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MOST: Management/Organizational Sustainability Tool, Tanzania

Family Planning Management Development (FPMD)

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MOST: Management/Organizational Sustainability Tool *of the Family Planning Management Development (FPMD) Project/MSH*

1. **Country:** TANZANIA
2. **Organization:** Family Planning Association of Tanzania
Uzazi no Malezi Bora Tanzania (UMATI)
3. **Date Conducted:** May 1997
4. **Facilitators:** Barbara Tobin, FPMD Africa Unit and Gerry Rosenthal, MSH Health Financing Program; Gottlieb Mpangile and Mary Kairu, IPPF Africa Regional Office
5. **Context for MOST:** Part of FPMD - IPPFAR Joint Activity Pilot Project
6. **UMATI Profile:** First family planning organization in Tanzania, established in early 1960s. Currently multiple clinics, 12 area offices, nationwide coverage.
Management situation: After years of being the foremost family planning organization in the country, UMATI is now faced with declining numbers of clients served; increased competition; almost complete donor dependence; lack of leadership.
7. **Workshop Structure:** 3 day workshop consisting of three modules:
 1. Module 1: Introduction of management concepts and MOST concept and instrument; application of MOST instrument and discussions leading to consensus on current status and “one step better” (Module summary and results attached)
 2. Module 2: Linking of MOST to UMATI’s proposed new strategic plan and to the results of recent IPPF external management assessment (OPE/MA) (Module summary attached)
 3. Module 3: Defining possible next steps as a role play [Note: Before the workshop, we were apprised that the Executive Director’s contract would not be renewed. The ED herself and the staff, however, were unaware of this. Because of the impending departure of the Executive Director and the impact of this leadership transition, there was not a strong emphasis on defining steps or setting a timetable at the workshop.] (Description of Role Play attached)
8. **Participants:** There was a total of 13 participants from UMATI: 3 volunteer

members of the Board; 6 headquarters senior management; and 4 zonal directors. There were two staff members from IPPFAR and 2 from FPMD.

9. *Innovations:*

This was the first MOST workshop, so everything was new, including the workshop format, agenda, modules, et al. This workshop was designed to be the model for other IPPF - MOST workshops, with the following underlying principles:

1. Participants: 10-20 with approximately equal numbers of board, headquarters, and field staff.
2. Style: Low key; low cost. In an atmosphere of seemingly endless workshops, we wanted to emphasize that this was a working session, part of conducting business rather than extraneous training. We requested that UMATI find a very inexpensive venue, as there was no separate budget for this activity; rather, it was to be cost-shared by FPMD, IPPFAR, and the FPA. There was no resistance to this idea; they found a very nice, free training room at the Ministry of Health, which they had never used before, but plan to use in the future. The teenage mothers' vocational training class at the UMATI youth centre catered lunches and tea breaks. The total costs to FPMD for the three day workshop for 17 people, apart from staff time and travel, was \$315.00. There were no fancy workshop supplies or handouts; no per diems in addition to actual expenses for food.
3. Role of FPMD and IPPFAR as Facilitators not Outside Assessors: We emphasized that we were not at UMATI to conduct an outside assessment, but rather to assist them in assessing their own organization. This was particularly important, both for gaining trust, but also because a recent outside management assessment had been conducted by IPPF, over which UMATI felt quite powerless. It took the group about half the first morning to trust the facilitators, after which discussions became much freer.
4. Two rounds of completing the ODSS: The participants went through one round of completing the ODSS by themselves, then meeting in small groups to reach consensus. These were presented to the group as a whole and discussed. However, rather than proceeding to the entire group consensus stage, we sent them back to new small groups and had them start all over again. The first round was thrown out as a practice and learning exercise.
5. Small Group Members: The IPPFAR facilitators organized the distribution of participants into small groups to ensure that field, HQ, and volunteers were interacting, rather than having homogeneous groups. This worked well, although with two rounds of MOST, it would be interesting to do homogenous groups, to see how well that works.
6. ODSS as a Work in Progress: The ODSS is a new instrument under development, and we wanted to emphasize this to the group in order to solicit their feedback and input in improving it.

10. Problems/Issues:

In Using the MOST Instrument:

1. Aligning numerical choice of levels of development with indicators was difficult. For example, the level would be a "3" but the descriptive indicator corresponded better to "1." The descriptions were invariably more accurate than the number.
2. Developing indicators in general proved quite difficult. The tendency was to repeat the reference criteria as indicators, or use some extraneous fact.

11. Lessons Learned:

1. We learned that the style, length of the workshop worked well. The purposes were clear and of interest. The modules and the ODSS instrument worked well and provided a non-threatening way for the organization to examine its shortcomings.
2. We needed a mechanism for planning the next steps. The workshop was more successful in providing a field test for ODSS than in helping the organization define what it needed to do to improve its management. During the role play the groups reverted to old ways of looking at creating new ideas and got bogged down in being too elaborate. Expecting the organization to write follow up concept papers for next steps is unrealistic and unsuccessful.
3. Soliciting their input for improving the instrument brought very useful insights, in the progression of levels and the wording of reference criteria. It also reinforced the point that we were not the know-all trainers, but rather, were learners.

- 12. Recommended Improvements:** Define last module better to allow for workplanning which includes specific tasks, dates, and people responsible.

- 13. Supplementary:** Several weeks prior to the workshop, IPPFAR and FPMD staff conducted a half day workshop expectations and preparation meeting with the senior management and board members and obtained background documents, including the external management assessment.

- 14. Next Steps:** Shortly after the workshop, we learned that the contract of the Executive Director was not renewed; the Program Manager is in charge during the search for a new director. UMATI submitted a concept paper to IPPFAR for ODSS-follow up activities: They requested \$20,000 to conduct a workshop to identify priorities. It was rejected by IPPFAR. Once the new director is appointed and settled in, there will should be another ODSS/MOST workshop conducted by IPPFAR with a strong workplanning component.