

Resumé

Denne praktik rapport diskuterer den seneste tendens af maksimerende NGO-effekt, nemlig 'kapacitetsopbygning', som ses som et vigtigt element i en bæredygtig udvikling centreret i mennesker. Samtidig har en overvældende efterspørgsel på målbar udvikling vokset sig stor nok til at påvirke virkningen og resultatet af udviklingsinitiativer, blandt andet ved at ngo'er bedst muligt demonstrere deres egen værdi. Det bliver således interessant, hvordan kapacitetsopbygning og resultaterne heraf skal måles.

Der argumenteres at hvis ngo'erne er nødt til at definere, hvad de forsøger at gøre, og hvorfor, så de er mere ansvarlige. Og hvis

resultaterne offentliggøres, så er det nemmere at bedømme, om donorer, regeringer og ngo'er faktisk leverer dem. Men det kan også lægge en bremse på relationer og forbindelser indenfor udviklingsbistand. Ønsket om at være i stand til at tilknytte forandringen direkte til investeringen, snarere end at være tilfreds med at bidrage til bredere processer, modarbejder desværre at kapacitetsopbygning nogensinde bliver taget alvorligt. Selvom det kan være muligt at oversætte kapacitetsopbygning til noget 'begrebsmæssigt kvantificerbart', er det med risiko for at miste forandrings-perspektivet og relevansen af den udvikling man er i gang med.

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Introduction

This report has the purpose of reflecting and discussing development issues based on my internship with the Danish NGO *IBIS*¹ at their Head Office in Copenhagen, Denmark in the period between February 2013 and July 2013, as part of my master studies at International Development studies at Roskilde University.

The main objective of this report is to display my ability to utilize theoretical and analytical concepts and approaches relevant to International Development studies deriving from IBIS and their work in an international development context. And on the other hand the objective concerns analytical reflections on my main work assignments as an intern; which lie within *Education Policy and Financing* the strategic line of action of IBIS Education team (see appendix 3); more specifically the individual and organizational capacity-building within the aforementioned strategy. Capacity-building will frame the issue of inquiry in this report; presented in chapter two and discussed in chapter three. The latest fashion for maximizing NGO impact is 'capacity-building'. Along with 'empowerment', 'participation', and 'gender-equity', capacity-building is seen as an essential element to sustainable development centered in people (Eade, 2005: 1). Additionally, an overwhelming demand, from official channels such as Danida², for measurable development has grown to affect NGOs as they, through impact and outcome, have to demonstrate their own added value. These latest development trends was of course noticeable during my time at IBIS, and as my main work assignments involved a mapping of existing and needed capacities within Education Policy and Financing³ it made me curious to investigate; *How capacity-building can be measured, if at all, according to the increasing demands on impact and outcome?*

The first chapter introduces IBIS as an organization and the specific strategy of the thematic team of education⁴ including the global Education for Change strategy. Chapter two and three present and discuss capacity-building within development as well as demonstrate the measurable

¹ www.ibis.dk

² Danida is Denmark's development cooperation. It is an activity area of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

³ See appendix 3

⁴ The team I worked with during the internship

complexity of development aid. Finally, chapter four holds the conclusive remarks. The report ends with some brief reflections on my learning process and outcomes of the of the internship.

1. Presentation of the host organization of the internship

1.1. IBIS

IBIS is a Danish membership based civil society organization⁵. Therefore the Board is democratically elected amongst IBIS' members at the Annual General Meeting. IBIS carry out important lobby and advocacy work, in Denmark and other local contexts, to influence the development agenda and important stakeholders to change in line with IBIS' vision and goals; lately within topics like extractive industries, capital flight and education.

Being one of the original six Danish organizations with a framework agreement with Danida, IBIS often play a leading role within the NGO environment. In terms of membership and supporters IBIS rose from 1.200 in 2001 IBIS experienced a steep rise until 10.000 were reached in 2007, and the number has been relatively stable around that figure up until today.

IBIS was founded in 1966 and has its roots from the global student solidarity movement that grew in the 1960s. Back then IBIS was called WUS as it was part of a world-wide and university-based organization, World University Service (WUS) founded in the early 1920s. In the beginning, WUS was involved in social activities for students in Europe. In the late 1960s, the scope of their work expanded to 'the third world'⁶. This included support to liberation movements in Southern Africa in their struggle against the Portuguese colonial rulers and the apartheid regime.

While the cooperation with the liberation movements developed and grew, the Danish WUS detached itself from the international WUS. In 1970, the Danish WUS was established as an independent organization and in 1991 the last ties with WUS international were broken.

Consequently, the name was changed to the current IBIS⁷.

In the 1980s, IBIS - or WUS as it was still called – started working in Central America. This happened as the people of these countries were rebelling against decades of dictatorship. IBIS

⁵ <http://ibis.dk/om-ibis/om-ibis/organisationen/>

⁶ <http://ibis.dk/om-ibis/ibis-historie/>

⁷ <http://ibis.dk/om-ibis/ibis-historie/>

wanted to contribute to the process set in motion, and entered into cooperation with the new governments and popular organizations in Nicaragua, Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras. The work revolved particularly around local development projects and support for the development of civil-society organizations⁸. In the 1990s, IBIS also began to cooperate with indigenous peoples in Ecuador and Peru with the aim of strengthening their abilities to claim their democratic rights.

Throughout the 1990s, IBIS has undergone major changes. Today, the organization is involved in very few projects on direct implementation and service delivery. Instead, IBIS is engaged in education, governance, global advocacy, and support to gain political influence for the poorest and has been for more than 40 years. This work is currently being conducted in eight countries, namely Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, South Sudan, Nicaragua, Bolivia and Guatemala⁹.

1.1.1. Educational Development Strategy

IBIS Education Team forms part of the International Department at the Head Office (HO) which consists of additionally a Governance Team, Policy and Campaign Team, as well as a Communication- and Administration department. IBIS has an education team in all of its international locations and together they form IBIS Global Education Group¹⁰ - they all answers to a global Education for Change strategy.

IBIS Global Education for Change Strategy 2012-2017

IBIS considers the fulfillment of individual and collective rights to quality education for children, youth and adults, a cornerstone in the fight against poverty and in the development of social justice and sound democracies. Educated citizens constitute a pivotal prerequisite for an active and legitimate civil society capable of driving social change towards a more transparent and accountable democratic society and sustainable pro-poor economic growth.

IBIS strive to achieve the objective of this strategy through focusing on two Strategic Lines of Action in all Education for Change programs in Africa and Latin America; *Quality Education* and

⁸ <http://ibis.dk/om-ibis/ibis-historie/>

⁹ <http://ibis.dk/lande>

¹⁰ This group includes head office as well as education teams in each country (Sierra Leone, Ghana, Liberia, Mozambique, South Sudan, Nicaragua, Bolivia and Guatemala).

Education Policy and Financing (IBIS Education for Change strategy 2012-17). With an emphasis on the second strategic line of action¹¹ IBIS and partners advocate that both governments and donors allocate 10% of their budgets to basic education. These funds are to be spent on quality improvements, making progress on e.g. inclusion, teacher training, leading to enhanced learning outcomes for the most disadvantaged communities. Moreover, strengthening the inter-face and information flow between different actors at local, national and global level is pivotal to the advocacy work of IBIS and partners (Ibid.). Influencing national policies, that determine the extent of civil society participation in developing and monitoring education strategic plans and budgets, are vital to achieving change. Thus, IBIS strive to make the education sector a major beneficiary of innovative financing models and support civil society to demand and advocate for this financing to benefit pro-poor policies in the area of quality education.

An important first step to mobilize emerging civil society participation in budget tracing, campaign and advocacy is to work for increased access to and understanding of education policies, budgets and their relation to quality education at local level. By doing this, civil society actors gain insight into government priorities and the factors that influence spending and at the same time collect information that can strengthen national level advocacy work.

In order to be able to fulfill these strategic lines IBIS will attach professionals in organization development to all programmes in the countries of co-operation as well as to the head office. Alongside and in dialogue with the partners, they will assist in capacity-building as well as in continuous strategic and methodological development of IBIS' work in this field. The strategies and methods for organization development programmes should be holistic and based on practical experience (Ibid.).

Hence IBIS emphasize that there exists a learning process, which will consistently gather and systematize experiences of support to civil-society organizations and organization development. This learning process will make the existing experiences of the field systematically available, enabling and substantiating internal discussions and decisions on replicating activities as well as strategic and methodological approaches.

¹¹ Consult the reference list for full version of the strategy.

IBIS will map out the international and national resource base, incorporating knowledge already available at these levels, and initiating networking-based exchange of experiences and knowledge with organizations and research centers active in the field of organization development¹². As well, monitoring systems will be developed aiming at generating knowledge of outputs, outcome and impact of organization development activities, as well as information-processing systems turning this knowledge into part of the basis for continuous strategic and methodological development. The latter being part of my main work assignment as an intern.

1.2. Motivation and argumentation for choosing IBIS

An important factor for doing an internship with IBIS was a desire to thoroughly explore the methodology behind organizational development work. Through my studies at the university I have developed the assumption that NGOs have a more direct and cooperative undertake to development projects as well as with the social groups of which these projects concern; thus I wanted to explore these suppositions. At the same time I wanted to work with a more organizational approach to international development as well as the political structure of development aid.

Finally, I have through previous work and current volunteer engagement gotten acquainted with education as a means to advance development¹³. I find the area of education important and vital within international development strategies and policies, and IBIS is one of the most competent Danish organizations, in my opinion, to work with quality education and transformative learning methods in order to strengthen civil society in realizing their human and democratic rights. However, in my object of interest education becomes the means of which to maneuver in the world of development aid. Meaning that my entering point into IBIS was within the objective of *education policy and financing*, hereby the more overall strategic and political aspects of international development. This meant that my focus lay elsewhere than on the learning objectives/pedagogical methods of quality education.

¹² Part of IBIS Global Education Group work plan 2013-2014. See appendix 1.

¹³ Since 2012 I have been a part of a small solidarity organization called Mellemamerika Komiteen, where I am involved in a youth project in Matagalpa, Nicaragua concerning improved educational skills, first of all in farm production, in order to enhance the future in the countryside.

2. Framing the issues

2.1. Documentation requirements towards NGOs

Danida's current Civil Society Strategy¹⁴, first developed in 2000 and updated in 2008, was initially the product of collaboration about development aid with Danish Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) which set out a series of strategic goals to guide Danish support to Southern civil society¹⁵. Alongside, a new strategy for Denmark's development cooperation *The Right to a Better Life*¹⁶ was published in August 2012. The strategy highlights four strategic priorities; human rights and democracy, green growth, social progress, and stability and protection, and the role of civil society are expressed within all of them (DANIDA d, 2012). The new strategy puts emphasis on a rights based-approach, flexible partnerships, results and efficiency. This includes an intensified orientation towards results management which entails that the Danish development aid works via a methodology of *managing for development results*¹⁷. The system helps to ensure that all resources are directed towards achieving the set objectives. The objectives must be clear, specific, and measurable; limited in number and with a clear time frame and the emphasis is on monitoring, documenting and reporting on goals¹⁸. As modus operandi the logical framework approach¹⁹ (LFA) has been greatly promoted and utilized. LFA is the most well-known tool for aid disbursement, utilized by many donors and NGOs in Europe and the United States; "it is the basic project document that includes project goals, plans, timetables for implementation, required inputs and expected outcomes with associated measurements (indicators), and an analysis or listing of external factors and internal assumptions that may be a risk to the achievement of the goals" (Wallace, 2006: 34).

¹⁴ Strategy for Danish support to civil society in developing countries or "Civil Society Strategy" sets the basis for cooperation with Danish organizations that carry out activities in developing countries.

¹⁵ The 2008 version was recently evaluated by an independent group of international consultants led by Cowan Coventry, chief executive of the Intermediate Technology Development Group.

¹⁶ The strategy for Denmark's development cooperation "The right to a better life" constitutes the main basis for the Danish civil society organizations. See more under references, DANIDA d.

¹⁷ <http://um.dk/da/danida/resultater/resultatstyr/>

¹⁸ <http://um.dk/da/danida/resultater/resultatstyr/>

¹⁹ LFA is an instrument for objective-oriented planning of projects and the method can also be utilized for analysis, assessment, follow-up and evaluation of projects. LFA is based on the idea that the project owner assumes the main responsibility for the planning process.

Danida acknowledges that it is a challenge to set goals and measure results and identifies three of the main predetermined oppositions which are; a) monitoring after what can be measured and weighed is not always the most important and what really matters in a particular community. B) Development requires and entails many factors and an entire program cannot be evaluated from a single or few targets. Lastly, it is often impossible to read the effect of a small project or a program in the major figures of growth, unemployment and life expectancy. Therefore, the objectives of the practice are often simple endpoint or user-oriented goals²⁰.

In order to meet these challenges it is necessary to have a solid knowledge - based on research – about the relationship between simple outputs, user-centric goals and society-oriented impacts²¹.

Having briefly introduced the measuring tendencies focus will now be put on the strategically development approach of capacity-building.

2.2. Capacity-building and development

The term capacity-building is widely used in relation to a range of strategies and processes which aim at improved development practices which are sustainable. This is also the case with IBIS who benefits from making it a learning process cf. Educational development strategy. Organizations and society can gain through “building social capital which involves developing high levels of co-operation, reciprocity and trust members of the community to work together for mutual social benefits” (Crisp, 2000: 11). The prime purpose of NGOs is to assist poor men and women, and civil society organizations, in changing their situation and exercising their right to participate in the development of their societies. However, when peoples existing strengths are ignored it may create dependency, and so make people more vulnerable than before. Just to mention some elements of organizational capacities, they could include; organization assessment, leadership development, participation, gender equality, transparency, financial management and transparency (Tematiskforum). One can distinguish between individual and organizational capacity-building, however it is not relevant for the arguments in this report to specify one or the other.

²⁰ <http://um.dk/da/danida/resultater/resultatstyr/>

²¹ <http://um.dk/da/danida/resultater/resultatstyr/>

Capacity-building activities help form good advocacy. Advocacy activities attract a growing part of the total funding to NGOs in developing countries and consensus exists around the fact that advocacy, if planned and implemented in the right way, constitutes an important tool to achieve both concrete results and changes at more structural levels (Tematiskforum). This will be elaborated in chapter three under *the change triangle*. What should be mentioned is that in a search for quick results, some donors focus on isolated advocacy activities or isolated project activities, while they tend to ignore the variety of challenges that are preconditions for civil society organizations to engage successfully in advocacy processes, e.g. organizational development, constituency building, leadership skills and alliance building (Tematiskforum).

There is no inherent limit to the capacity for empowerment or participation – for these are processes as well as goals. In order to measure them comparisons can be made over time, or in relation to other indicators, but not in absolute terms. It is a process that needs nurturing as powers and capacities that are not used are likely to weaken and vanish (Eade, 2005: 32).

Capacity-building for development, therefore, not only meets concrete needs for skills or resources, but responds to the feelings that come from people's experience of poverty or oppression. It should be understood as a long-term investment in people and in relations.

2.2.1. Whose capacities? Power, partnerships and participation

"No matter how good the personal relationship between the Northern and the Southern NGO, the latter must accept the humiliation of being the receiver of charity. Perforce, there is a relationship of unequals. And inequality never built capacity"
(Eade, 2005: 9).

If the nature of the relationship between two 'partners' is uneven, the basis for honest negotiation between them is compromised. Since a capacity-building approach is intended to enhance the quality of people's relationships within their societies, and beyond, NGOs can contribute positively only if their own relations are based on mutual trust and two-way learning, not merely the transfer of money (Eade, 2005: 49).

A good start would be to turn the monitoring processes on its head. Southern organizations need to have a strong identity of their own to be able to negotiate their position, and need to know as much about their potential donors as the donors insist on knowing about them. And even more crucial; Northern, but also Southern, NGOs need to be realistic about who they are, and what they can really offer. Meaning that an organization should consider within what area their expertise lie and not simply what can be easily monitored and measured (cf. Documentation requirements towards NGOs).

In principle the more participatory a process, the more local people will identify their own indicators and subsequently monitor those (Chambers, 2008: 121). The indicators can be numbers that are counted, qualities that are scored, quantities that are measured or estimated etc. Participatory methods of both monitoring and different development approaches “can be persuasive and more credible than those from questionnaire investigations. But they may be discounted when they challenge official statistics and threaten professional reputations” (Chambers, 2008: 123). In other words, numbers can also reverse power relations through the persuasiveness and advocacy of statistics presented to policy-makers.

Summing up points for further inquiry

Power and learning are bottom lines, which can generate win-win solutions that combine local learning and local empowerment and at the same time provide numbers useful for measurement to outsiders, and for influencing policy. In order for those in power to be better and more realistically informed and more persuasively influenced; and for those who are marginalized to express their realities in ways which are convincing so as for them and their reality to count for more. In order to count for more both Northern and Southern NGOs needs to ‘proof their worth’ and they are somewhat dictated by the methodology of managing for development results as for example presented by Danida (cf. managing for development results). In ordinary parlance, value for money means believing that you have made a good deal: believing that the services received were worth the price paid. In other words, it is the receiver of the goods or services that decides if it is good value. When it comes to value for money in aid or development cooperation, however, it

seems too often to be the other way round: it is the giver not the receiver who seems to be deciding.

The pressure of demonstrating that results have been achieved at the lowest possible cost gives a strong impression that impact is all about measuring quantitative results, preferably in the short and middle-long term. One can wonder, then, how the principle of value for money is to be applied to education which, according to the human rights based approach (DANIDA d, 2012: 9), is not in need of economic justification, because it is a basic human right. It is more difficult trying to measure less tangible things like education quality; and even more difficult assessing outcomes when they are mediated through so many other (no more easily measured) variables - a current variable such as capacity-building. To capacitate within a NGO in order to enhance development and further build and make civil society realize and advocate for their basic human rights seems crucial within development relations today. This seems somewhat contradictory when at the same time there is a demand towards development aid to be more measurable and development strategies more visible in local output and societal impact.

3. Analytical debate

3.1. Steering mechanisms of development strategies

The understanding of how to conduct development and how to promote it changes constantly among development thinkers and practitioners. Two distinctions of how the conditions of funding have changed as well as the way development is undertaken can be pointed out. The first is *rational management* and it emphasizes “planning for predictable outcomes, management designed to achieve planned results, with strict lines of accountability” (Wallace, 2006: 31); *participation* is the other which focuses on networking and engaging with people in order to promote participation and ownership “and draws on an understanding of change as contingent and locally driven (Ibid.). Both can be argued to navigate IBIS’ development actions as a Danish NGO influenced by the Danida’s methodology of managing for results on the basis of the right to a better life through a more direct aid, the so-called bilateral agreements, towards national

development programmes as part of larger contiguous development within specific themes, civil society and/or sectors²².

Wallace acknowledges that a push proceeds to improve planning and control development away from varied and loose project formats into a more universal use of logical framework approach and an increase of project cycle assessment procedures as guidelines, and reporting systems designed to show cost-effectiveness and impact based on indicators (Wallace, 2006: 34). Capacity-building may not perform as the most effective indicator to demonstrate value-for-money and although there may be a broad recognition of the need for capacity-building of any sort in developing countries, studies capturing capacity-building experiences underline the difficulties of this task (Holland, 2008: 227). It is somewhat easy to increase the quantity of outputs, but this does not ensure quality, nor does it ensure sustained improvements in long-term research capability and strengthened networks to an evidence-based policy process. Over the past decade the focus on poverty reduction has been a central development goal and “the development of new ways of understanding and analyzing poverty, coupled with an emphasis on the need for evidence-based policy-making, has given new impetus to demand for social research skills in development arenas” (Ibid.). This proves as an example of a capacity-building approach, here within research skills, being crucial in order for civil society to engage in evidence-based and influential policy-making concerning their human rights.

Relevant and lasting change is currently promoted via, among other things; participation, capacity-building and accountability but the methodologies behind are not codified beyond agency manuals (Wallace, 2006:34). This is to say that NGOs may deal with the tension by separating the learning function from the everyday business of raising, spending, and accounting for money. But in this way ‘institutional learning’ becomes compartmentalized instead of being a central part of responsible development work and an institution-wide responsibility. Learning is seen as an ‘optional extra’, which can be cut when money is tight. IBIS includes the learning process in its development work by consistently gathering and systematizing experiences of support to civil-society organizations and organization development (cf. educational development strategy).

²² <http://um.dk/da/danida/det-goer-vi/>

Similarly, 'administration' which includes information gathering, storage and analysis as well as the monitoring of resource flows, is generally seen as something to be kept to a minimum. A problem here is that NGOs have gotten acknowledgement of their supposedly lower costs and greater efficiency at delivering aid just to create the misleading impression that development can be done cheaply (Eade, 2005: 193).

3.2. Capacity-building – isn't that what development is all about?

Much development aid has resulted in institutions and activities which are dependent on continued donor-funding but capacity-building should not create dependency. Some individuals may learn new skills or increase their earning capacity as a result, these are essentially by-products. The central purpose is determined by the donor's need to find the most expedient and efficient way to achieve a particular goal (Eade, 2005: 32). Neither should capacity-building support NGOs in such a way that weakens the capacity of the state, or citizens' claims on it. 'Good governance' is not well performed when governments abandon their responsibilities to their citizens, or transfer their role as duty-bearers onto institutions that are not themselves accountable to those who use their services. Hence lack of accountability occurs.

Moreover, "capacity-building is not solely concerned with financial sustainability: Although capacity-building should enhance sustainability, this is not synonymous with financial self-reliance. Reducing dependence on grant-funding is critical for any organization that is working towards future independence, but not all activities can become entirely self-funding – health and education provision being the most obvious" (Eade, 2005: 33). IBIS and partners rely on grant-funding a long way on the development chain in order to keep capacitating towards a sustainable society. And despite of being a framework organization under Danida IBIS has to self-fund 20 percent (DANIDA c, 2012: 1). So in order to keep receiving those resources IBIS and partners must constantly prove their value added.

A capacity-building approach to development concentrates on enabling people to overcome discriminatory practices that limit their life-chances. Rather than forcing an agenda, capacity-building approach encourages deeper analysis.

Even so, donor agencies and NGOs are often criticized for viewing capacity-building too narrowly in terms of training; and focusing on its technical dimensions, to the exclusion of other needs. Education and training are not capacity-building activities in and of themselves (Eade, 2005: 79). Rather, it is the organizational setting and overall purpose – what is intended, what is being achieved, and by whom – that define them as such.

None the less, education and training represent an investment in people, and so are important ways to put a capacity-building approach into practice. Basic education is a fundamental human right and it is also part of the soon to expire Millennium Development Goals²³. The lack of access to educational opportunities places a major constraint on people's life chances, as well as on their capacity to participate in the social, economic and political processes affecting them. Formal education is in crisis when governments cut back public sector spending. In supporting organizations working for social justice, it is also necessary to support the various capacities they require to do this: intellectual, organizational, social, political, cultural, material, practical, or financial. For IBIS education is political, and has always been a powerful instrument in social exclusion, oppression and culture-, ethnic- and gender-discrimination both in the developed and developing countries (IBIS a). Thus IBIS and the Education for Change strategy operate with transformative quality education. Transformative education empowers learners and enables them to constructively consider multiple viewpoints and perspectives in dialogue with others and gives them the skills to engage in social actions.

3.3. Measuring capacity-building

If capacity-building is a means to an end, then the intended end of the intervening NGO, i.e. the chosen strategy, must be explicit in order to compare options or evaluate progress. The focus is likely to be on improving the links between the structure, processes, and activities of the organization that is receiving support, and the quality and quantity of its outputs and outcomes (Eade, 2005:34), which could be determined, as imagined causalities, through logical framework approach. Criteria for effectiveness will therefore concentrate on impact(s) at the local level. On the other hand, if capacity-building is an end in itself (e.g. strengthening the quality of

²³ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

representation and decision-making within civil society organizations, and their involvement in socio-political processes), such political choices demand a clear purpose and contextual analysis on the intervening part. The focus is likely to be on the counterpart's organizational mission, its analysis of the external world, and its structure and activities. Criteria for effectiveness will therefore relate to the extent to which the mission is perceived to be appropriate, coherent and fulfilled (Ibid.).

Some, particularly those whose job it is to allocate grants and report on how these are spent, may see capacity-building as something that others need to do, but that they and their organizations are somehow 'above'. In fact, nothing could be less true. NGOs promoting gender or racial equality, empowerment and participation must expect to be judged on the extent to which their own organization and performance demonstrate these values. On top of that the logical framework approach is increasingly presented as a story line of causalities, from beginning to end, imagining the course from the overall purpose to the fictional final outcomes in a straight, unprovoked line (Wallace, 2006: 34). She further argues that; "reporting, based on monitoring and evaluation procedures, is done against the predicted changes and indicators laid out in the LFA; a great deal of time in NGOs is spent identifying methodologies to generate relevant indicators. Yet especially at the global and strategic levels these are hard to delineate" (Ibid.). Some may argue that this should construct the best possible 'working conditions' for NGOs as they get to determine the frame and content of their own work-settings, however measurement can be attempted only in something which is conceptually quantifiable, argues Drewnowski (in Baster, 1972: 78) and before measuring one must make clear exactly what is attempted to be measured and then make sure that it is a measurable concept. It is possible to translate capacity-building into something 'conceptually quantifiable' with the risk of losing the development relevance of ones actions towards change.

3.4. The Change Triangle

The Change Triangle (see appendix 2) is a specific model that is designed to strengthen strategic planning, obtaining advocacy results and hence the legitimacy of partnership-based projects and programs in the South. The logic behind the model is that strategic deliveries and organizational

capacity (building) are not just supplementary to advocacy, but actual preconditions for good advocacy-work to be effective (Tematiskforum). Successful advocacy can widen the organization's constituency and boost its capacity even further and hence improve its chances of providing more strategic deliveries and with time getting authorities and decision-makers to take on responsibilities. The model demands that people organize themselves around the fulfillment of individual and collective rights and/or other civil society demands. The thought is that the change potential of a NGO is only as strong as the interaction between the three elements in the triangle, which can be targeted or implemented by various NGO's, respectively. The overall aim should of course be to promote concrete change but;

“What if those of us who claim to do the teaching do not know how to fish? This is not at all far-fetched. Can we – as NGOs, as donors, as governmental extension services – honestly claim to have achieved that much capacity in our own organisations, we who strive to teach others? Have we really mastered what we teach, have we been able to organize ourselves sufficiently to achieve meaningful impact? (Eade, 2005: 26).

As mentioned further up NGOs must be able to demonstrate the values they preach and thus capacity-building is not solely something that others need to do it is part of a more complex development dynamic. It is plausible that NGOs can get distracted from their visions and main competences in order to 'chase the funding' which mean the measurable results. For example, both the new Danish development strategy²⁴ and the evaluation of the Civil Society Strategy highlight the importance CSOs increasingly trying to work with advocacy as their key strategic objectives; which entails that advocacy becomes an aim of which NGOs navigate towards but is not necessarily well-capacitated within.

IBIS education team initiatives as well operates within the three legs of the change triangle (see appendix 2) and this entails gaining knowledge and conducting activities of Education Financing; e.g. experience with budget tracking in order to collect strong data suitable for advocating quality education and influencing policy-making/changes. In IBIS' case this initially meant mapping out in-

²⁴ *The Right to a better life*. For more detail see references.

house experiences on the area at head office as well as at country offices in order to develop stronger organizational and individual capacities. When IBIS choose to focus a strategic line of action on education policy and financing; successful advocacy on the area demands functional preconditions of strategic deliveries and organizational capacities. And thus IBIS education team spends a certain amount of resources to build capacities strong enough to undertake this specific line of strategy.

The point here is to demonstrate the amount of resources being put into the latest understanding of how to conduct development and promote change, only to change strategy within six months. Oppositely, some argue this to be natural, progressive organizational development.

4. Conclusive remarks

The right information, in the right hands, can be revolutionary. The push to results is not solely a restrictive action, but should be used to put power in the hands of the people being targeted with development aid. It is argued that if NGOs have to define what they are trying to do, and why, then they are more accountable. And if results are publicized then it is easier to judge if donors, governments and NGOs are actually delivering them. But this may also put a restrain on the relationships within development aid. Unfortunately, the desire to be able to attribute change directly to the exact amount spent, rather than being satisfied to contribute to broader processes, works against capacity-building ever being taken seriously (maybe it is simply today's buzzword). Structures are created more to manage aid than to enable the sharing of knowledge as argued through the logical framework approach. How then, is capacity-building captured in monitoring and evaluation? Almost as stated it will only become apparent in the years after or well into the development interaction.

Ironically, however, it is the failure to get capacity-building right that is one of the reasons why those much-sought-after results are so hard to come by. On one level, capacity-building is one of those issues that are inherently difficult to grasp. On another level, it is a crucial element that matters, as seen in the change triangle. Development can be defined as enhancement of the capacity of a society to function for the well-being of its members over the long run. The advantage of this definition is that it lays weight on substantive change rather than superficial

change. This entails embracing not only technological and educational capacities but also structural and institutional capacities; it suggests the importance of structural and institutional indicators. The enhancement of capacities suggests a certain orientation and urges enquiry and investigation in a particular direction.

Focusing on capacity-building, complex as it may be, is a crucial way to help countries continue the exit from aid dependence.

The development potential of a human resources investment may perhaps be equivalent to the product of one qualitative indicator and one quantitative indicator, but this should be carefully determined in order to not prematurely capture very complex phenomena in some type of simple mathematical formula. The logical framework approach bears resemblance to such a formula where a series of causalities are imagined - from the overall purpose to the fictional final outcomes. On the other hand, LFA helps induce clearness of the development initiative and what exactly is attempted to be measured as well as making sure that it is a measurable concept. The important thing is to establish whether the content of ones actions is development-relevant (not mere conceptually quantifiable); evaluating and measuring quantity alone implies virtually nothing.

Learning process and outputs of internship

Through my internship at IBIS I have gained insight into the organizational approach of conducting international development as well as the political structures influencing development aid. I have been able to test my abilities in a Danish NGO that has a more direct and cooperative undertake to international development. Furthermore, I have had the opportunity to identify and explore internal as well as external factors which have had an influence on IBIS' work. This includes the ongoing national debate on the Danish civil society strategy as well as the all-surrounding narrowing end-date of the Millennium Development Goals and henceforth the Post-2015 international processes. Also, as IBIS holds a framework agreement with Danida this has an impact on the evaluation, reporting and measuring workload at the head office at the same time as IBIS conduct own organizational performance system monitoring in order to continuously uphold value and gain from their learning processes. The latter I was fortunate enough to take part in as well.

During my work assignments I was able to conduct smaller analytical researches about Education Financing and post-2015 initiatives and processes for internal use. Moreover, methodologically I got acquainted with conducting research mapping in the form of question sheets and afterwards turning the answers into an analytical report for further inquiry and action plans. All in all, I have been challenged all the way through.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 (only a part of the entire strategic work plan of IBIS HO Education team)

Development task 2: Improve IBIS competence and advocacy actions in the field of education policy and financing

This development task is closely related to the Strategic Line of Action number 2 in the new EfC strategy: 'Civil society participation and advocacy work at the local, national and global level ensures that relevant policies for the fulfilment of the right to quality education are adopted, financed and delivered in practice.'

This should also be seen in the perspective of the post-2015 process – as the strategic line of action 2 emphasises that access to quality education should manifest itself as the overarching 'beyond 2015' goal.

A mapping of existing competences and experiences will take place as an entry point for analysing the capacity development needs of HO and TP staff and partners leading into an action plan for capacity building of IBIS staff and partners on especially education financing. Education financing has been chosen as the focus of this development task as it is seen as a prerequisite for delivering of quality education for children, youth and adults within both formal and non-formal education. The development task should result in country plans for advocacy on education financing and in the implementation, cooperating with national, regional (ANCEFA and CLADE) and global education coalitions (GCE), other INGOs and not least the governance teams within IBIS (HO and nationally).

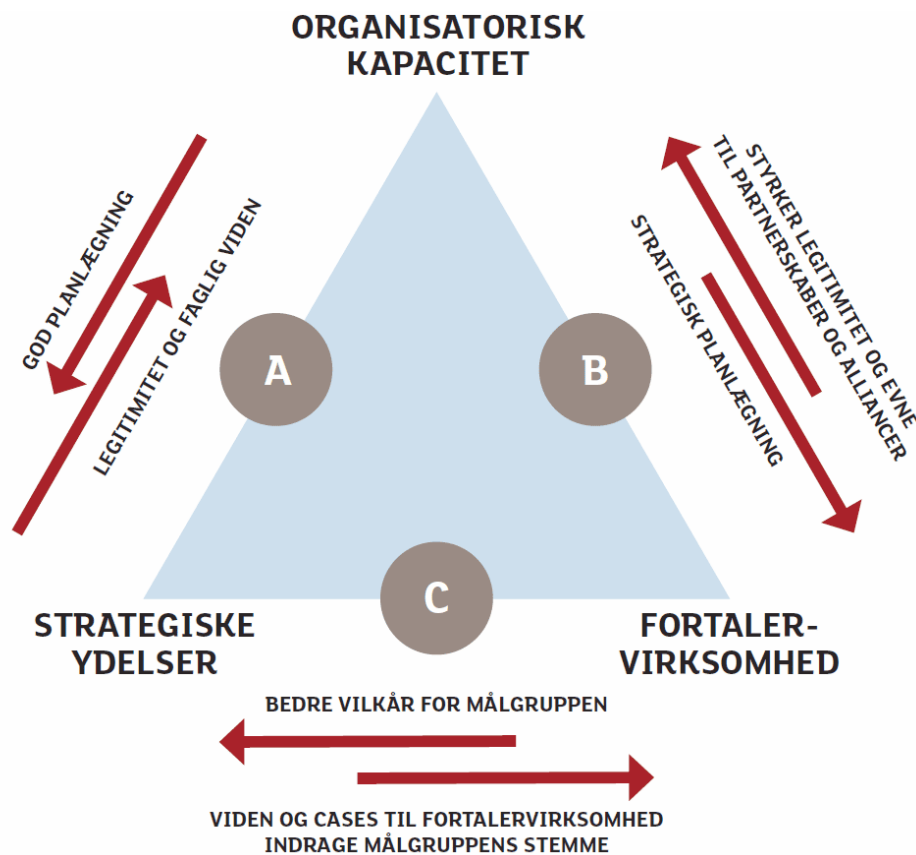
Milestones	Responsible
1. Map existing competences/experiences and identify capacity development needs of IBIS Thematic Programme (TP) staff and partners in the field of Strategic line of action 2	HO Education

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Guide for country level mapping ○ Carry out mapping and analysis by TPs ○ Make a summary of outcomes and recommendations 	<p>Team /Intern at HO TPs²⁵/Partners HO Edu Team/ Intern at HO</p>
<p>2. Plan for capacity building of IBIS staff (HO and TPs) and partners (members of national EfA coalitions/coalitions themselves) on education financing (different aspects e.g. (budgeting, sources of funds and allocation; budget tracing and transparency in education planning and monitoring the implementation of funding):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Elaboration of plan (including budget) at HO and CO level for capacity development. Cooperation sought with Action Aid (and other likeminded INGOs) and IBIS governance tea. - Capacity development process started - HO staff will be available to facilitate processes in TPs - Carry out and monitor capacity development process 	<p>Coordinated by HO, TP plans made at each country level</p> <p>TPs and HO</p>
<p>3. Develop country plans for advocacy on education financing (country specific and link to regional and global advocacy):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and share plans - Implementation of plans - Integrate monitoring and reporting of the education financing advocacy process (OPS, 5 steps/partner forum, FMM, GEG) 	<p>TPs and HO</p>

²⁵ Thematic partners

Appendix 2

The Change Triangle



Source: <http://www.cisu.dk/Default.aspx?ID=29514>. For English version consult the webpage.

Appendix 3 (only a part of the Terms of Reference of Internship)

Tasks: The Intern will assist the Education Team with **follow up/implementation of IBIS Global Education Group (GEG) development tasks** decided upon at the meeting in Nov/2012 with focus on:

- Mapping of existing competences/experiences and capacity development needs of IBIS Thematic Programme (TP) staff and partners in the field of Education Policy and Financing – related also to the global post-2015 process

1. **Policy analysis or/and writing articles on relevant topics** With the approach of the 2015 deadline for achievement of both the Dakar Framework for Action on Education For All and the Millennium Development Goals, IBIS is seeking to involve itself and partners on what should come next in realizing the rights to quality education. The task is influenced by the fact that the period with start from 2013 will be imperative for influencing the revision/elaboration of new global

commitments towards Education for All beyond 2015. The intern will contribute to the IBIS HO Education Teams knowledge of all the different post-2015 processes and participate in the articulation of IBIS advocacy efforts to get quality education into the post-2015 targets / objectives. Related to this the intern is expected to support elaboration of analysis papers and articles to be used in different forums.

2. Support the **communication of IBIS EfC Strategy and finalizing a Series of Concept Papers concretizing** IBIS approach to education.

3. Support **elaboration of IBIS GEG newsletter** – The quarterly newsletter is an initiative from the IBIS Education Team at the Head Office. The newsletter is prepared with participation from the members of the GEG and aims to inform on new initiatives, conferences, evaluations and learning taking place currently in the various programs or globally in general. It is in this way intended to provide a forum for sharing knowledge and inspiration and to foster a collective sense of innovation and action.

Products and results

Develop a guide for country level mapping of competencies / experiences in relation to education policy and financing and summarize the results of the mapping

Develop an overview of the post-2015 processes and support in analysis and article writing

Support the production of 2 GEG newsletters

Review existing global concept papers and support the publication of these