EVALUATION
FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Inclusive Tanzania Network

Access to education and political participation of persons with disabilities

Working with a Network

The process to create a network requires time and human resources which may limit the scope and effectiveness of external action in that period.

Voicing their individual expectations and understanding the benefit of working together for a consensual objective was crucial for the network members.

By analyzing and assessing the stakeholders, the (political, social, socio-economic) environment and the needs of the target groups as a prerequisite, effective advocacy and networking was possible.

The offer of space and resources for activities complementary to the members' individual work increased the recognition of the network's added value.

Through the considerable experience of its individual members the network became an important player in policy processes.

Making an effort to ensure that members actively address potential discrimination, faced by vulnerable groups such as girls with disabilities, persons with learning disabilities, etc. ensured their inclusion.

Inviting duty-bearers (i.e. govern. officials) to planning workshops and other network activities was an effective way of making them aware of their own responsibilities.

Involving media personnel was one component adding to the network's success.

Linking the network to other projects and to service providers was important for being able to meet expectations for support that arose while avoiding turning the network into a service provider itself.

Structures, Roles and Responsibilities

Developing and signing a MoU by all member organizations provideed clarity on objectives, responsibilities and structures.

Having a strong local coordinator, also acting as facilitator, was crucial for supporting and supervising activities of the network, and for ensuring their acceptance of the decisions of the steering committee.

A network can stand and fall with strong individuals: To avoid "single strong personality decisions" and that the whole network is not depending on one person it is crucial to ensure that knowledge of the project and responsibilities are distributed to among a number of people.

Maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the local partners, asking for views and assessments on progress, promoted the decision making power of the local partners.

Funding networks and their activities can create tension between network members especially if they have different levels of resources.

A Culture of Information

Learning to share experiences instead of feeling threatened by other organizations as potential competitors is an essential factor for effective cooperation and joint advocacy.

Trust and recognition of the mutual benefits of the network was achieved by providing information and resources to all members, which in turn encouraged them to share their own information and resources.

Decisions on how to use international processes and frameworks in a national context need to be made by the network of local partners. Guidance and technical support will however be needed for their integration in joint advocacy.

The use of flexible and alternative ways of communication (incl. Braille, easy to understand, sign language, etc.) and internal awareness raising have proved to be effective in avoiding the exclusion of members who e.g. cannot afford access to the internet, live in remote areas or risk to be neglected because of learning difficulties.

Developing Skills and Capacities

Developing the skills and capacities of the disability movement lies at the heart of any intervention that aims at an inclusive and accessible society. Flexible and needs-based capacity development has to be defined by the network members themselves.

Flexible and needs-based capacity development on e.g. computer literacy for blind members, advocacy approaches, democratic and electoral rights was applied during the implementation phase to strengthen their capacities.
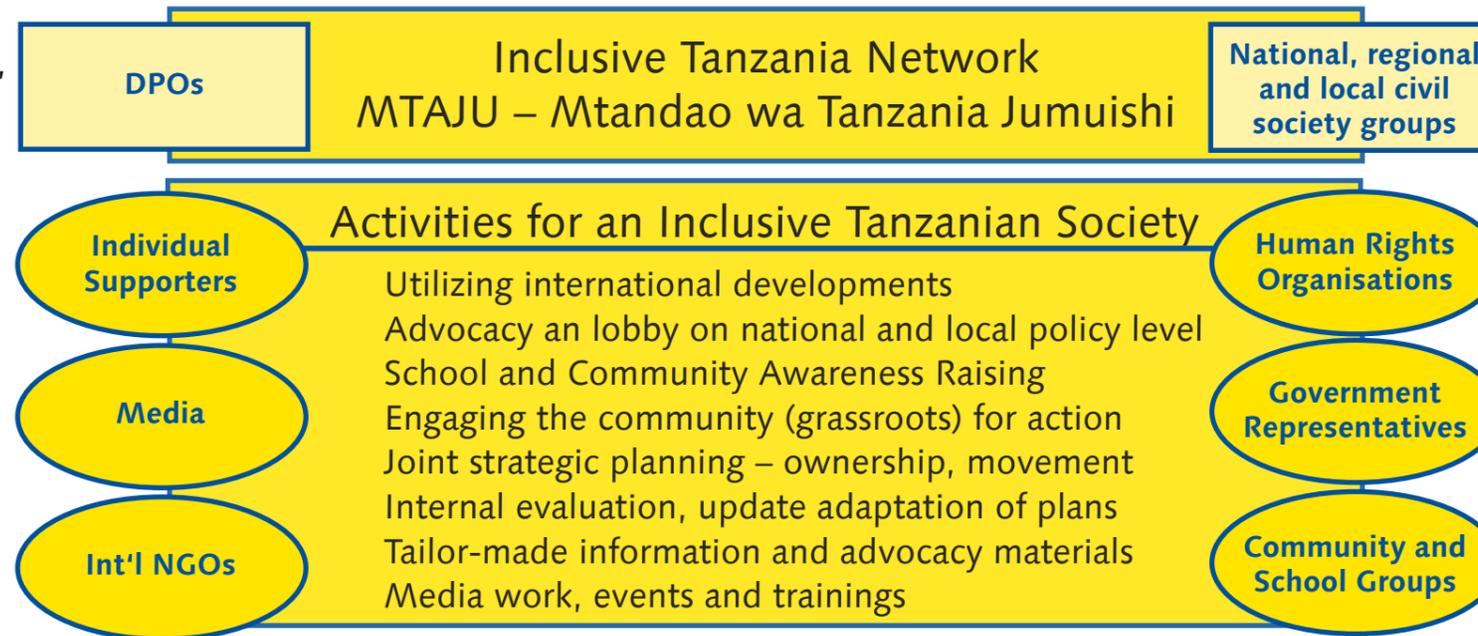
Using local trainers with disabilities supports the learning in praxis-oriented settings as well as shows persons with disabilities as professional experts, contradicting the charity model of disability.

Regular follow up of "hands-on" training (e.g. development of advocacy strategies, working plans, etc.) during the implementation phase ensures that acquired skills can be applied and built on.

Collecting and processing data, for example on the number of children with disabilities, was used as the starting point for informing and lobbying government agencies and the media. It helped provide evidence for advocacy and evaluation of progress.

Working for inclusion in selected pilot areas demonstrated the effectiveness of advocacy, which in turn helped to influence decision makers and policies.

Training in fundraising in order to develop alternative ways of funding guarantees the sustainability of networks, who have very limited own resources.

DPOs

Inclusive Tanzania Network
MTAJU – Mtandao wa Tanzania Jumuishi

National, regional and local civil society groups

Individual Supporters

Activities for an Inclusive Tanzanian Society

Human Rights Organisations

Utilizing international developments
Advocacy an lobby on national and local policy level
School and Community Awareness Raising
Engaging the community (grassroots) for action
Joint strategic planning – ownership, movement
Internal evaluation, update adaptation of plans
Tailor-made information and advocacy materials
Media work, events and trainings

Media

Government Representatives

Int'l NGOs

Community and School Groups

The Project

MTAJU - Inclusive Tanzania is a pilot project to empower persons with disabilities through inclusive education and political participation.

The project was co-developed, supervised and financed by LIGHT FOR THE WORLD and monitored by the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights. The project lasted from November 2005 to December 2010. MTAJU consists of a network of Tanzanian Disabled People's Organizations (DPOs) and Pro Disability Organizations (PDOs), who campaign together for their vision of an inclusive Tanzanian society, where people with disabilities enjoy the same rights as other citizens.

The main project aims are the legal, political and social establishment of the right to education of children with disabilities and the right to political participation of persons with disabilities. To achieve these ambitious aims, member organizations carried out various advocacy, lobbying and awareness raising activities from grassroots to national level. They chose pilot wards, districts, and model schools where Advocacy Committees intensively and successfully worked on realization of the rights of children and persons with disabilities.

The Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights did the project monitoring and at the end created the report »Good Practice Examples, Lessons Learnt, Recommendations - Guidance Document« by Claudia Sprenger supp. by Stefanie Zauner on which this learning guide is based.

Project Coordinator: Light for the World