

Foreword

Successful cooperation is a key challenge of the 21st century. Be it health reform or airport expansion, education system reform or public debt reduction, neighbourhood development or the integration of migrants: in Europe and worldwide, these and similar change processes are now on the agenda more than ever before. Crucial to their success is not just selecting the right political and technical solutions, but also the issue of how to transform them step by step into a new social reality. This means finding the right methodology.

Through this book we are now making available the quintessence of our experience in this field, gained in over 30 years of international cooperation by GIZ and its predecessor organisations GTZ, the German Development Service and Capacity Development International, Germany. Through our management model Capacity WORKS we are showing what we believe makes cooperation succeed, so that others can benefit from this expertise.

Organisations rarely know just how much they actually know. What is especially valuable, though, is their wealth of experience, the methods of the seasoned practitioner, and an understanding of the principles underlying this know-how. This knowledge is reflected in the practices of the knowledge bearers, and is transmitted orally. Yet it often remains implicit. So to make our expertise available for wider use – both within GIZ and by others – we needed to decode, condense and express it in a way that is easy to understand. This is why we embarked on a shared voyage of discovery – a journey to the factors for successfully managing social change. We wanted to know what it actually is that makes those projects which generate results particularly effectively and sustainably, better than others. To answer this question we collated the lessons our practitioners had learned, and analysed them in light of recent systems theory.

The product of this analysis and reflection work is the management model Capacity WORKS. Capacity WORKS is a key tool that supports us and our partners around the world every day in our work for social change processes. In diffuse and complex constellations, Capacity WORKS gives the actors involved guidance and structure, without constraining them. And using simple methods it facilitates a joint understanding of the key issues in the joint project and how to approach them. But that is not all. At the same time Capacity WORKS also reflects an attitude, and articulates a standard of quality for cooperation projects. The distinguishing feature of these projects is that all the actors involved participate actively, listen and look carefully, pool and negotiate their interests and strengths, and continuously reflect on their joint undertaking.

‘Cooperation management for practitioners – Managing social change with Capacity WORKS’ is a manual for GIZ staff and partners worldwide. But it is also designed for everyone involved in cooperation systems on any level whatsoever – whether as managers, executives, consultants or advisors in business, governance, public administration or the nonprofit sector. We hope that you will find it helpful in driving key reforms and change processes. Good luck!



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