



Teenage mothers recruitment process for livelihood program

What is it about?

Not engaging oneself in the recruitment of one's own clients can lead to a series of problems in the implementation of a program.

What problem emerged?

The Teenage Mothers Program is a program targeted at young mothers below 20 years with an aim of improving their livelihood situation while creating a forum for them to interact with their children. Being under pressure to kick start the programme, MCFp relied on the referrals done by community leaders and organizations it networks with to find the beneficiaries, and did not double check on those referrals. Referred "teenage mothers" did to a big part not meet the requirements. They were over 25 years old, girlfriends of community leaders and persons who did not have children.

What has been the impact?

- The clients had expectations that the program could not meet or manage, and there was an overall lack of synergy between clients and staff.
- Drop-out, absenteeism and indiscipline were reasons why the first intake left only two clients who were genuine and committed to the programme.
- Time and resources were wasted, which took a toll on the project. The lack of working trust with the partners who referred the cases led to changes in the network interaction.

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AUSTRIAN ORGANISATION
FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

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Organisation: Mathare Children's Fund panairobi

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Learning from failure
AT A GLANCE

Why did it happen?

- The main assumption that led to the failure was that the partners would do a due diligence when referring clients. For MCFp network relationships imply the commitment and responsibility to act according to the agreements and requests.
- On the other hand, MCFp lacked well-drawn strategies for the programme and did not have the criteria documented. Partners were only verbally communicated to what was expected of the clients.
- Together with the pressure to meet a donor's time frame, the main reasons for the practice to go wrong were, therefore, the over-reliance and trust on the network/partners and the lack of a logical approach to execute the programme in the initial stage.

What are the key messages and lessons learned?

- The process of execution must be dynamic and adaptive, responding to unanticipated events. Clear responsibilities and processes are a must for effective execution and should be well documented, and there has to be more information exchange, including a consistent briefing of all stakeholders.
- Lessons have been drawn for the future work, such as having a sound strategy first before the programme starts, having an implementation model to guide execution thoughts and actions, as well as having responsibilities and processes well defined and documented.
- Failure is not always bad. Failure is a source of learning. Therefore there has to be a consistent reporting of failures, focusing on "what happened" and not "who did it", when things go wrong.

Who could be interested in the experience?

Organisations working in similar conditions, who focus on vulnerable groups and offer different interventions.

