

Organisational Development

There are two ways of understanding the term organisational development.

1. How organisations come into being

Community Organisations, small and large NGO's/CSO's operating at local, national and international levels all have a number of features in common.

1. They emerge when a group of people decides to work together to achieve a common vision.
2. They generally take a legal form to provide protection to the individuals involved.
3. The legal form taken can vary from group, association, co-operative, company, network organisation.
4. They usually have membership criteria based on agreement with the objectives of the group.
5. They can often have membership structures, which allows for the claim of being representative of a larger community of people.
6. They generate plans for the work, have division of labour amongst the people employed, have budgets and financial management responsibilities and have a responsibility to communicate their work to the membership.

Organisations develop over time

A number of models for the evolution of civil society organisations have been described. This ranges from loose collectives without any structures to legal entities with clear demarcation of responsibilities and authority. These structures have been adopted as the movements evolved. (Jo Freeman). Different structures will be chosen at different times because the structure should follow the purpose.

One typology for the stages of development of CSO's is:

- Exploratory Stage
- Initiation/operation Stage
- Operation/growth Stage
- Consolidation Stage
- Learning/development Stage.

Often times it is an external or an internal crisis that causes shifts in the structures/processes of an organisation, which responds to the crisis by modifying itself to adapt to the changed environment.

Sometimes the change occurs because the individuals who started the organisation move away and the successors have a different vision and approach to the work.

Finally, organisations can also develop according to a planned environmental analysis and reflection leading to developing more appropriate work programmes and approaches. Leading to a life-cycle description of stages, changes and future opportunities for renewal and growth.

2. How to develop existing organisations

By this we usually mean targeting an intervention at some element of the organisation so as to improve, enhance and make 'more fit for purpose'.

The focus of such interventions is on the interlinked areas of:

- ❖ Structures;
- ❖ Plans;
- ❖ Finances and People Resources;
- ❖ Systems of operation;
- ❖ Monitoring and Evaluation of outputs and outcomes;

And the interventions can be at

- Individual
- Team
- Departmental
- Whole Organisational levels.

For example:

- Coaching/mentoring/supervision for individuals.
- Team development
- Departmental and interdepartmental strategies on co-operation/time planning
- Whole organisational reviews/planning/strategic development

Supporting organisations to develop.

Supporting organisations to develop in planned, systematic manner is part of the responsibility of the Chairperson/Manager and is often supported by an outside person who facilitates reflection, learning, visioning, and planning.

Looking at how organisations approach their work, two lines of movement can be illustrated.

The parabola...starting with no activity, moving through planning, implementation and then coming to the end of the work and back to no activity. This is often used to describe a discrete project or programme of work.

The sigmoid curve...where new activity is developed while still engaging in the successful current actions. Never being at the 'no activity' place. This is a more useful model for an organisation which has no time boundaries, and hopes to continue to exist until its vision has been attained.

Typologies for the development of organisations

Group Theory	Organisational Leadership Life Cycle	Community Development Organisational Development	Organisational Development
Forming, Storming Norming, Performing Ending – renewal	Creation Construction Development Expansion Cultivation Renewal	Activists Employing Managing Group Management Committee Co-operative Organisation	Exploratory Stage Initiation/operation Stage Operation/growth Stage Consolidation Stage Learning/development Stage.

Organisations are a feature of MOVEMENTS for social change. Over time the focus can shift and change according to the community's needs, the individuals working with and for the community and the analysis of the situation of inequality being experienced.

Once the analysis develops and a new paradigm of understanding becomes current, the appropriate responses will change.

Deficit Model....Charity Response.

Needs based model....Fairness response.

Rights based model...Duty bearers and rights holders

Community development....Empowered rights holders participating and others accountable.