Addis Ababa University
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Inclusiveness

Chapter 8
Collaborative Partnership among Stakeholders

8.1. Understanding the concepts of collaboration, partnership and stakeholder

- Collaboration is defined as “the act of working together to produce or create something according to the capacities and abilities of individuals.
- A person should not be discriminated due to mismatch with other people’s abilities; because he has his own quality in other perspectives.

- Collaboration provides every team member equal opportunity to participate and communicate their ideas.
- To sum up collaborative engagement accomplished by a sense of partnership of individuals or a certain team member leads to achieve common goals and outcomes that would benefit all participants.

8.2. Key elements of successful collaboration

- In collaborative engagement the relationship of actors includes a commitment to:
  - Mutual relationships and goals;
  - A jointly developed structure and shared responsibility;
  - Mutual authority and accountability for success;
  - Sharing of resources and rewards.

- For the success of team work and or collaborative engagement in work and other places, the following elements are needed:
  - Respect;
  - Communication;
  - Delegation;
  - Support.

❖Here are a few qualities that a successful team possesses:

1. They communicate well with each other.
2. They focus on goals and results.
3. Everyone contributes their fair share.
4. They offer each other support.
5. Team members are diverse.
6. Good leadership.
7. They're organized.
8. They have fun.

- Collaboration or team work should be guided by the following general principle:
  - Establish clear common goals for the collaboration;
  - Define your respective roles and who is accountable for what, but accept joint responsibility for the decisions and their outcomes;
  - Take a problem-solving approach – with a sense that all those in the collaborative arrangement share ownership of the problem and its solution;
  - Establish an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect for each other’s expertise;
  - Aim for consensus decision-making;

- Ask for and give immediate and objective feedback to others in a nonthreatening and non-judgmental manner;
- Give credit to others for their ideas and accomplishments;
- Develop procedures for resolving conflicts and manage these processes skillfully;
- Better still, anticipate possible conflicts and take steps to avoid them as far as possible. This is not to say that disagreements can, or even should, be avoided;
- Arrange periodic meetings to review progress in the collaborative arrangements.

8.3. The benefits and challenges of collaboration

- Collective engagement or cooperation has the following benefits and advantages:
  - Higher employee productivity;
  - Greater efficiency and less duplicated effort;
  - Access to additional resources or lower costs through sharing resources such as office space, administration or other aspects of an organization's operation;
  - Improved service coordination across agencies, with better pathways or referral systems for service users;
  - Team work culture building.

- In contrary, the following are key challenges for collaboration and or team work:
  - Indecisive decision-makers;
  - "E-fail" This is a little term used for when email straight up fails;
  - Miscommunication (When collaborating, there is always room for misinterpretation and miscommunication);
  - Process sinking vs. process syncing.
  - Too many cooks;
  - Negativity.

8.4. Characteristics of Successful Stakeholder Partnerships

- A stakeholder is any person, organization, social group, or society at large that has a stake in the business.
- Thus, stakeholders can be internal or external to the business.
- A stake is a vital interest in the business or its activities.
- Some examples of key stakeholders are creditors, directors, employees, government (and its agencies), owners (shareholders), suppliers, unions, and the community from which the business draws its resources.

- Stakeholders are usually parties who have a stake in a project and have a great influence on its success or failure.
- The benefit of stakeholders' participation in a given and project or program can be measured by the following points
- Provide all stakeholders with full opportunities to share their views, needs and knowledge.
- Build consensus through bringing together a diverse range of stakeholders to share needs, information, ideas and knowledge and harmonize the objectives of individual groups to reach common societal goals.

- Successful stakeholder partnership is characterized by:
  - Existence of an agreement;
  - Sharing of profits or stratification for the services offered to the community;
  - Establishing equal and equitable relationship;
  - Membership without discrimination;
  - Nature of liability;

- Fusion of ownership and control;
- Non-transferability of interest;
- Trust;
- Common values;
- Defined expectations;
- Mutual respect;
- Synergy;
- Great two-way communications.

- Good partners and allies as stakeholders on a certain project and program initiative:
  - Have a similar audience;
  - Are not your competitors;
  - Can give you access to new customers and prospects;
  - Want to work with you;
  - Want something you can offer.

8.5. Strategies for community involvement in inclusive development

- Community development is about the inclusive involvement of all people, regardless of their diversities, enhancing equality, respecting their full right in terms of educational opportunities and employability.
- The creation of opportunities to enable all members of a community to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably in the fruits of any development endeavors.

- Participation has an intrinsic value for participants and a catalyst for further development.
- Due to the reason that it:
  - Encourages a sense of responsibility;
  - Guarantees that a felt need is involved;
  - Ensures things are done the right way; uses valuable indigenous knowledge;
  - Frees people from dependence on others' skills; and makes people more independent and productive.

- The following strategies are believed to be useful for inclusive development through promoting community involvement
  - Commit to the participation of all persons with diversities;
  - Establish non-discriminatory and effective communication with all people with diverse back ground;
  - Tap into local networks, culture and indigenous experiences of inclusiveness;
  - Use all possible communication channel including sign language for deaf people.