



Resource Mobilisation

Nurturing the community to grow



INTRODUCTION

Resource Mobilisation is an impending need for Community Based Organisations (CBO's) to be able to sustain themselves. The increasing number of CBO's within the country makes it all the more challenging for them to be able to access donors funding. Furthermore, the insufficient knowledge and skills that CBO's currently possess makes resource mobilisation a strenuous task.

CBO's have been and are, an integral part of development projects and initiatives for decades. They are the 'face' of community empowerment by building on the social capital, and increasing reliance on community participation. CBO's are key in VHS DIVA implementing projects as they are a representation of the transgender population within a geographical community. Therefore, making them pertinent is crucial in our efforts.

VHS identified the general need that exists among all CBO's is the need for funds or corpus beyond the requirements of project as this is crucial for the

survival of the CBO.

But once the funding support ceases, the CBOs face multiple challenges in sustaining their functions. As a result, many such organizations die out. To adapt to newer situations and sustained existence of these CBO's, they need to be financially self-reliant, program and organizational sustainability and exploring new avenues for financial support is very important. These organizations must not depend only on the external funding support, as it might be inconsistent, temporary and based on the priorities of funding agencies/ donors rather than on the real need at the grassroots¹.

In order to devise an innovative strategy for fundraising, CBO's must first focus on its current activities, prioritize them and then must diversify accordingly. They must first understand their own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and also threats to its sustenance.

In order to attain financial self-reliance, access to financial resources may be sought in more than one

DIVA PROJECT AND RESOURCE MOBILISATION

VHS DIVA Project has been working with the transgender community and their CBO's assisting them in their promotion and strengthening. The lack of projects, funds and knowledge on securing additional resources made operations difficult for CBO's to sustain themselves. Therefore, VHS DIVA experimented with various skill building programs for the Transgender community. A few alternate methods suggested by VHS DIVA to increase CBO corpus were charging membership fees for community members, user fees when availing any services offered by the CBO such as identity card registration and other administrative tasks. Within the realm of Transgender CBO's, we have identified that CBO's find cultural events to be the most attractive avenue and in line with displaying their talents. The strategy of conducting cultural events to both mobilise resources as well as showcase transgender talent, owed to their enthusiastic expression of creative arts (dance, music, make up, fashion, etc.). They also exude a high level of confidence and like performing among crowds and other large visual media. However, we found that they were unable to properly plan their activities cost effectively and efficiently. To encourage local CBO's in the practical implementation of Resource Mobilisation events, VHS organised two Resource Mobilisation Training workshops conducted over the course of three-days. Participants were assessed



first put through a preliminary assessment based on various criterion and ranked. Following which, we provided training and assistance in administrative, financial, skill building, capacity building and training for CBO's to better manage themselves. The workshops involved thirty-seven (37) participants from twenty-two (22) CBO's throughout India. This event was conducted in Mumbai and Chennai, in

way as there are multiple strategies and approaches, which are :¹²³

1. Accessing financial support from other organizations, like foundations, CSR arms, local resources and support, etc.
2. Generating revenue by taking up income-generating activities; membership dues, special events, cost recovery.
3. Making use of resources available to generate funds/ other kind of support, like asking volunteers to raise funds, building and utilizing network and goodwill to raise funds.

However, the ability to access funds continues to be a challenge within the trans community, as they are unaware of effectively using their skills to do so. Having seen this as a challenge, VHS DIVA Project addressed it by conducting training programs to improve their capacity, assisting in drafting action plans and providing technical support in execution.

IMPACT

Following the training workshops, a manual on resource mobilisation for Transgender CBOs was launched and, a State level action plan for conducting resource mobilisation for TG / Hijra CBOs through cultural performances has been developed. This document is being used by CBOs to effectively adopt appropriate Resource Mobilization strategies within their respective communities by incorporating a standard process and approach.

This event conducted by VHS, has been the first of its kind in India, an attempt made to organise a training program for the sustainability of the TG / Hijra CBO's by fundraising through cultural performances. Overall the training program provided technical input, skills for resource mapping, strategy development, event management and, devising a business plan and was

¹Dr Saumya Arora (2016), Resource mobilization for community-based organizations.

²World Bank (2007), Resource Mobilization.

³Rehema C. Bhatti (2014), Challenges facing local NGO's in resource mobilization

partnership with Mx. Sudha from ITI and Mx. Aruna, from Ahead CBO conducted activities during the workshop as they have rich experience in successfully implementing RM initiatives for over a decade in Tamil Nadu. We felt that involving members from the community would further enhance uptake and learning by other transgender CBO's.

We designed the workshop to include both demonstrative training as well as an exposure visit for attendees, to encourage a more interactive, participative approach that promoted knowledge sharing. Activities conducted were a full day orientation workshop and interactive sessions to gain understanding on the logistics and planning required for conducting a cultural event, as well as a community sharing & learning and an exposure visit. On the final day, participants provide feedback as well as drawing up action plans plotting roughly how they plan on conducting events in their respective states.

The success of Resource Mobilisation through conducting cultural events, was initially demonstrated by the Salem Tirunangaigal Nala Sangam (STNS), who successfully gained 13 Lakhs for their corpus. STNS is a transgender CBO that is currently being supported by VHS DIVA under the CSS seed grant. The CBO has been conducting one cultural event every year, making them a pioneer in this area. Following the spread of their success story and achievements, multiple CBO's across the state of Tamil Nadu ventured into this new



avenue. This success has been possible after multiple failed attempts. Mx. Pooja, President of STNS added, "The first time we conducted an event with the support of VHS DIVA, we attempted to involve the government personnel and local leaders to participate. However, they did not positively respond, also STNS did not take

successful in facilitating the learning of new techniques for CBO fund raising.

- We guided CBO's in understanding how to conduct donor mapping (local, district, state), developing budgets, drafting a business plan approaching high value donors and heads appropriately.
- In addition, CBO's were required to submit an action plan for their respective organisations to mobilise funds at state level events.
- We also trained them on the appropriate ways of approaching members of the state and national

Loveland Arts Society, Kerala - The CBO was presented a jewellery set worth 5 Lakh Rupees by donors. However, following VHS DIVA RM workshops, to generate more revenue, the CBO let-out the jewellery for rent and the rental costs earned goes directly to contribute to the CBO's corpus.

government bodies to ensure they receive their support as well as donors, philanthropists and sponsors.

CHALLENGES

The large number of CBO's and limited resources contributes to a lot of challenges within the CBO operating environment both internally and externally.

- CBO's have provided feedback that establishing rapport with donors in a new demographic for the first time has proved to be difficult. Furthermore, they state that identifying donors who will positively contribute to the cause is all the more challenging. In the case where they have successfully conducted multiple resource mobilisation events, they find it difficult to identify donors and sponsors beyond those who already exist. The concept of Resource Mobilisation is in itself new, making it taxing for CBO's who have existed for a long period, proving difficulty in understanding as well as seeking support of local

sufficient efforts to mobilise funds in material and only focused on monetary relief". STNS shared a few lessons along the way that could be mentioned briefly.

- They found that setting up a donation box during an event may be a great idea. However, STNS felt a little apprehensive in doing so. So, Deputy Director, VHS MSA DIVA - Mr. Vijayaraman suggested they keep a box and encouraged a small girl to go and drop 10 rupees that he provided. Seeing the little girl and her generosity, a lot many people became conscious and started putting money in the donation box. This now served as an additional source of funds.
- Another lesson they learned through their attempts, was to publicly recognise those who contributed to the cause on a stage. We realised that people thrived on public recognition and applause, so all those who contributed as well as came to support the event in any way, such as by providing the auditorium facility, or by providing lighting, sound etc. They took an effort to acknowledge them on the stage during the event and promote their contributions. STNS also learnt that all those who made personal contributions, were also eager to be acknowledged on the stage and this in turn brought more new donors, supporters and sponsors during the following events held.
- VHS DIVA suggested the implementation of membership fees, so that the money generated through this could also contribute to the long term welfare of the organization. The cost of the annual membership fees was set at a nominal rate that could be afforded by all.

Following VHS DIVA efforts with STNS and leading to the organizations eventual success, they now conduct events annually and with no help from VHS DIVA as they feel they have mastered the skills required to be able to mobilise resources through cultural events.

partners, donors and sponsors.

- CBO's also find it difficult to understand that resources may not necessarily be in the form of liquid cash, but can also be in kind, such as material and human resource. Donors and sponsors may also provide materials such as stage, acoustics, logistics and others for free, therefore supporting their initiative in another manner. However, CBO's are unable to recognise these as equally valuable and most often demand support in the form of cash assistance. We encourage CBO's to seek and mobilise local resources to support their PLHIV in nutrition supplement, educational for young community members, and much more.

LESSONS LEARNED

- CBO's must focus on not just big donors and sponsors but must pay equal attention to emerging business people and general public and not just popular figures. Donors could range from

grassroots level, corporate, government departments, social development organisations and individuals.

- We've also identified that CBO's were unable to effectively complete a cost-benefit analysis while drafting their business plan. During the training program, we helped them in identifying the gaps in their financial event management, as well as we have encouraged them to conduct a post event analysis to assess their success, failures, challenges and identify solutions for the future.
- CBO's also tend to stick to the traditional methods (donations, sponsorship etc.) of conducting events and are faced with inertia while adopting newer strategies. They must look to conducting new and innovative ideas in their events, by changing their theme and concept annually, inviting new public figures to showcase a growth in support and more.

VHS DIVA would like to promote creative thinking to put in minimum effort to drive the best results from

Seeing the success of STNS, Indian Transgender Initiative (ITI) a Transgender community based organisation, started operating with limited to no sufficient funds and resources, which urged them to explore other avenues. In 2015, after identifying an opportunity at a cultural event which required them to perform for 60 hours, VHS DIVA supported their cause by providing small financial assistance. Following the success of this event they were able to mobilise sufficient funds to conduct another funding drive which has now led them at present, to build a corpus holding 15 lakhs, by conducting events in over 6 districts in the state of Tamil Nadu. ITI has since set an example and has multiple times been a part of our Resource Mobilisation Training activities conducted for CBO's.

ITI was able to source funds from all key donors and popular figures within their circle, using appropriate and relevant strategies which propelled the growth of their corpus. ITI adds, "Conducting Resource Mobilisation events has also benefitted by providing an opportunity as a platform for networking as well as advocacy for transgender people". They have been able to successfully establish a healthy rapport to many government officials, media personnel and key leaders within the community. In this way they have been able to approach them in case any assistance was required to advocate on behalf of the transgender community.

ITI conducted a resource mobilisation event in the district of Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. Following the success of this event, the Vice Chancellor of the educational institution, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University announced free education for all interested transgender people.

resource mobilisation initiatives. Rethinking the concept of traditional Resource Mobilisation strategies is needed for going beyond stage performances with an effective pre and post activity assessment. VHS DIVA would like to suggest promoting events and activities that encourage the inclusion of the transgender people with that of the larger community. In this way encourage looking for opportunities to engage in communality mobilisation, as well as foster mainstreaming within the larger society.

In one case, a local CBO who was very eager in conducting their RM event, without properly assessing their capacity went on to face failure in their event. They were unable to mobilise sufficient funds and did not receive a very great response in participation, thereby mobilising less than 50 percent of the estimated profits.

EVENT CHECKLIST

- 3 Identifying requirements
- 3 Formation of Advisory Team for Resource Mobilisation (ATRM)
- 3 Meeting with staff / volunteers / TG Leaders
- 3 Fix the date and venue (College / University / community hall)
- 3 Finalizing the theme.
- 3 Prepare Brochure /Album / Sponsor / Donor letter
- 3 Print Tickets (Different amount) for the cultural event
- 3 Mapping of internal talents
- 3 Donor mapping
- 3 Prepare budget proposal

- 3 Choose guest / special invitees for the event
- 3 Committee formation
- 3 Review the progress of the event once in a week on a fixed date
- 3 Initial money to be shared from the CBO (Venue booking, printing brochures, tickets)
- 3 Reduce un wanted expenditures,
- 3 Meet all the print / electronic media
- 3 Permission from different departments
- 3 Advocacy and Marketing
- 3 Communications
- 3 Budget planning

Additional Resources and products developed by VHS DIVA Project.

- Resource Mobilisation for CBOs : Reference Manual
- Resource Mobilisation for Beginners: Video Both of which can be found on our website : www.vhsdiva.org



THE VOLUNTARY HEALTH SERVICES (VHS)