



# ACTION LEARNING PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

*A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO PROJECT-BASED LEARNING*

## DESCRIPTION AND CORE PRINCIPLES:

### I. Inspire & Involve

#### 1. Establish the partnership:

- Identify partner organisations who can support each other in defining and implementing the desired change. Make an agreement with them that defining and implementing the desired change is a shared responsibility.

#### 2. Examine the potential and formulate a common strategic intention:

- A Strategic Intention is not strategy plan, it indicates a meaningful and necessary direction without defining exact solutions, e.g. what is it that we want to move away from, and what are we heading towards?
- All influencing and affected stakeholders should ideally take part in defining the strategic intention

### II: Create waves of mini projects focusing on impact & learning

#### 3. Find options together for improvements:

- Identify and prioritise collaborative projects in alignment with Strategic Intent
- Identify goals for impact and for capacity building. These will be used for monitoring and evaluating success

#### 4. Run projects:

- Run projects (8-10 weeks) with a focus on results and capacity building
- Schedule frequent short meetings (often daily or weekly) to monitor progress

### III: Enable and anchor the change

#### 5. Methods of anchoring:

- Sensemaking - the change must be perceived as necessary, closely related to those involved task and with good realistic gains.
- Power – make sure that both management and the informal agenda setters are advocates for change.
- Organisational learning – e.g. the methods introduced throughout this programme
- Synchronisation – align intentions and goals of the project with other relevant social and guidelines already in place in the organisation

# Design Principles for Development Projects

**I. Inspire (Don't instruct) & involve extensively**

**1. Establish the partnership**

**2. Examine the potential and formulate a common strategic intention**

- What is it that we want to move away from, and where are we heading towards?
- Gains?
- Urgency?

**II: Create waves of mini projects focusing on impact & learning**

**3. Find jointly options for improvements - create waves of incremental improvements**

- Decide for the easiest / most important. Plan what to do with the others.
- Goals for impact (What needs to improve in our work?)
- Goals for capacity (What do we need to become better at?)

**III: Enable the change and ensure anchoring**

**4. Run short improvement rounds**

- Action
- Evaluate & learn – are we coming at the desired/intended impact? Are we getting more capable? What need to be done?
- Action

**5. Run a new short improvement round**

- Action
- Evaluate & learn – are we coming at the desired/intended impact? Are we getting more capable? What need to be done?
- Action
- To anchor the learning in process and structures