Governance, Institutional and Human Capacity Building for Sustainable Development: International Norms, Standards and Emerging Trends

Professor Dr. Shawkat Alam

Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS
THROUGH STRATEGIC HR

Effective Governance

OUTLINE:

1. **Effective Governance: Conceptual Framework**
   a) Introduction
   b) Accountability
   c) Transparency and Integrity
   d) Participation

2. **Implementing Effective Governance: Capacity Building**
   a) Introduction
   b) Institutional Capacity
   c) Human Capacity
   d) Achieving Capacity Building

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS THROUGH STRATEGIC HR

Effective Governance

1 INTRODUCTION

- 'Governance' is a broadly defined concept, and generally relates to how decisions are made, the power and authority exercised to make decisions and to what extent various stakeholders (including citizens) can actively participate in the decision-making process

- Good governance aims for inclusive participation, effective government, responsible and accountable power structures and a respect for the rule of law and international law principles

- The community can possess traditional knowledge to inform decision-making; civil society can act as a watchdog and demand accountability.

Effective Governance

- Effective implementation to generate positive outcomes is the result of good governance which can attribute to better decision-making (Winqvest et al, 2012, p 26)

Figure 5. Input and output side of national governance systems

Effective Governance

2 ACCOUNTABILITY

- Individuals, agencies and organisations are held responsible for executing their powers properly

- Accountability can be direct or indirect (i.e. through a third party)

- Traditionally, governments are accountable to their constituency. However, the revenue generated by aid partners to development agencies may result in these agencies reporting to (i.e. accountable) aid partners rather than their constituency

Effective Governance

3 TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY

- Ability to examine records and information from agencies to enable detection of wrong-doing

- Budget transparency is vital as non-transparent budgets make it difficult to scrutinize budget allocation and implementation of obligations

- Integrity refers to the adherence of moral or ethical principles, such as impartiality, legality, public accountability and transparency

Effective Governance

3 TRANSPARENCY AND INTEGRITY

- Integrity breeds trust. Public trust in institutions is vital given that a core function of agencies is to allocate resources, and they have a direct impact in the balance between private gains and public wealth

- Corruption has a detrimental effect on outcomes. Core activities such as monitoring, effective allocation of resources etc. can be compromised by corruption. Principles including transparency assist in preventing corruption.

- UNSDG Goal 16: "Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels"

Effective Governance

4 PARTICIPATION

- Various actors, including the community, companies, civil society and academia can effectively contribute and influence policy and decision making. For effective participation, decision-makers must consult all stakeholders.

- Citizens must have the opportunity to participate, as well as the capacity to process information and act on it (e.g. be well informed).

- Increased local participation has a positive effect on service delivery. For services implemented at the local level, communities and citizens can monitor its effectiveness and provide feedback to improve service delivery

- Who participates is important: careful stakeholder analysis is vital to determine whether participation from certain actors create a 'false-balance' of perspectives

Implementing Effective Governance: Capacity Building

1. Introduction
2. Institutional Capacity
3. Human Capacity
4. Achieving Capacity Building

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS
THROUGH STRATEGIC HR

Capacity Building

- Capacity building refers to 'building abilities, relationships and values that will enable organizations, groups and individuals to improve their performance and achieve their development objectives' (UNEP, 2002).

- There is a strong trend for increased capacity building, rather than creating ad hoc development projects, as a pathway to sustainable development in order to reduce chronic aid dependency.

- Capacity building focuses on creating partnerships with developing countries to empower them to achieve their development aspirations.

Capacity Building

Sustainable Development Goal 17.9:

- **Target**: Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation

- **Indicator**: Dollar value of financial and technical assistance (including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation) committed to developing countries

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS
THROUGH STRATEGIC HR

Capacity Building

- Capacity building is vital in addressing sustainable development given its complex, interconnected and interdisciplinary nature of sustainable development problems.

- Sustainable development problems can be characterised as being both vertical and horizontal:
    - Vertical – where issues take place across local and national jurisdictions

    - Horizontal – where issues cross specialised areas of expertise/government, or between different stakeholders

Capacity Building

- Developing countries face severe capacity constrains which can inhibit their ability to effectively implement sustainable development.

- Some of these constraints come in the form of:
    - Lack of policy coordination, strategy and communication between stakeholders

    - Corruption

    - Lack of evaluation and reporting

Capacity Building

5 CAPACITY BUILDING

- Little evidence based policy making

- New and emerging issues not captured in national policy making institutions

- Lack of policy implementation measures

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS
THROUGH STRATEGIC HR

Capacity Building

- Creating a coherent institutional framework for sustainable development is critical for promoting cross-sector policy coordination and decentralisation of policy-making

- A central agency to coordinate policy-making, articulating clear goals and objectives, and to measure effectiveness remains important to steer development towards certain priorities.

- However other departments, local governments and partners play a key role in policy design and implementation. These partnerships frame and create sustainable development solutions for their respective areas of specialisation and jurisdictions

Capacity Building

7 CAPACITY BUILDING – INSTITUTIONAL

- Removing 'silos' and introducing integrated policy planning creates more opportunities to find co-benefits and address sustainable development challenges holistically.

- Addressing corruption is vital as it undermines any institutional framework for sustainable development. Promoting transparency, accountability are important tools to combat corruption.

Capacity Building

8 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE

- The practice of an organisation that leads the behaviour of its members through words, interpersonal relationships and gestures.

- It is informed by the beliefs, social ideals and values that its members share.

- UNSDG Goal 16: "Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels"

Capacity Building

8 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE – LEADERSHIP

- The leadership of individuals and the wider organisational culture are mutually reinforcing. Leaders create tools to either evolve current culture or change existing standard.

- Where leadership and organisational culture can work together, then leadership can be an effective factor in changing an organisation's culture when needed and to impact it when there is a decision or plan to be implemented.

Capacity Building

- Achieving sustainable development remains a challenge for developing countries without the sufficient human capital to promote change.

- This may come in the form of sufficient knowledge capital, education and training to recognise, frame, address, implement and reform sustainable development policy.

Capacity Building

9 CAPACITY BUILDING – HUMAN

- Developing countries are limited in their ability to localise, implement and adapt technological responses to SD issues given a lack of human capital and knowledge.

- 'Effective technology transfer requires the building of innovation capabilities in developing countries through transfer of associated and tacit knowledge rather than mere technical assistance' (de Coninck, 2015).

Capacity Building

10 ACHIEVING CAPACITY BUILDING

- Identifying needs and building on existing capacities
  - There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Identify what are critical needs first, and leverage off existing strengths including professional/expertise to lead policy delivery

- Be clear with objectives
  - This assists in policy coordination and delivery
  - Recognise if your objectives address building awareness, building analytical capacity or decision making capacity as it may shift your goals

Capacity Building

10 ACHIEVING CAPACITY BUILDING

- Use different approaches
    - Education
    - Networking
    - Projects

- Build 'critical mass'
    - This is where there is a sufficient number of people who can initiate and sustain change
    - Whilst targeting senior personnel is important, middle management is needed to provide a platform

Capacity Building

10 ACHIEVING CAPACITY BUILDING

- Train-the-trainers
    - By focussing resources on providing education to future trainers, this can enable critical mass and promote coordination.
    - Continual reform and feedback is essential

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS
THROUGH STRATEGIC HR

Capacity Building

ADDITIONAL READINGS

M Hilderbrand, M Grindle, 'Building sustainable capacity in the public sector: What can be done?' in *Getting good government: Capacity building in the public sectors of developing countries* (Harvard Press, 1997)

Chris Miller, 'Developing capacity and agency in complex times' in Sue Kenny and Matthew Clarke (ed) *Challenging capacity building: Comparative perspectives* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010)

2018 Public Sector HR Symposium
ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGH RESULTS
THROUGH STRATEGIC HR