

The practice of strategic change management among International Non-governmental organizations in Nairobi, Kenya

Munga, Catherine Njeri

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Abstract:

This study sought to establish the nature of strategic change experienced in International NGOs working in Nairobi, Kenya and how they are managing these changes. A survey research design was used. This was considered appropriate because it involved a cross-sectional study of International NGOs Nairobi. The study involved a sample of 40 International NGOs based in Nairobi from the target population of 132 International NGOs operating in Kenya. Data was obtained through self-administered questionnaires and was later analyzed for the computation of descriptive statistics. Out of the total target number of 40 respondents, 31 responded giving a response rate of 77.5 %. This was considered a good response for analysis. The study found that organizations experienced both fundamental and incremental changes within a given span of time. The said changes bring about conflicts and are sometimes met with resistance by the would-be implementers. There is therefore the need to manage the change effort effectively and efficiently for the success of the organization. The change effort need to communicated well to all workers, the workers need to be trained and equipped with the skills needed to implement and sustain the change effort and the conflicts that may arise from the introduction of the said change effort need to be solved amicably. In addition, the top management need to manage or completely eliminate resistance to change among the employees. One of the main approaches of managing change has been cite as the one of giving detailed information to the teams involved and affected by the change effort. Burnes and James (1995) brought in the theory of cognitive dissonance in trying to understand the need to involve individuals in organizational change. The theory states that people try to be consistent in both their attitudes and behavior. When they sense an inconsistency, they experience dissonance, they feel frustrated and uncomfortable with the situation. Therefore individuals will seek a stable state where there is minimum dissonance. From this theory, it can be seen that if an organization embarks on change project that is out of step with the attitudes of the concerned, it will be met with resistance unless those concerned change their attitudes. Besides the introduction of the change effort in the organization, change agents should be keen in reinforcing it and ensuring that the change effort is sustained. This involves the integration phase which commences once the changes have been successfully implemented. It is concerned with consolidating and establishing changes so that they become part of an organization's normal, everyday operation and do not require special arrangements or encouragement to maintain them. The change processes involved are reinforcing new behavior through feedback and reward systems and gradually decreasing reliance on the consultant, diffusing the successful aspects of the change process throughout the organization, and training managers and employees to monitor the changes constantly and seek to improve upon them.