Partner Capacity Strengthening: Inspiring Change

Online training course -
19 October - 7 December 2023

Course summary

Organisational change is much harder than it looks, and catalysing genuine, positive and sustainable change with partners requires much more than a single assessment or a mechanistic process. The aim of this course is to help inspire more effective and equitable capacity strengthening and organisational development support to partner organisations, including when working remotely.

This course introduces participants to the core skills needed to support a partner through an organisational change process. It will give you an understanding of the true nature of organisations, and how to assess capacity strengthening needs. You will explore methods and tools for capacity strengthening. You will learn how powerdynamics impact on organisational change processes in partnerships, and identify how to promote partner ownership. You will also have the opportunity to explore your own strengths and weaknesses as an external change agent, and identify new practical approaches to try.

Who is this training course suitable for?

This course is particularly relevant to programme staff with some experience in capacity strengthening and/or organisational development support work with international partners, which they would like to build on. It is also relevant to staff who are intending to engage in some form of capacity strengthening support work in the near future.

Course format

The Partner Capacity Strengthening course is a facilitated, interactive and collaborative e-learning experience consisting of:
- Six interactive live sessions via Zoom (first session: 2 hours; all other sessions: 90 minutes)
- "Triads exercise": 3 self-facilitated peer learning sessions in small groups
- Self-paced activities and access to further learning resources on INTRAC learning platform
- Feedback on one individual assignment
- One individual mentoring session (50 minutes)

On average, the total time commitment is around 3-4 hours per week.

What are the objectives?

By the end of the training participants will be able to:
- Explain how to assess a partner's capacity strengthening needs
- Identify how to increase partner ownership of any change process
- Recognise how power dynamics impact on the effectiveness of capacity strengthening work with partners, and what to do about this
- Identify a range of different capacity strengthening tools and approaches
- Understand how to plan capacity strengthening initiatives with partners
- Analyse which capacity strengthening initiatives are working and well, and how to overcome common capacity strengthening challenges
- Explore participants own strengths and weaknesses as external change agents, and identify new strategies that can help them to increase their effectiveness

Course content and structure

Session 1: Assessing capacity strengthening needs	• Overview of different data gathering methods for assessing capacity strengthening needs – at distance & in person • Analysing the benefits and constraints of standardised tools for organisational assessment • Identifying effective assessment questions, and practicing observation skills
Session 2: Ensuring partner ownership	• Unpacking the importance of partner ownership • Exploring how the partner/funder power dynamics can affect levels of partner ownership • Assessing levels of partner ownership and engaging with leadership - at distance & in person
Session 3: Selecting appropriate capacity strengthening methods	• Linking capacity building with an understanding of human change dynamics • Overview of different capacity strengthening methods • Identifying most appropriate methods for different contexts
Session 4: Planning and monitoring capacity strengthening support	• Developing capacity strengthening plans with partners • Overview of different approaches to monitoring and evaluating capacity strengthening support
Session 5: Supporting capacity strengthening effectively	• Clarifying what you and your organisation can offer – at distance & in person • Identifying what type of capacity strengthening support is working & what type of support is not having the desired impact and why & how to overcome common challenges • Linking capacity strengthening to programme strategies
Session 6: Programme staff as change agents	• Understanding the personal characteristics that enable effective capacity strengthening to take place • Assessing your own personal strengths and weaknesses as an external change agent • Developing strategies to improve your capacity strengthening approaches and inspire change

IT requirements

- You will need a laptop and access to broadband internet. A headset is recommended.
- Live sessions take place via Zoom (download recommended if possible)
- INTRAC's e-learning platform (Moodle) and other collaboration tools used in the course are accessible via browser.

Live session calendar

Session	When	
Enrollment and self-paced activities	*19-25 October 2023*	
1	Thursday 26 October 2023	1pm-3pm UK time (BST) *
2	Thursday 2 November 2023	1.00-2.30pm UK time (GMT)
Self-paced & group activities (no live session)	*6-12 November 2023*	
3	Thursday 16 November 2023	1.00-2.30pm UK time (GMT)
4	Thursday 23 November 2023	1.00-2.30pm UK time (GMT)
5	Thursday 30 November 2023	1.00-2.30pm UK time (GMT)
6	Thursday 7 December 2023	1.00-2.30pm UK time (GMT)

* Note: the first live session will be 2 hours long; all other sessions 90 minutes

Course fee: £799*

**A small number of Training Access Scholarships are available for small nonprofits based in selected countries.

For more information, please contact the training team (training@intrac.org)