Common River (CR) is a US-based 501(c)3 nonprofit public benefit organization that implements community development programs in Aleta Wondo, Ethiopia. According to the website, the organization’s mission statement is “to empower the community to become balanced, productive and self-sustaining for others to witness and replicate, while honoring cultural heritage and environmental biodiversity.”

Using a collaborative approach with key stakeholders, current organizational challenges and goals were first identified. Next, an evaluation design was created to guide the process of assessing organizational performance. Once data was analyzed using an integrated approach, a series of recommendations were established to guide leadership in next steps.

Objectives

- Provide leadership with tools and guidance to make the best use of available resources.
- Clarify the CR leadership team’s focus enabling them to make appropriate decisions about moving forward with strategic planning initiatives and capacity building efforts.
- Identify viable capacity building strategies that will best empower CR in effectively utilizing current assets to better align programs and services with their mission and community needs.

Methodology

An adaptation of MITRE’s Organizational Assessment Approach was used for project mapping. Primary data was collected via expert interviews, program records and a detailed survey in conjunction with secondary data through a literature review.

Research Questions:

- Is CR’s mission statement still viable, relevant, and desirable?
- Is CR performing at their optimal level and in accordance with their stated mission, vision, and values?
- Is CR’s current programming in alignment with their stated mission and values?
- How can CR build their capacity with limited resources?
- Is CR fully utilizing identified opportunities and strengths and how can they best address weaknesses and threats?

The analysis process included a multi-dimensional evaluation utilizing the Universa1 Institutional and Organizational Assessment (IOA) Model.

![Diagram of Universa1 Institutional and Organizational Assessment (IOA) Model]

OCAT scores indicate strengths to build upon and areas to improve. The lower scores demonstrate a clear need for increased capacity while the higher scores reveal a high level of capacity. The results show that CR has room for improvement in the area of financial management, board leadership and program design & evaluation. The highest score received was for their team leadership.

Results from McKinsey’s Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool (OCAT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities</td>
<td>Threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Robust participatory community-based leadership.</td>
<td>1. Lack of funds, limited revenue sources, recruiting and developing talent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2. Rich history in meta data. | 2. Infrastructural, professional。
| 3. International cross-cultural exchange between ethics and responsible practices. | 3. Limited capacity for effective social impact.
| 4. Model of bottom-up development. | 4. Challenges obtaining adequate program supplies. |
| 5. Significant asset of property in Ethiopia. | 5. Ineffective board participation. |
| 7. Positive impact on local children’s health through nutrition and education services. | 7. Environmental degradation. |

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT was developed utilizing primary and secondary data. Outcomes from the SWOT substantiated results from the other assessment mechanisms.

References


