MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC CHANGE
AT
PLAN INTERNATIONAL INC – KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the university supervisor.

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DEDICATION

To my Mother, Elizabeth Mumbi for her hard work, advice and commitment to my education. In memory of my late grand mother Loise Wanjiru Gichuhi from whom I gathered a lot of support and inspiration over the difficult years of my childhood.

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ABSTRACT

Non-governmental organizations operate in turbulent environments characterized by constrained funding, competition and high demand for social services. These organizations respond to the environment through strategic change to achieve a competitive advantage. Strategic change is a means of establishing the organization intent, core competence and the organizational purpose in terms of its long-term objectives.

This case study examined organizational change in Plan International Inc - Kenya. The objectives of the study were to establish how change was implemented and the challenges that faced the change programme. During the study both primary and secondary data were collected through interviews and focused group discussions. The data collected was then analyzed through the conceptual content analysis technique.

The research established that Plan International Inc- Kenya conducted a participatory management of strategic change. The process involved providing space and opportunities for staff to make positive decisions that affected their future and that of the organization. This was made possible by involving and preparing the staff for change, as change only favors a prepared mind. The staff then participated in implementing the change programme as individuals and in teams.

The change programme implementation experienced challenges that included resistance to change, scarce resources and staff separation. These challenges were managed through negotiations and consultations. The researcher noted that the change implementation process was generally successful. However the organization needs to institute a change monitoring and evaluation process in order to avoid dragging back to pre-change period of business as usual.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

1.1.1 STRATEGIC CHANGE MANAGEMENT

The management of change among organizations, groups and individuals is perhaps the biggest challenge that faces organizations today. Change is now the only constant in many organizations and its occurring at an exponential rate that is almost frightening. Unless managements are able to cope with the demands imposed by the changes that they face, then organizations are unlikely to survive. Robson and Beary (1999) cautioned that no individuals, groups and organizations have automatic right to survive and succeed.

Strategic change management is all about identifying and embedding in the organization those changes that will ensure the long- term survival of the organization. The cause of change varies from a steady decline in performance and effectiveness which ultimately demands a genuine 'turn around' to a sudden radical shift. Change can be thought of as a condition and process. Change as a condition describes what is happening in the internal and external environment and it is part of the reality that an organization must accept (Hill & Jones 1999).

Mintzberg (1983) notes that strategic change is not a regular or a continuous process; rather it is most often an irregular, discontinuous process proceeding in fits and starts. There are periods of stability in strategic change but also there are periods of flux, of piecemeal change and of organization wide change. This view of strategy change as an irregular process reflects an understanding of the human tendency to continue on a particular course of action until something goes wrong or a person is forced to question the status quo.

The period of 'strategic drift' may simply result from inertia on the part of the organization or may simply reflect management belief that the current strategy is okay but just needs fine tuning to improve performance. Quinn et al (1988) argue that the need for a major strategic re-orientation occurs rather infrequently in most organizations. When it does it usually means moving from a familiar domain into a less well defined future where most of the organization's rules, concepts, procedures and processes will no longer work.

People must often abandon entirely old skills and attitudes to a new way of doing things. This is clearly a frightening and threatening event and often the most difficult challenge a manager can undertake. This is due to its complexity and people resistance to change. Balogun & Hailey (1999) highlight that organization changes are a complex and difficult process for companies to manage successfully. The first hurdle is getting managers to admit that there is a problem and realize that change is necessary. Once the need for change has been recognized, managers can go about the process of recommending a course of action and analyze potential obstacles to change.

Buther et al (1999) evidenced that certain management characteristics such as management youthfulness, objectives set, the directions in which manpower resources are employed and containment of bureaucracy are associated with superior change management and acceptance. Bar (1979) concurs and notes that successful organizations are those that, as events have turned out, had the correct vision of how things were to be in the future and deployed their resources accordingly. Organizations thus must ensure that they have the right people at the right places with employees who are able to manage tomorrow today.

1.1.2 The Nongovernmental Organizations(NGOs) Sector

The NGO sector has organizations that dub themselves as non profit making. Anthony and Graham (1988) define a non profit organization as one whose primary goal is something else other than earning profit for its owners. Usually its goal is to provide services to its owners or to the community. This definition provides the basic distinction between profit and nonprofit organizations. The two categories of organizations experience need for change from time to time. In the profit making organizations the strategic change decisions are intended to increase or at least maintain profits that the organizations earn.

This is not to say that profit is their only objective or driver for change, or that, their success can be measured entirely in terms of profitability. On the contrary, in nonprofit organizations strategic change decisions made by the management are intended to result in providing the best possible service with the available resources. The NGOs experience changes in processes, structure, programmes and strategies of facilitating development.

There are over 3800 NGOs in Kenya. These NGOs fall into different categories that include local, international, faith based, child centred and women focused. It's important to note that some organizations have traits that designate them into different categories. The NGOs characteristics include absence of a profit measure, different tax and legal considerations, less dependency on clients for financial support and constraints on goals and strategies.

The NGOs face changes in the environment. This is because they are open systems which depend on the environment for their inputs and outputs (Pearse and Robinson, 1997). These organizations have unique governance structures.

The international non-governmental organizations are managed by country directors or managers who report to the board. In most instances they have programme managers and operations managers who provide the strategic directions. Under the programme managers are the sectoral project managers based in the field. The local NGOs are usually small in terms of the overall programme capacity and governance structure. The CEOs often have a direct relationship with almost everyone, which gives them significant influence over what the organization is, does and achieves for the society.

Goldsmith, Hesselbein and Beckhard (1997) observed that managers of NGOs are too busy concentrating on the problems of today and turn a blind eye to tomorrow. Many of the leaders of these organizations need to develop visions so that strategic change decisions can be taken and commitments made towards making the desired future a reality. The NGOs compose of health care organizations, education organizations, membership organizations, human service and art organizations. They include Red Cross, World Vision and Plan International among others.

1.1.3 Plan International Inc - Kenya

Plan is an international humanitarian, child centered community development organization without religious, political or governmental affiliation. Child sponsorship is the basic foundation of the organization. Plan's vision is of a world in which all children realize their full potential in societies, which respect people's rights and dignities. It strives to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries through a process that unites people across cultures and adds meaning and value to their lives by enabling deprived children, their families and communities to meet their basic needs and to increase their ability to participate in and benefit from their societies.

It fosters relationships, increases understanding and unity among people of different cultures and countries; and promotes the rights and interests of the world's children. Plan's Global identity includes a central organizing thought, children at the heart of everything we do. It has four organizational attributes which are building relationships, achieving results, being a recognized voice and realizing potential. Plan is an organization that is committed to achieving excellence in meeting the needs of the people it serves by continuous improvement of its programs, processes and services.

It strives to work directly with children, their families and communities in designing, implementing and evaluating development projects. Plan Kenya supports grassroots development initiatives by improving the capacity of community based organizations (CBOs) to deliver programs more effectively. Plan Kenya's support to CBOs takes the form of technical assistance, financing and capacity building. Plan Kenya encourages foster families within the CBOs to maintain relationship with their individual donors.

Plan International started its operations in Kenya in 1982. Upon establishment it adopted field based autonomous units for operation and programme implementation. In the mid 90's an international process defined a structure and basic parameters for all the Plan International country operations. Hence after 18 years of autonomous field offices operation Plan Kenya shifted to country operation in 1998. The country operational structure presented a set of structural choices that included decentralized programme units(PUs), area support units(ASUs) and country office(CO) to co-ordinate the area support units and provide strategic directions.

Area support units provided technical and operational support to the field. The programme units were primarily the programme implementers and played a pivotal role in the actualization of the country strategic plan's (Country Operations Structure, 1997). Goldenberg (2003) did the Country Structure assessment and gave specific recommendations. He noted that it facilitated the achievement of a number of critical changes including the transition from six independent field offices to a unified country operation with a single identity and management structure.

He further observed that it facilitated the establishment of an effective de-centralized support system, a clear commitment to project quality and strategic directions. He noted that the existing structure, did not achieve several other critical objectives. These included the alignment of all programmes and systems with the community based organizations framework, the transfer of capacities and responsibilities to front line staff and reduction of staff salaries burden. He also noted that several functions overlapped and redundancies in the structure were numerous. The study recommended that Plan Kenya builds upon its achievements and evolve a structure that supports the realization of the community based organization (CBO) framework.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Strategic change is normally about trying to achieve competitive advantage for the organization. Strategic advantage could be thought of as providing better value for money than other providers, thus attracting appreciation, support, and recognition and funding from donors. It can be seen as the matching of the resources and activities of an organization to the environment in which it operates. This is known as the search for strategic fit. Change in organizations is usually as a result of either internal or external environmental factors that interfere with the achievement of set goals and objectives.

The change focuses on significant alteration in the strategy, processes, systems, procedures and organization culture. However managing change is not an easy task, as it is problematic. Mabey and Mayon–White (1993), identified three main problem areas that managers have to overcome when dealing with organizational change namely, resistance, control and power. Despite this there is no one right formula for change management. Balogun and Hailey (1999) highlight a number of important contextual features that need to be taken into account in designing change programmes.

Some of the features identified include the scope, institutional memory, diversity of experience within an organization, the capability in managing change as well as the readiness for change throughout different levels in the organization. Consequently, there are different approaches to managing change that are sudden, planned or incremental. Whichever the approach that the organization chooses does not necessarily guarantee success to the strategic change it-self. A number of studies have been done on the strategic change management (Mbogo 2003, Isaboke 2001, Bett 1995 and Kandie 2001). These studies have furnished readers with insights into the challenges and responses of some Kenyan organizations to management of strategic change.

This study of Plan International Inc -Kenya, offers a suitable avenue in developing an in-depth understanding of change management in a non-governmental organization. Plan International Inc-Kenya is one organization that has gone through strategic changes in its life. It went through a planned change process that was implemented by the management. The strategic change process started in late 2003 with the posting of a new country director. This was followed by the formation of a change committee of six people that envisioned the future better state of Plan Kenya. This study seeks to address the questions, how was change implemented and what were the challenges to the change programme?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study had two objectives. These were;

- To establish how change was implemented at Plan International Inc – Kenya.
- To establish challenges to the change programme

1.4 Importance of the Study

The study will contribute to knowledge of scholars interested in strategic change management particularly in NGOs. It will be important to Plan International Inc, Kenya for future reference on its process of change and outcomes. Further, the study is crucial to managers of NGO's who operate in highly turbulent environment for ease of choice of the appropriate strategic change management process. The study also is a great inspiration to the researchers to investigate the change programme implementation, learn and contribute to the body knowledge in the field.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Strategy

During the past twenty years the concept of strategy has become one of the every day headache of managers, and the concept of strategy is widespread among large and medium sized firms in Kenya and the world at large. Ansoff (1988) notes that the interest in strategy is caused by the growing realization that firm's environments have become progressively changeable and discontinuous from the past. The need for strategy arises from characteristics, which are peculiar to the strategic problem.

He further observes that strategy is an elusive and somewhat abstract concept. Its formulation typically produces no immediate concrete results in the organization. Above all it is an expensive process both in terms of actual financial cost and managerial time. Since management is pragmatic and result oriented activity, a question needs to be asked; whether an abstract concept such as strategy can usefully contribute to the firm's performance.

Ansoff and Edward (1990) identify strategy as a potentially powerful tool for coping with the conditions of change, which surround an organization today. However, it is complex, costly to introduce and costly to use. Nevertheless, they observe that there is evidence that it more than pays for itself. The non profit entities which are environmental and community serving organizations exhibit variety of behavioral styles; which include incremental and entrepreneurial strategic change. Lewis (2002) see strategy as a multidimensional concept that embraces all the critical activities of the firm, providing it with a sense of unity of direction and purpose, as well as facilitating the necessary changes induced by its environment. It is a means of establishing the organization intent, core competence and the organizational purpose in terms of its long-term objectives, action programs and resource allocation priorities.

Strategy is also seen as a definition of the capacity, competitive domain of the firm as a response to external opportunities and threats and internal strengths and weakness, in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. The strategic decision contributing to this pattern is one that is effective over long periods of time, affects the company in many different ways and focuses and commits significant portion of its resources to the expected outcomes (Benerjee, 1998).

The patterns resulting from a series of such decisions will probably define the central character, structure and image of a company, the individuality it has for its members and various publics and the position it will occupy in the market. The pattern will permit the specification of particular objectives to be obtained through a timed sequence of investment and implementation decisions. This will govern directly the deployment or redeployment of resources to make these decisions effective. Strategy as a concept tends to be long term, concerned with fixing stable pattern of behavior in the organization. But to manage strategy is frequently to manage change, to recognize when shifts of a strategic nature are possible, desirable or necessary and then act (Chandler, 1962).

2. 2 Levels of Strategies

There are four levels of strategy that include corporate, business, functional and operational. Andrews (1987) observed that corporate strategy is an organizational wide pattern of decisions in a company that determines and reveals its objectives, purposes or goals. It produces the principal policies and plans for achieving these goals and defines the range of businesses the company is to pursue, the kind of economic and non economic contribution it intends to make to its shareholders, employees, customers and communities.

Jonson (1980) concurs and adds that it concerns the overall managerial game plan for a diversified organization.
He notes that it involves initiatives like establishing positions in different businesses and achieve diversification, pursuing ways to capture valuable cross-projects strategic fits, turn them into competitive advantage and establish investment priorities.

Goodfellow (1985) noted that contrary to the corporate strategy, business strategy is less comprehensive. It defines the choice of products or services the organizations will provide to the community. Towards this end it is concerned with forming responses to changes within or without the organization, crafting competitive market approaches that can lead to sustainable competitive advantage, building competitively valuable competences and capabilities

Functional strategy on the other hand concerns the managerial game plan for running a major functional activity or process within the business. The functional strategy while narrower in scope than the business strategy, add relevant detail to the over all business game plan. It aims at establishing or strengthening specific competences calculated to enhance the organizations market position. Operational strategy concerns even narrower strategic initiatives and approaches for managing key operating units and for handling daily operating tasks with strategic significance (Conner, 1992).

2.3 Models of Strategic Change Management

There are a number of practitioners who have contributed own models and techniques to the development of change management. These models of the change process rise from the pioneering work of Lewis(1996). The models are action research model, the three steps model and the planned change model.

The action- research model is in which a key and powerful individual senses that the organization has one or more problems that might be resolved by a change agent. The agent gathers data, develops a change strategy and solves the problems jointly with client through implementing the strategy. The three-steps model goes through three stages, problem identification, action steps and action on possible resistance to change. In attempting to elaborate upon the three – steps model, authors have increased the number of steps. However, they have pointed out that the concept of planned change implies that an organization exists in different states at different times and that planned movement occurs from one state to another.

Planning change is a term first coined to distinguish change that was consciously embarked upon and change that might be due to impulse or that might be forced on an organization (Lippit, Watson and Wesley 1958). Therefore, in order to understand change, it is not sufficient to merely understand the approaches and process, which can bring about change. There must be an appreciation of the state that an organization must pass through in order to move from an unsatisfactory present state to a more desired future state. According to Burnes (1998), other models include the simple model, champion of change model and the processual model.

According to the simple model, change takes place within a seven – phase framework which includes, the need for change, recognition of the need, identification of the need, identification of possible solutions, communication and consultation, selection of the solution, selling the solution, implementing the solution and achieving results. The processual model is a temporal approach to change management. It identifies the substance of change like new technology or new management techniques.

It recognizes the need for change in a contextual framework of politics of change, human resources, administrative structures and the business market. The champion of change of model suggests that change is unlikely to be lasting or to be successful or even take place at all unless there is a leader of change. The leader must provide inspiration, must have the complete or whole- hearted support of senior management and must have the authority to carry out the change. He leads the people in the change process until change has taken place and he then disengages himself after empowering those involved in the change process, through involvement to continue with the change.

The logical incrementalism model advocated for change to take place by developing the patterns of change incrementally, solidifying and integrate the change programme incrementally (Quinn 1980). The incremental model is directed towards minimizing departures from historical behaviour, both within the organization and between it and the environment. It recognizes that change is not welcome; it is to be controlled, absorbed or minimized. In the incremental style the response to change is reactive as action is taken after the need for change has become clear and imperative. Thus while incrementalism in the firm is used to enhance the effective utilization of resources, in other organizations it is directed to the maintenance of the status quo.

2.4. Strategic Change and Structure

Kotter (1995) observes that change strategy need to permeate the very day to day life of the company if it is to be effective and implementable. They identify those organizational elements that are fundamental for long-term strategy institutionalization. They include structure, leadership and culture. Gilbert et al (1995) states that a well managed structure enables organizations in complex environments to adopt to change. But it can also create confusion and interpersonal difficulties if not well designed and managed.

They also observe that as organizations grow they face predictable crises. To cope with the crises, they change the structure. Starting with a small informal structure, they introduce more formal management techniques systematically in the organization. Jobs become specialized, departmentalization occurs and bureaucracy grows. Pearce and Robinson (2002), lamented that organizational structure is a major priority in implementing a carefully formulated strategy.

They note that if the structure and strategy are not coordinated; the result is probably inefficiencies, misdirection and fragmented efforts. The structure is not the only means for getting 'organized' to implement the strategy. Reward system, planning procedures, information and budgeting systems and processes are other critical factors. These other means may also be important, but it is through structure that strategists attempt to balance internal efficiency and overall effectiveness.

2. 5 Strategic Change Leadership

Great leaders are those that have the vision and also the courage to confront the challenge of change without fear. However, many managers do not have the leadership skills, the knowledge or the experience to manage change successfully and most organizations treat the management of change in a purely ad hoc and unsystematic way. They rationalize their behaviour after the event particularly when things go wrong.

Successful change managers encourage the best out of people and this can only be achieved through facilitative style of leadership. Bar (1979) concur and states that the leader fill the change implementation role which puts a premium on ability to communicate, skill to identify the potential in people and to motivate them to exercise their potential to the fullest.

In older conceptions of management, leadership has been viewed as the central and almost the only one set of skills required of the manager, hence the definition that management is getting things done through people. The leader is an inspirer of people to do their best. Lewis (2002) denotes that during change organizations need an entrepreneurial leader. One consequence of not having one is an increasing number of novel and poorly structured decisions involving problems and opportunities new to the organizations, requiring imaginative analysis and judgment, rather than decisions based on historical experience. They emphasize that the flair, imagination, creativity and risk propensity of the leader is essential as during the days of the industrial revolution. However, the complexity of the challenges make the leader increasingly dependent on contributions from a whole range of experts in areas in which he/she has limited expertise.

2. 6 Organizational Culture and Change

Porter (1996) defines organizational culture as the basic assumption and beliefs that are shared by the members of an organization. They operate unconsciously and define in a basic fashion an organizational view of itself and its environment. It's fostered by the efforts of senior group members to reiterate those beliefs and values in daily conversations and pronouncement by telling of company legends in regular ceremonies.
The living old members display cultural ideals and management visibly rewards those who follow cultural norms and removes those who don't.
The beliefs, vision, objectives and organizational approaches and practices underpinning a company's strategy may be compatible with its culture or not (Pottenayak and Mishra 2003). In addition when they are congruent the culture becomes valuable in strategy implementation and execution.

When the culture is in conflict with some aspect of the company's direction and performance targets, the culture becomes a stumbling block that impedes successful strategy implementation and execution. Mintzberg and Waters (1985) are in agreement and further state that a culture grounded in values and practices and behavioral norms that match what is needed for good strategy execution helps energize the people throughout the organization. They are hence able to do their jobs, in a strategy supportive manner, adding significantly to the power and effectiveness of strategy execution.

Miles and Snow (1978) notes organizational leadership knows the importance of congruence of culture and strategy. The staffing of an organization with new employees is one of the most important ways in which company's culture is perpetuated. Organization Managers tend to hire people they feel comfortable with and think will fit in. This tends to mean hiring people with values, beliefs and personalities that embrace the prevailing culture. On the other hand jobs seekers tend to accept jobs at companies where they expect to be comfortable and happy.

Employees who don't hit it off at a company tend to leave quickly, while employees who thrive and are pleased with the work environment move into senior roles and positions of greater responsibility. Kotter (1995) connote that the longer the people stay at an organization the more their values and beliefs tend to be molded by mentors, fellow workers, company training programs and the reward structure and the more that they embrace and mirror the corporate structure.

2. 7 Organizational Politics and Change

Decisions about strategy and structure and how to change strategy and structure are not made just by following a calculated, rational plan in which only shareholders interests are considered.

In reality, strategic decisions making is quite different. Hill and Jones (2001) observe that organizational politics are tactics that strategic managers engage in to obtain and use power to influence organizational goals and change strategy and structure to further their own interests. Top level managers constantly come into conflict over what the correct policy decisions should be, and power struggles and coalition building are a major part of strategic decision making.

Disagreement over the best course of action is inevitable in the political view because strategic change necessarily favours some individuals over others. Managers also engage in politics for personal reasons.
Since organizations are shaped pyramids, individual managers realize that the higher they rise, the more difficult it is to climb to the next position. Thus, by being successful at politics and claiming responsibility for successful change, they increase their visibility in the organization and make themselves contenders for higher organization office.

Organizational politics involve those activities taken within organizations to acquire, develop and use power and other resources to obtain one's preferred outcomes in a situation in which there is uncertainty or dissents about choices. It involves intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups (Wilsted and Bernett 1988). Organization politics can have a positive and negative face. The pursuit of unsanctioned organizational goals or the use of unsanctioned organizational means might be examples of the negative face of politics. The negative face is characterized by extreme pursuit of self-interest, unsocial needs to dominate others, a tendency to view most situations in win – lose terms.

The positive face of politics is characterized by a balanced pursuit of self-interest, viewing situations in win-win terms as much as possible, engaging in open problem solving and then moving to action. There is a relative absence of the tactics of fighting. Increased consensus about goals and means and more centralized power would reduce conflict and hence reduce political activity.

2. 8. Teamwork in Change Management

Gilbert, Freeman and Stoner (1996) define a team as two or more people who interact and influence each other towards a common purpose. They recognize that much organizational work is done in teams. Indeed to meet the challenges of the business environment today, more and more organizations are replacing old hierarchies and formal systems with teams and teamwork.

They recommend that workers take control of their work in an environment where consensus is the guiding principle. Team members do not vote, if the entire team does not feel comfortable enough with a decision to support it, that decision will not be made. Hax (1996) concurs and adds that teams should be self-monitoring. Instead of having non-members do the checking, the members themselves do it. The team members' scope of responsibility is broadened so they have a better and bigger picture of what it takes to run the business. Even though their piece of running the business may be relatively small they gain a better appreciation of what the organization has to do.

Stodgill (1992) points out that such work groups are recommendable but they experience disagreements. In work teams conflicts are managed differently. It is more of finding a better solution or better options collectively than fire fighting. In co-operative hourly and management problems solving (CHAPs), quality circle teams meet for an hour weekly to discuss work related problems; investigate the causes, recommend solutions and take corrective action. When a team has completed its investigation and identified a solution, it makes a formal presentation to the management. The teams may be permanent or created to deal with a specific problem and are usually disbanded when the task is completed. Swingle (1976) notes that a quality circle team has a significant component of quality program and dramatically improves productivity.

2.9 Organizational Environment and Change

The environment of an organization, like that of any other organic entity, is the pattern of all the internal/external conditions and influences that affect its life and development (Burnes 1993). Strategic change is a response to external opportunities and threats, and internal strengths and weaknesses in order to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. According to this perspective, the control thrust in strategy is to achieve a long-term sustainable advantage over the key competitors of the organization in every core business activity.

It recognizes that the competitive advantage results from a thorough understanding of external and internal forces that impact the organization. Externally the organization has to identify the industry and organizational attractiveness, trends, as well as the characteristics of the competitors. This guarantees opportunities and threats to be reckoned with internally. The organization has to assess the competitive capabilities, which produce strengths, and weaknesses that have to be further developed and corrected.

Hax (1996) concur and note that strategy is needed in order for organizations to obtain a viable match between their external environment and their internal capabilities. They view the role of a strategist as not just passively respond to the opportunities and threats presented by the external environment, but as continuously and actively adapting the organization to meet the demands of a changing environment. Wilsted and Bernett(1988) state that the environmental influences relevant to strategic change decisions, operate within and without the organization. They are technological, economic, physical, social and political factors. They further note that the corporate change strategist usually should at least be intuitively aware of these features. Change takes place at varying rates, fastest in technology and less rapidly in politics.

2.10 Communicating Change

The reasons for strategic change may be complex resulting in an even more complex strategy to facilitate the change. However, irrespective of its degree of complexity, the strategy chosen must be well communicated to members of the organization so as to be effective. It is important to state the vision and strategic intent of the strategy chosen to facilitate change. However, it is also important to clarify and simplify the priorities of the strategy. Young (1960), argue that it is best to emphasize a limited number of key aspects of the strategy, rather than expect to be able to communicate overall complexity. The choice of media is also important.

The extent to which different forms of media (face-to-dace, bulletins, circulars, and memos) are likely to be effective depends on the nature of the change. To communicate a highly complex set of changes, it would be inappropriate to use standardized bulletins and circulars with no chance of any feedback or interaction. Johnson and Scholes (2004) observe other reasons why communicating change is important. Involvement of members of the organization in the strategy development process or the planning of strategic change is in itself a means of communication and can be very effective, as they can become change agents themselves. As the changes may be difficult to comprehend it is important to implement a system where feedback is provided.

To overcome this problem, it may be useful to set up teams which give feedback to senior executives. The executive also need to ensure that they meet with those responsible for implementing change, perhaps on an informal basis in their work place.

2.11 Styles of Change Management

Johnson and Scholes (2004) outline three styles of managing change. Education and communication involves the explanation of the reasons for and means of strategic change. It is appropriate if there is a problem in managing change based on misinformation or lack of information. Collaboration or participation entails involvement of those who will be affected by strategic decisions. It involves the setting of the strategic agenda, the strategic decision making process and the planning of strategic change. This can be helpful in increasing ownership of a decision or change process.

Coercion involves the imposition of change. This is the explicit use of power and may be necessary if the organization is facing a crisis. Major strategic changes are frequently introduced without regard for the consequent resistance and order. The change is planned, explained to those who are responsible for carrying it out and then launched. When implementation lags and inefficiencies occur, they are treated one at a time, typically on the level of the change process and not at the roots and sources of the resistance. If sufficient power is lacking, or if the change managers run out of power chips during the process, change grinds to a halt, and the organization returns to pre-change business as usual status.

If power is adequate to complete the change, the change remains unstable and requires continuous application of power against hostile power centres and the hostile culture. If the proponents of change relax their vigilance prematurely, a return to the good old times takes place.

2.12 Resistance to Change

Mishra and Paltanayak (1997) observed that change is a stressor at the workplace. They further note that persons who work upon change as challenging and or frightening are more likely to experience stress. Thus it is the way people perceive or react to change rather than the change itself that is the source of stress. Many changes occur at the workplace. The introduction of a new work procedure may require employees to learn and adopt different work methods.

Any change in the organizational climate will result in increased stress to those who view change as threatening. So knowing or explaining what a change strategy is, designing a structure and processes to put this into effect does not mean that people will make it happen. Weber (1947) note that there is an assumption in most of what is written about strategic change, that there will always be a tendency towards inertia and resistance to change. People will tend to hold on to existing ways of doing things and existing beliefs about what makes sense to them. Managing strategic change must therefore address the powerful influence of the paradigm and the cultural web on the strategy being followed by the organization.

The understanding of the nature of resistance denotes that it need not be the brute force approach typically used in many organizations that is applicable. Action learning is an answer to establishment of change in organizations (Marshall and Conner, 1996). It tries to analyze and diffuse the bonds between theory and practice, knowledge and experience, between doing something on one hand and talking about it on the other. Action learning during change creates operational responsibility for one's real decisions in a real world situation. They further note that change in organizations will be more resisted if engineered by expert advisers and specialist consultants hired externally.

Non-can grant deliverance to another who merely pays for it. Others may lend a helping hand but indirectly, nevertheless, the best change is attained only through self realization and self awakening to truth. Self-realization can come only to one who is free to think out his own problems without hindrance. Galbraith (1977) concurs and adds that change favours a prepared mind. Also important in effecting change is the language used by change agents. Either consciously or unconsciously, change agents may employ language and metaphor to galvanize change. Language is not simply concerned with communicating facts and information. It's powerful as it is symbolic and is able to carry several meanings at once

In summary, a number of approaches have been proposed that can be used to implement change programmes in organizations. However no single approach provides outright success to change programme implementations. It has been argued that there are other critical factors that need to be taken into account. They include adequate preparation of people and other stakeholders for change, proper communication of the change programme and allocation of sufficient resources. Change programmes also require leaders who continuously evaluate the change programme, risks takers and are ready to work with teams during and after the implementation of the change programme.

CHAPTER THREE. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This was a case study of Plan International–Kenya. Young (1960) observed that a case study is a very powerful form of a qualitative analysis that involves a careful and complete observation of social units. He defined a case study as an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution or a social group.

In the same vein it provides a platform to explain linkages between causes and effects, to answer "How" and "Why" of a social activity or unit. The researcher settled on this method as it enables intensive study of the social units, serves as a mirror for reflection and provides change data not yet available quantitatively. A number of researchers have conducted similar studies (Kombo, 1997; Njau, 2000; and Kiptugen) and have successfully used this research design.

The choice of Plan International – Kenya was based on the fact that it is one of the established and leading Non-governmental organization in Kenya and the world at large. Further the organization went through a change process, managed by its own staff from late October 2003 to June 2005. The change process in the organization therefore provided a good opportunity for a study, to establish how the change was conducted and the possible challenges.

3.2 Data Collection

The researcher made use of both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was collected through desk review of the existing literature on Plan International. Primary data was collected through personal interviews and focused group discussions (FGDs). The group discussion and the interview processes were moderated using a discussion guide and an interview schedule respectively.

Eight respondents were selected from all the four departments of finance, administration, programme and building relationships including four senior managers. Representative focused groups of between four to six people were organized for the discussions.

The researcher administered questions, explained and clarified difficult ones using various unstructured probing tactics. The probing techniques allowed for a vast and rich amount of data to be collected. The two methods provided space for flexibility in data collection.

3.3 Data Analysis

The conceptual content analysis technique was used on the data collected which was qualitative in nature. The researcher determined the presence of certain words or concepts from the qualitative data collected. He then analyzed the meanings and relationships of such words and concepts, and made inferences from the important words and concepts. Other researchers (Kombo, 1997, Mwathi, 2001, Kandie, 2001 and Kiptugen, 2003) have also successfully used this technique.

CHAPTER FOUR. THE RESEARCH FINDINGS.

4.1 Preparation for Change

The respondent's observed that the change process started with the assessment of the organization management structure. The assessment identified the gaps and strong points of the management structure. In addition the assessment recommended structural changes to improve on organizational efficiency and effectiveness. This was followed by the posting of a new country director (CD) in July, 2003. The country director was the champion of the change process.

The respondents indicated that the director initiated the change by calling a meeting of all the programme staff involving about 100 people representing all the departments in the organization. In the meeting the CD communicated to staff the need for the reorganization to boost the efficiency in programme delivery. The respondents also indicated that she clearly informed the staff of the far reaching effects of the change process to the staffing ratio and the country strategic directions.

This sent shock waves to many of the staff particularly the people who had spent many years in the organization. The staff were given the opportunity to select a team of six people to map the way forward. The team's mandate was to deliberate on the change and prepare an action plan proposal. The team was given three months to handle the assignment. The team developed the change plan of action and identified three key parameters for consideration during the process of change that included process, people and the promise.

The people parameter meant that the organization had to ensure that the change implementation was fair to all staff. The respondents noted that the committee emphasized on the organization retaining the best staff and separation of the ones who were not fit for the new challenges, through a fair due process. It also recommended counseling sessions for the separating staff and full compensation to ensure that they started a new life outside the organization with ease.

The process simply meant that the due processes and procedures had to be followed during the change implementation. For instance according to the respondents it was agreed that all the national staff were to go through an interview process. The purpose of the interviews was to vet the staff for qualifications and readiness, to fit in the new organization where child centred community development was the guiding principle.

The promise meant that the committee recommended minimal interference with the core business of the organization during the change process. The organization had promised in the year to meet its obligation in supporting the community based organization to implement various projects. The promise had to be respected by the change management team. This meeting held with a key representative staff, the change action plan developed and the identification of key change parameters gave the staff an indication of the expected changes. The meeting was also crucial as the decisions made set the pace for change implementation in the entire organization.

4.2 Establishing Vision and Strategic Intent

The respondents identified themselves with the change process and were clear on the vision for the change. The researcher gathered that the vision for the change was to align Plan International Inc – Kenya with the principles of child centred community development concept. The child centred community development approach is a rights based approach in which children, families and communities are active and leading participants in their own development.

It enhances their capacity and opportunity to work together with others to address the structural causes and consequences of poverty at all levels. The researcher noted that the vision for change was adequately shared with staff at all levels. The country director ensured that she shared with all staff through the internet and each was provided with a hard copy of the paper stipulating the aspirations of child centred community development. At the same time regular meetings were held between the country director and the area managers to follow up on the change programme implementation. To ensure that all the staff shared in the vision of change, all the supervisors held regular meetings with their departments to share the vision and the progress of change.

The interviewees noted that the country director enforced a strategic intent in the country management team and formed a team of area managers, who were key drivers of change. She called a meeting of all area managers in October, 2003 and stated in no uncertain terms that the time for change had come. All the supervisors were asked to meet all their staff and explain the need for change and the expected changes. The managers and the supervisors were requested to seek for the buying-in of the change programme by all the staff.

To create a sense of urgency the management immediately set up a structure committee with mandate to develop the action plan for the expected changes. The staffs were also requested, to discuss the expected changes and propose the best course of action. In doing so, the respondents noted that the information spread in the organization like bush fire and it was crystal clear that there was no turning back. In addition the change management committee was given a very short time to develop the action plan and share with all the staff.

4.3 Implementing Change through Teams

The respondents were all emphatic that there were a number of drivers to the change process. They identified the country director as the lead facilitator of the change process. She communicated regularly and firmly on the need for the change and continuously reminded staff on the change strategic direction. They indicated that there were a number of teams that were involved in the management of change.

The topmost team was the country management team[CMT]. This team was constituted by the regional office (RO) and international headquarters (IH). The team was composed of the local and international staff that included the country director, operations support manager (OSM), human resources manager (HRM), operations and programmes support manager (OPSM) and strategy and programmes support manager (SPSM). The team was led by the country director. The role of this team was to provide direction, make specific decisions regarding change and also ensured that the change programme implementation was consistent with the country strategic plan and the child centred community development framework. The team also sanctioned all the changes taking place in the field.

To make the team more effective the development area managers were later co-opted as part of the country management team to form the extended country management team (ECMT). The team met quarterly and was responsible for making decisions on the strategies implementation in the whole country. The area managers effected all the changes in the field with the support of the country team and reported back to the management on the implementation progress. For instance the areas managers launched and implemented the child centred community development strategy with their teams and community based organizations.

The other teams that were critical in the change management were the various departmental teams. All the departments were asked to follow up keenly the implementation of change and its effect in their respective departments. The departmental teams sat occasionally to discuss and provide feedback on all the planned changes. Essentially this process enriched the implementation of the change programme.

The researcher also observed that the team of the area managers was also keen on promoting the change. They implemented the changes at the field level and dealt with numerous change issues related to human resources and programme strategies. For instance, they were wholly involved in the recruitment and placement of all staff in their respective areas. Consequently, they ensured that the organization had the right people at the right places. These people constitute the development areas teams.

The development area teams were the focal points for the organizational change, as the child centred community development provides the guiding principles in the programme implementation at the field level. The teams discussed the change activities during the weekly meetings, dubbed the action point meetings. The teams then made functional strategies to align their operations with the child centred community development approach. In addition the teams ensured the communities were well informed about the organizational and strategy changes. The community leaders and the community volunteers implemented the changes on the ground. For instance they ensured the principles of the change process were adhered to. That included working with strategic partnerships and alliances and facilitating the participation of children and all adults in community activities.

4.4 Management of Change of Processes, Structure, Systems and Procedures.

According to the change management committee, the areas that urgently required change included processes, procedures, systems and the organization structure. The development of a clear methodology was therefore key to progress and success. The area managers, operations support manager and the internal auditors were identified to effect changes in the processes and procedures. The team collectively analyzed the existing processes and procedures, well documented in the field office book. They prepared a development area operations manual which contained the old, new and repackaged processes and procedures.

The operations manual stipulates the procurement processes and procedures. It gives a step-by-step guide on how the development areas are to procure for services, materials and equipments. The reorganization also meant changes in positions and only functions in others. The respondents noted that the manual included all positions in the organization with functions and authority summarized in a duty matrix. The authority level in this case implies the amount of money that one is allowed to spend or approve for expenditure to occur.

The human resources manager noted that the structure of the organization represents the functions in the various positions and the span of control. She highlighted that the management of the structure change was interesting and exciting at some stage. The researcher learnt that the staff were involved in the development of the new structure. In a programme meeting they were asked to propose a suitable organizational structure. The staff developed different forms of structures some tall and other too wide to represent the spirit of child centered community development.

The structures were taken up by the change management committee, for harmonization into a uniform lean structure. According to the committee, it wasn't an easy task. The change committee eventually developed one, modeled within the three foundations and the four principles of child centered community development. The three foundations are civil society, rights and scaling-up, and the four principles are child centeredness, supporting groups and organization, facilitating participation and promoting partnerships and networks.

Organizations nowadays are run through the help of systems that run different software's. According to the respondents the systems changes in Plan International – Kenya involved replacement of computers and upgrading of the softwares. These softwares included shifting from enrollment system version 3 (ES3) to a better version known as enrollment system version 4 (ES4). The programmes and projects module (PPM) involved moving from version 1.3 to version 2. The enrollment systems software tracks the communications between the community and sponsors and the PPM is a projects and programmes monitoring module. To manage the changes effectively the organization hired a team of information communication specialists and also enlisted consultancy services from other Plan International Inc offices abroad. The process was implemented through consultations and alot of trouble shooting meetings were held to develop solutions to technical problems.

4.5 Changes in Human Resources

The change management committee noted that managing people was very tricky and time consuming. This is because the same people were responsible of critical organization aspects that could spell doom if neglected even for a short period. To ensure there was harmony in the organsition, the change management team handled the human resource issues in confidence and with a lot of care.

The researcher established that sufficient consultations were done before any decision or action affecting staff was taken. In addition, the respondents noted, that staff or their representatives were involved in the development of the functions for their positions. The staffs were asked to pick their representatives in meetings to design the job descriptions. The staff proposed their job descriptions that included their position titles, purpose and responsibilities. The consultations fostered ownership of the process and acceptance of the staff changes outcome.

The respondents also noted that to ensure equity in the placement of staff in different positions in the various areas, all staff were interviewed starting with the area managers. They then took the responsibilities of interviewing and placing all the staff in all the development areas in the country. Most of the interviews were conducted in a central place and placements done immediately. In the new structure the staffs were requested to apply for the position they were qualified for, even if they were not in those positions before the change process.

The researcher established that, to avoid uncertainty, the managers informed the staff of their fate immediately after the interviews. The process led to transfers of staff from one area to another, separations and promotions to new positions. Most of the respondents interviewed noted that the consultative process ensured fairness and justice during the change period. The human resources manager noted that some staff thought that the process was an exercise in futility and henceforth refused to apply for any positions. They were eventually declared redundant and separated from the organization. Their efforts to seek legal redress were fruitless as the labour officer concluded that they willingly squandered their chances

Change cannot be appreciated unless the change managers provide a better working environment and compensation. In this regard, the researcher noted that the country management team commissioned a salary survey to identify the salary market rates for different positions. Consequently, the salaries were adjusted to measure up with the market and in some instances put above the market rates. The staff noted that the positive salary adjustments were motivating. Accordingly they found a reason to participate in the change process and strive to remain in the organization.

The unfair treatment and intimidation of staff can not be ruled out during a change programme implementation. To ensure this was controlled a grievance committee was set up. This committee was composed of the country director and the country internal auditors. The purpose of the committee was to provide an avenue for the staff to air their views particularly on instances where the change managers unfairly treated them, consciously or otherwise.

The committee confidentially handled issues that involved unfair transfers, separations and intimidation of staff by their supervisors. They were also required to support them in the best way possible depending on their specific needs. Accordingly the supervisors could step-in to organize for the counseling or capacity building sessions for the affected staff.

4.6 Communicating Change

The respondents indicated that they were well informed of expected changes during the implementation of the change programme. The country director was charged with the responsibility of informing all staff on the changes. The researcher established that she did a letter to all staff on a monthly basis that highlighted the changes that had taken place or were to take place.

This update kept all the staff members abreast with the change progress and hence eliminated speculation and uncertainty. In addition the letters were also meant to reassure, boost the staff morale and eliminate fear of change. Further the human resource manager kept the staff informed on the staff changes. This included recruitments, separations, transfers and retentions among others. The information involving specific staff was handled professionally and in confidence by the human resource manager or the supervisor of the affected staff. In case of separations the supervisors of the people involved were left with responsibility of informing the respective staff.

In general the communications channel used were identified as through the emails, through meetings and one to one discussion between staff and their supervisors. Henceforth this represents communication as an important tool of change management. It involved proper explanation of the reasons for and means of strategic change. This method was very instrumental in sending the right signals to all the staff that change had come and it was the best thing to do at the time for the survival of the organization. In addition the communication enhanced the buy-in of the process by all the staff.

4.7 Effect of the Stakeholders to Change Management.

Plan international Inc- Kenya does not work in isolation. It works in conjunction with the International Headquarters (IH) and the Regional Office (RO). Henceforth all the changes had to be done in consultation with the IH and the RO. The researcher noted that the two offices provided an extra check to ensure that the changes did not destroy the organization. At the same time the changes were been monitored to ensure that they were consistent with the global strategic directions. For instance all the discussions and decisions made by the country management team had to be shared with the two offices for validation and acceptance for implementation.

Among the key change areas was the corporate systems. The interviewees lamented that system changes were done with direction from the international headquarters through the regional office. They also indicated that the resource allocations had to be sanctioned and provided by the two offices. Some respondents shared that some computers and other equipment could not be bought without the approval of the regional office. The long chain of decision-making had its negative side. For instance, Plan Kenya management team had decided to have all the positions filled through a competitive process.

However the regional office prevailed upon the country team and some positions were not filled through a competitive process. This affected the technical advisors positions at the country office. It simply shows that there was a lot of influence and control of the change process by the two offices which caused occasional delay to the change programme implementation. The researcher noted that Plan Kenya has strong working relationship with plan programme countries like Plan Uganda. Plan Uganda had gone through a similar change process. Plan Kenya country management therefore decided to send two key staff to learn how Plan Uganda went through the change process.

The staff then shared the lessons learnt with the change management committee for input into the Plan Kenya change programme. This ensured that the change implementation did not fall into the same pitfalls as in Uganda. It went a long way in improving the Plan Kenya change programme and implementation mechanisms. The responds indicated the community did not play any part during the change process. The communities were informed about the changes by the Plan Kenya front line staff through leaders of their respective CBO's. The researcher also observed that most partners NGO'S were not involved at all.

They were only informed of the changes that were taking place and others never got to know anything. A few of the like minded NGOs were, in isolated instances, asked to support through advice.

4.8 Management of Resistance to Change

The group discussion indicated that the change process was met with uncertainty by the employees. Many felt that the new strategy of facilitating development was risky and untenable. Consequently, staff initially objected to the change process through refusal to contribute adequately to push forward the change process. In some instances some staff went into a go slow, even though it was not formally organized, poor performance by various departments was a clear indicator.

To manage the resistance the change leaders instituted a participatory process to change management and in seeking collective solutions emanating from change it-self. During the focused group discussions, staff shared experiences of having been involved in discussions to dispel any concerns from the staff. The respondents indicated that they discussed the various issues and forwarded their recommendations to the management. The departmental discussions were described as having been very effective in controlling the resistance.

In some instances the team supervisors were also called upon to diffuse the resistance. Some supervisors lamented that they were under instruction from the top management to be vigilant to deal with any resistance with the urgency it deserved. They explained to the staff why the organization needed to change and they talked to specific staff members when need arose. Resistance according to the interviewees was also managed through firm decision making. When the staff realized there was no other way, apart from being positive on the new direction, they made bold decisions to support the change process. However, a few people quit the organization.

The staff were also worried that they were going to loose their jobs and hence their support was limited. Their resistance was managed through a transparent and competitive process of selecting the staff for the old and new positions in the new structure. In general, the resistance was best managed through consultations, involvement of all in implementing the change programme and in regular information sharing on what was bound to change, and letting staff know that the organization was keen to retain the best staff. The involvement of staff made them own the process and became part of it to the end.

4.9 The Change Process Challenges

The respondents identified a number of challenges to the change process. The management specifically indicated that the bureaucratic process in Plan International Inc – Kenya posed a big challenge. For instance the change management committee decisions were not implemented until an approval was given by the country office or the regional office. This process caused delays and sometimes the committee decisions were changed or ignored all together. This left the implementation team with less authority to manage and push forward the change programme.

The other challenge was the resistance by the staff to change key aspects of the organization due to the negative attitude towards change. The staffs were too used to managing projects and were not ready to let the community manage and implement their projects. Many of the staff members thought that releasing some of their responsibilities was a clever way of slowly separating them from the organization

The other challenge came due to the many resignations from staff in different departments. This was perhaps the biggest challenge due to loss of institutional memory and key staff. The resignations slowed down the change process. They also left gaps in the human resource at critical stage as the organization could not effectively run its core business.

The other challenge noted by the staff was the lack of sufficient resources to support the change process. Despite the availability of a budget to support the change processes, there were hidden costs that had not been anticipated. For instance, the staffs that were resigning required their terminal benefits and the gaps left had to be filled immediately. Consequently the change budget was mostly utilized in the recruitment and separation of staff, rather than the planned purchase of equipments and building the capacity of the staff.

During the change process there were major changes in functions and authority levels particularly of the area managers. These positions required better remuneration due to new responsibilities and higher authority level. The scenario presented a risk and a challenge to the organization in loss of finances and the ability of the managers to take up the added responsibilities respectively.

The Programme Units (PU) was also enlarged into Development Areas (DA) which required more logistical support: This posed a challenge as it meant thinking about a bigger programmes implementation area than before. The other challenge noted particularly by the information, communication technology coordinators was the change in the systems. Plan international decided to decentralize the corporate systems that included the enrollment system and the general ledger. The systems decentralization process required advanced technical support that was not available internally. The technical support was sourced from the international headquarters in Britain and from consultants. The respondents also indicated that managing the staff was also a big challenge during change implementation. The staff were met with a situation where they had to abandon traditional methods of programmes implementation to a different way all together. This presented uncertain future hence the resistance.

Most of the staff did not concentrate on meeting their set targets and responsibilities at the work place. The respondents noted that the process of replacing the staff and recruiting for the new positions was a challenging task too. This is because many of them were leaving the organization at almost the same time causing instability, by having low staff numbers. In addition some of the separating staffs sort legal redress to stop the organization from separating them. The change process was therefore delayed as the implementation committee had to wait in some instances to clear the court cases and with the Ministry of Labour.

The other challenge was that during the change process the staff morale was in all time low. The management tried to consult and re-assure the staff, however the effort to consult the staff did not yield the required results. The staff viewed the consultations with suspicion and hence did not take them seriously. The respondents also noted that the community programmes implementation process was slow as the facilitators were uncertain about their future in the organization. In addition key staff efforts were directed towards the change process. The slow programmes implementation resulted to complains from the communities who are key Plan Kenya partners.

In summary it's clear that the change management in Plan International Inc – Kenya was participatory and the managers played a facilitative role. The researcher observed that staff involvement, consultations and regular communication of the right information was key to progress and the completion of the change programme implementation. The researcher noted that Plan International Inc – Kenya used the following approach to manage the change setting the vision, the objectives, activity plan and finally the actual change programme implementation. The key step that was missing was the monitoring and the evaluation.

CHAPTER FIVE. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 Change Implementation Process

One of the objectives of the study was to establish how change was implemented at Plan International Inc– Kenya. In order to achieve the objective of the study the researcher interviewed the current staff of the organization. The main aspects of strategic change management investigated included the structure, leadership, resistance and teamwork.

The research findings indicate that the management of change in Plan International – Kenya was done in a participatory process. There were adequate consultations with staff individually or through selected representatives. It's through these consultations and negotiations that the organization was able to smoothly implement change. In addition they were instrumental in curbing the resistance that would have otherwise delayed the change programme implementation.

The research established that the departments in the organization were effectively utilized in managing change. The departmental teams acted not only as the drivers of change but also as support groups for those who for one reason or the other, had to leave the organization. They also acted as the channels for giving feedback to the management and hence involved those who would otherwise have shied away. Consequently, the management of change was appreciated by staff and they were not intimidated through the process or by the management. The facilitative change management style adopted and the consultations with most of the staff provided a conducive environment for all to participate in the change process.

Furthermore the unsatisfied staff had an opportunity to forward complains to the grievances committee that took action with urgency that the issues deserved. The research found out that change management team had clear vision of where the organization was headed. Henceforth, they were able to implement the change programme to completion with a high degree of success. This was through the relentless efforts of the entire management team who continuously championed the change programme.

At the same time the emerging issues were effectively handled during the implementation period. This resulted to development and implementation of emergent strategies. The study also noted that the various organization team supervisors played key roles as change facilitators. The decisions and changes were not forced through peoples throats. The change decisions were clearly explained to all the staff for their understanding and appreciation.

The organization was hence able to transit from a tall expensive structure to a lean, less expensive structure. The lean structure enabled the organization to retain the right staff and remunerated them better than before. The retention of the key staff meant the organization institutional memory was not lost.

5.1.2 Challenges Encountered

The members of the change management committee noted that the management of the change programme had many challenges which were dealt with accordingly. The most pressing challenges were the staff resistance to accept the changes and the bureaucratic decision making process.

The other challenge included the shortage in the resources to support the change process to conclusion. This forced the change team to delay the implementation so as to solicit for more resources from the regional headquarters. Further the separation of some staff due fear of change also was a big challenge to the process. This is because the change team and other managers were forced to exert their energies in hiring more staff to replace the ones who were leaving.

Further the departure of some staff was disorganizing the teams sometimes sending wrong signals about the change process. However apart from minor delays, the challenges did not have major negative impact to the change programme.

5.2 Conclusions

This study concurs with the literature available on of how to manage strategic change in organizations. The management of strategic change programme needs to address key change parameters for success and sustainability. For Plan International – Kenya, the organizational culture has improved as the staffs show positive attitude to the new beliefs and work norms. There is also an integrated working synergy towards child centred community developement as a guiding principle towards programme design and implementation.

The changes have created a strong spirit of teamwork in the organization. This is essential for the organization to easily pursue its development targets with the community. It also facilitates a conducive working environment for all staff with a shared vision of the organization direction. The changes seem to have been generally successful given that the organization has been operating under the new structure for the last one year now. The changes have brought in new impetus to the organization in delivery of key programme targets as it reported fast and effective programmes implementation at the end of the financial year. It's however quite early to predict whether the changes effected will stand the test of time.

It's clear from this research that managing change is not a one off activity, rather, it ought to be a well thought of systematic process. For the change managers of organizations intending to reorganize, it's important that they have clear vision and develop a road map of how to manage people through the change process. Having a clear vision and a road map is not enough. Over all, the preparation of people is critical as change favours a prepared mind. During the change process the flexibility of the change leaders is critical to align the strategies to the emanating challenges.

5.3 Limitations of the Study

The study data was gathered from the current staff. Probably it would have yielded different results if other stakeholders were included particularly the community and the governmental lines ministries who are key partners of Plan International Inc – Kenya.

The researcher interviewed the current Staff in the organization who were involved in the change programme implementation. The change programme was implemented for a period of one year. It's therefore likely that staff could not remember all what happened during the change programme implementation and hence missing crucial data.

This case study involved one organization. The study can not be generalized to represent the strategic change programmes implementation in all organizations. This is because organizations operate with different strategic plans in unique operating environment.

5.4 Recommendation for Further Study

It's recommended that a study be carried out to establish how the changes in Plan International Inc – Kenya have empowered the community and the field staff.

It's also recommended that a study be carried out to establish the effectiveness of the resultant structure in programme delivery.

Plan Kenya should also set up monitoring system to continuously monitor and evaluate the change outcome to ensure the gains achieved are not eroded and business as usual return in the organization.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE.

1. Describe the process used to develop the change strategic objectives and vision.

2. Explain how the vision and change strategies were shared with all staff.

3. Were there teams formed with the responsibility to implement the change process?

4. Describe the process of team formation and the characteristics taken into account in picking members:

5. What was the mandate and authority of the change team(s)

6. What forces necessitated the change?

7. Describe how the planning for change was done

8. How was the change programme initiated and managed?

9. Was there a monitoring system during and after the change programme implementation?

10. How did the top management support the change programme and activities?

11. What resources were allocated to the change programme?

12. In your view explain how the following factors influenced the change outcome (Resistance to change, culture, stakeholder politics, teamwork, leadership, funding).

13. Did the change process develop any reward system or improve the terms of service? Please provide details

14. What steps have been taken to ensure achievements of the change process are not eroded and “business as usual” resumes due to negative forces of change?

APPENDIX II: DISCUSSION GUIDE.

1. Describe the change process in Plan Kenya

2. How were you prepared for change?

3. What were your roles in the implementation of the change programme?

4. In your view, was there adequate participation of all staff.

5. Explain how changes were effected on strategies, structures, systems, processes, policies and procedures.