness to invest into capacity building and innovative management solutions.
The ‘HOW’: Key questions

WHAT are the requirements towards project managers? *(recruitment criteria)*

HOW do we find the right people? *(recruitment process)*

What are the organisational structures in which managers are embedded? *(retention strategy)*
The ‘HOW’: selection criteria

- Understanding of systemic approach
- Analytical and strategic thinking
- Communication and social skills
- Broad match with organisational values
- Leadership experience
- Many years of experience as PM
- No, he/she does not have to be Swiss
- Sector-specific expertise/experience
- Regional/country knowledge and experience

THE ‘MUST HAVES’

THE ‘NICE TO HAVES’
The HOW: recruitment process

INVESTMENT
CONSULTATION
SEARCH
INTERACTION
PROCESS
TIME
TOOLS

Your adaptive manager
The HOW: retention through support

IMPLEMENTER

• Backstopping
  • Management/admin
  • strategic
  • technical
• (Learning) culture
• Perspectives
• Processes
• Pay & benefits

DONOR

• Shared vision and understanding
  • Flexibility
    (strategy vs. tactics)
• Understanding of requirements towards personnel
  • Communication
• Participation and interest
  (partnership vs. contracting)

Being project manager is the most important position in your organisation
The ‘SO WHAT’: some conclusions

Are our (recruitment) processes conducive?

Do we know what we need and how realistic are our expectations?

We are just humans – are we open to new management models?

How much are we willing and able to invest into people ourselves?

Common understanding between donor and implementer is critical

Is our organisational culture and setup conducive for adaptive management?
Discussion and Q & A

David Ratliff
USAID

Alison Hemberger
Mercy Corps

Matthias Herr
HELVETAS

Amir Allana
(Moderator)
Thank you

Webinar recording will be made available

We value your feedback. Please take a few minutes to do the survey (link in the chat box)