



RSF-THE DHAKA PROJECT

Julie Tartaggia's Feedback

I came to The Dhaka Project mid-October 2009 and stayed for three months working on a specific project. Having my Masters in International Development and experience in Policy Development in the Australian Government, the Project Manager and I agreed that I would come and do an operations and service delivery analysis.

This research report brought together a broad overview of the entire organisation in the form of a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis on the basis of interviews and workshops with 50 per cent of TDP Staff, meetings with The Dubai Council, RSF, long term (i.e. more than one year) volunteers as well as observations and community talks.

A key research objective was to provide the research and analysis to support the organisation to commence assessing the right combination of strategies and the appropriate organizational structure to:



- address current organizational and service delivery issues and weaknesses;
- to create a solid foundation for increased sustainability,
- to implement effective mechanisms of governance and communication and d) to ensure ethical practices and best practice approach as an NGO influencing the lives of beneficiaries in Gawair. The recommendations in this paper aim to support this objective.

Despite low staff morale, within the staff I recognized that there still burned a fire of passion and devotion to the underlying purpose of TDP. There was a sense of team synergy bonded by common principles. Likewise, the children were full of loving energy and very welcoming, and the community members were warm, friendly and eager to interact. Overall, the organisation does the best that they can with the human and financial resources that they have. I was very impressed with their ability to make the most of their limitations and maximize on their strengths. Also, where they have to compromise or make sacrifices, it is always with the best interest of the beneficiaries in mind and they never sell the beneficiaries short. Staff do not hesitate to go out of their way to take on extra work or responsibility where necessary and in this way ensure that the quality of service delivery is maintained even during times where resources are stretched.



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Leadership thus far has been erratic and with a high turnover. TDP is currently experiencing a stage of consistency in leadership which is good for staff morale and the development of long term strategic plans for a more sustainable organisation in the future.

During my time here, I was lucky enough to have the company of two other long term volunteers, as well as Jewel the Volunteer Manager, who ensured a smooth transition and that all my questions were answered. As time went on I really started to feel part of the community, particularly after participation in Eid celebrations and as a long term volunteer I met with various interesting short term volunteers almost weekly.

Overall, the experience was extremely rewarding and I am particularly grateful to the support of the staff and the warmth of the entire community for making my stay in Gawair such a pleasure and my work with TDP so satisfying and effective. In particular, a special thank you to Jewel - the wonderful and helpful volunteer manager, Faria - the ever enduring and endearing Family Counselor and to Rossie - the dedicated and impressive Project Manager.