

Project number	39911027
Title	Kapacitetsbyggande

Countries Kenya, Egypten, Östafrika

Summary The Pentecostal Mission's Development Cooperation (PMU) is a nonprofit organization, which provides administrative and technical support to the development investments of the Swedish Pentecostal church movement. The church supplements larger contributions to partners by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), and funds are also provided by the European Commission - Humanitarian Aid & Civil Protection (ECHO), as well as donations by many individual donors, other churches, businesses and charity stores. Complementing mission work, PMU helps around 44 partners implementing over 150 projects, coordinated by a Secretariat in Stockholm of around 30 people and a handful of Facilitators in different regions.

PMU acts as an advisor and facilitator for local partners, aiming to provide outcome-oriented support in a cycle of planning, monitoring, evaluation, reflection and learning (PMERL). Support takes the form of financial enablement, tools and concepts around rights, organizational and management capacity development, and collective reflection on actions, policies and procedures. PMU strongly embraces the principles of local ownership, partner-centred organizational development and strategy, and developmental practice.

Captured under Building Block 5, PMU sees capacity building of its local partners as one of its critical roles. PMU offers direct capacity building, such as seminars or training around themes like democracy, equity, advocacy and education, as well as coaching on systemic and structural issues. PMU also tries to stimulate and motivate capacity building through its templates, PMERL systems, and compliance and financial audits. PMU also encourages mutual peer-to-peer capacity building, and aims to intensify this level of capacity investment.

While most PMU capacity building is provided through onsite mentorship and training by a team dedicated to supporting the programs in each region, certain crosscutting capacity building functions are seen to be delivered more practically at a global level. The "Resource and Development Team" (RDT) includes four capacity and development experts, who drive global level interventions.

This evaluation was commissioned with a relatively open brief, to review the processes, systems and approaches to capacity building by PMU in general and the RDT in particular. The evaluation team reviewed documentation, interviewed most of the relevant PMU staff based in Sweden, conducted several telephone interviews of both staff and partners, and conduct field visits to the Middle East and Kenya. The evaluation was intended to gather the views of capacity practitioners within PMU, as well as the advice and feedback of development partners on the ground.

PMUs structure at regional level is highly effective, although sometimes understaffed. Each region, or a reasonable cluster of countries benefits from the regular intensive support of a "Country Level Support Team" comprising Project Officer, Facilitator and Controller. Some or all of these may be based in the region, depending on distance and logistics from Sweden. This structure is

effective. The structure of the RDT is less clear. This is partly because the roles of the RDT, especially in relation to the “Country Level Support Team”, are not yet clear. While the “Country Level Support Team” provides the great majority of capacity building through its close contact, some functions are well suited to a global approach. Once functions have been defined, structure, roles and communication flows should follow. The roles of partners and “Country Level Support Team” in requesting call-down services and in providing input to annual planning of the RDT’s workplan should be more clearly defined in the flow of communication between structures.

PMU’s capacity building seems to be effective, particularly since it supports an approach to partners’ development through the provision of funding, accompaniment and long-term commitment. The added value of specific capacity building work is always difficult to evaluate, although a mature understanding of rights-based approaches, and strong strategy, management and leadership can be accepted as contributing to effectiveness. Partners report improved performance in areas such as facilitation, advocacy, planning and implementation of projects.

PMU is an important asset to partners, and to the scaled delivery of development through faith-based structures. Its dedication to continuously learning and improving its own impact is praised by partners, and is likely to enable increasingly effective practice.

Recommendations

- The RDT risks becoming lost in excessive documentation and philosophy. Its contribution needs to be simplified and described in shorter, less abstract briefs.
- Re-branding – A more descriptive name, a by-line and clearer, more punchy descriptions of the RDT’s services may support more coherent uptake, and clearer impact.
- Position in PMU – Consider showing where the RDT contributes at local, regional and global levels, and its relationship with the “Country Level Support Team”.
- Functions – Outline services at different levels, and mechanisms for partners to gain access to them.
- Ensure that partners understand the RDT services and include the time and budgets into their workplans, requesting training with a clear purpose.
- Simplify: Consider ways of simplifying complicated lists, documents and templates. Continuously look for opportunities to reduce the over-engineering that has created a very complicated partner-PMU interface.
- Recognise and define the capacity building roles of “Country Level Support Team” comprising Project Officer, Facilitator and Controller, so that these are clearly recognised and not duplicated by RDT, but instead complemented. This “Country Level Support Team” should concentrate particular attention on weaker organizations, where basic administration, management, planning and OD are needed. The manpower in the “Country Level Support Team” should reflect this role, and may need to be increased in some cases.