

Outcome Mapping in North Korea

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Introduction

SDC is one of the first institutions that implements development cooperation with North Korea. Projects with the focus on increasing food security in the country evolved step by step from the previous humanitarian aid programme. The responsible state institutions in North Korea showed interest in the transition from humanitarian aid to development cooperation. This is in line with their philosophy of self-help and independence. The strong will of North Koreans to help themselves and to act self-dependent can even lead to criticism against experts in development cooperation, who are doing things the North Koreans want to learn and to do themselves right from the beginning. SDC has supported this strong will for self-help in North Korea. SDC has therefore organized a capacity building programme in project cycle management over several years. Further SDC has split its agricultural support programme into many small-scale projects. This should have made project self-management easier for the North Koreans during the start-up phase. Unfortunately both SDC efforts did not result in project self-management. Responsibility and initiative for project implementation remained in the hands of employees and consultants of the donor.



Paddy fields. Increasing food security is the main goal in the Agricultural Support Programme of SDC in North Korea.

Outcome Mapping as an Alternative

Project Planning

Outcome Mapping offered an alternative in this situation. Outcome Mapping makes a clear difference between activities within the responsibility system of the donor and activities within endogenous responsibility systems in the project area. Actually planning with Outcome Mapping is splitting projects into two parts, the own development project of the responsible endogenous actors in the project area and the support project of the donor.

Outcome Mapping follows right from the beginning the principle of no joint project institution and no joint project management including representatives from both donor and endogenous partners in the project area. Outcome Mapping plans the coordinated cooperation of different self-dependent institutions. Each institution has its own interests, responsibilities and contribution. Outcome Mapping means planning and adjusting the contributions of all partner institutions that are needed for success in sustainable development. This includes contributions from both sides the endogenous actors in the project area and the actors from donor side. For successful changes on the side of endogenous actors are usually value chains necessary. Specific contributions can be needed from research, state administration, training and extension, production, processing, transport, trading. Clear responsibilities and roles among all partner institutions are crucial. Important is also that future actors in the development project are already participating in the planning workshops. This is because one important part of donor support is usually focusing on the endogenous participants from the project area during the planning workshops. The support project from donor side must be well adjusted to the development project of the endogenous partners.

The contributions of endogenous institutions from the project area are changes in practice which are adding

intended values for groups of beneficiaries. The donor and his employees or consultants are responsible for the right start-up support to different Partners. Addressees of start-up support are the endogenous innovators in the project area that are responsible for intended changes in practice.

Yearly Plan of Operation

The yearly plan of operation includes the changes of the year for endogenous innovators in the project area. Another part of the yearly plan of operation includes the corresponding start-up support for innovators. The SDC start-up support project is responsible for making sure that the means for support to innovators (knowledge, experience, equipment, finances) can be provided in the right quality at the right time. The innovators are then responsible to ask for and making best use of support for their contribution to development. Planned outcomes are monitored, assessed and analyzed regularly and results are used for project steering.

Experience

The concept of responsibility of the Outcome Mapping method has been presented to the North Korean partners. They approved it although they realized that the method is more complex than the logframe approach they have learned and used so far. They liked

two things in Outcome Mapping: 1. The clear concept of shared responsibility and contributions by different actors. 2. The principle of continuous capacity building by the support project of the donor in order to fill capacity gaps of innovators. This helps endogenous innovators to face the challenges and contribute themselves step by step to their own development.

The first planning process for their own development project with Outcome Mapping in January 2007 was not easy for the North Korean partners. The project documents are formally not perfect. However from the point of view of their content are

The cooperative approach to development

- It needs contributions of several independent partners of value chains to create additional benefits



- The support project from the donor side is not part of the system



the documents good. Especially important is that for the first time the North Korean partners have their own development projects. Findings of the monitoring mission in November 2007 are encouraging: The level of taking over responsibility and initiative in implementation their own development projects by the designated North Korean partners is good. This does of course not mean that all problems are solved. But it is an important precondition for development cooperation.

Monitoring as an important management task

For a long time monitoring in North Korea was a big problem. The North Koreans perceived it as interference in their inner affairs by foreign experts. Now with Outcome Mapping self-monitoring of the own development projects has become important. The North Koreans themselves want to know and to show what they managed to do successfully, how far donor support has contributed to progress and problems can be solved based on lessons learned. The joint monitoring mission of North Korean partners and an external expert in November 2007 could be successfully implemented. Lessons learned based on outcomes contributed substantially to assessing performance of partners that have implemented planned activities. Clear roles and responsibilities minimize mistrust. The wish to be successful furthers monitoring as an important management task, which is supporting strongly learning by doing.

Knowledge in Outcome Mapping is an advantage

It is in any case an advantage to have knowledge in Outcome Mapping. The experience in North Korea is relevant also for other countries. The wish of partners to implement their development projects themselves can only be supported by donors. Motivated and self-dependent partners are the main factor for project support. Success of the partners is at the same time success of the donor, who supported them. Outcome Mapping proved in North Korea to be a good management method for projects of coordinated cooperation

of different self-dependent partners. It is in any case an advantage to have knowledge about the principles of Outcome Mapping and the latest experiences about the method.

The one who pays manages!

In cases where a donor has a joint project with partners he wants to promote, activities of the partners depend on the donors. It is because of this experience that donors are looking for other organizational solutions for their projects. One solution is Outcome Mapping. This method is splitting projects into two parts:

- ⇒ Part 1: The own development project of the responsible endogenous actors in the project area.
- ⇒ Part 2: The support project of the donor. The support project depends on the development project of the endogenous partners.

The experience in North Korea is also a contribution to the issue of harmonising different management methods. It gives for instance an example, how Outcome Mapping can be harmonised with Result-Based Management (RBM). The section East Asia in SDC uses RBM for the strategic monitoring of country programmes.

Agridea gains since 2003 continuously experiences with Outcome Mapping. Based on that, it offers inception trainings each year since 2005. Those who are interested to update their knowledge in project management are welcome to participate in the inception training. Also those who have already participated can profit and participate again after some years in order to remain updated.