

LESSONS LEARNED BY ODS IN ACCOMPANYING MIGRATION, REFUGEE, ANTI-RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION CSOs AT EU LEVEL

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I. Introduction

The environment in which EU nonprofit organisations operate is changing. One reason is that the financial and economic crisis has made the life of nonprofit organisations more difficult financially. The same goes for the life of their target groups. Another reason is that the media and the general public are now challenging the efficiency and effectiveness of the nonprofit sector more often, and more fundamentally, than before the crisis.

In addition, nonprofit organisations are expected to meet ever higher standards of transparency and accountability. The competition for scarce resources is growing at a time that the European Union is moving away from core funding towards project funding for civil society organisations. At the same time, the EU itself is under attack, which reflects negatively on all those organisations working in Brussels.

All this is even more relevant for CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination at EU level, as the issues they cover are relatively low on the priority list of politicians and policy makers. This type of CSO does not sell cuddly animals or unspoilt landscapes. Their issues are more difficult and multi-layered and the implementation of the solutions they propose is often complex. The people these organisations represent - migrants, ethnic minorities and refugees - form exactly that part of society that is attractive to no one. Many of them are, or are seen as, the poorest, least educated, worst-housed and most vulnerable inhabitants of any European country, and with many of them being residents rather than citizens, they do not necessarily have voting rights.

As a consequence, these groups often get the least support in terms of public policy and funding. They are demonstrably unpopular with policy makers and have real and persistent trouble interesting public authorities for their needs or demands.

ODS has worked on organisational development issues with quite a number of these organisations. Given the specific problems they face, we think a reasoned set of suggestions and recommendations may be helpful. Therefore, we have written down our experiences and identify lessons to be learned. They can contribute to advance the mission of CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination and to compensate for the disadvantages they suffer from, as compared to their colleagues in other sectors.

II. Common characteristics of CSOs working on migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination

Our long-standing experience has taught us that organisations working in this field have a number of particularities in common. These concern phenomena that might be perceived in other organisations as well, but often to a lesser degree or in less complex combinations.

Scarce public and private funding

The very first thing organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism or discrimination have in common is a marked lack of funds. Theirs is not a 'sexy' cause and it is not high on anyone's priority list. As a consequence, public funding is limited while quite a few big donors tend to prefer causes that either lend more prestige or are more pleasant to the eye. Fundraising for this type of organisation is extremely difficult and attempts to diversify funding sources are more easily debated than made.

The many requirements of donors, especially the European Commission, and the level of detail needed to secure funding do not help in this respect and should, in our view, lead to a discussion with the Commission and with other donors about what are fair, relevant and adequate work programme requirements. Furthermore, CSOs may get overexposed to unstable or contradictory donor priorities and the risk of mission drift because of a donor-driven agenda. This does not, however, diminish the responsibility of the organisations to be realistic in their planning, to monitor quality and to deliver.

Idealism and oversimplification

The organisations working in this compensate these disadvantages with a strong commitment and a set of inspiring ideals. Idealism is an especially important driver for their work, and it keeps them going where others would probably throw in the towel. This is important and there is no reason to change this.

At the same time, it is important to be aware that a strong commitment and inspiring ideals not infrequently lead to oversimplification; to a degree of blindness to the complexity of the issues these organisations deal with. The hostility or indifference their environment show can lead to too much self-centeredness and too little self-reflection and self-doubt. In some organisations, we see a tendency to cling to simple cause-effect theories, and equally to different mixtures of assertions, assumptions and individual anecdotes –instead of to solid research data- to back them up. Checking facts, fact-based reporting, healthy ties to research institutions or performing thorough analyses, are insufficiently integrated into the daily routine of those working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination.

Victimisation

By defining beneficiaries by their group membership and locking every single member of it into victimhood by definition, these organisations can overlook differences within and between groups, and the importance of making distinctions. Gender issues within the groups these

organisations support, for example, tend to be overlooked or they get only marginal attention. At times, subtle and not-so-subtle differences in attitude between and within their beneficiaries (in particular vis-à-vis women, LGBT or other religious and ethnic minorities) are ignored for the sake of the general narrative. This way, we will end up with a great many victims, but very few perpetrators. We think this view is neither realistic nor helpful and may, in the end, hamper the necessary self-criticism and empowerment of precisely those target groups whose emancipation and rights these organisations advocate.

By no means all individuals working in the field have personal experience of migration, discrimination or marginalisation; they often champion other people's causes. And among those who advocate for empowerment it is not uncommon that they themselves fall prey to patronising. This should be recognised and should lead to different approaches. However, taking a step back and regular self-assessing or evaluating are not yet common practices.

Stakeholder involvement

Stakeholder involvement in the sector seems an underdeveloped area. Although many umbrella bodies or networks are made up of different organisations, it remains rather unclear what exactly the requirements for being allowed to join a network are, and whether either being representative for a group of beneficiaries or belonging to the target communities are among them. In some cases, we seem to detect a preference for some organisations to join the platform, network or umbrella, and for others to remain outside them. We think there clearly is room for improvement here.

Decision-making

Organisations in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination often have a preference for bottom-up democracy, with as a consequence that decision making tends to be a long and convoluted process. Valuable time and energy is taken away from the mission and used for internal debates. In particular when the representation at EU level is a member organisation, the resulting decision-making architecture makes their functioning often extremely complicated. Long-drawn processes blur the necessary focus and hamper the kind of pro-activity and quick turnaround that is needed nowadays in the European policy and political environment. While a bottom-up approach can be a valuable option to ensure ownership of strategies well adapted to the needs of a diverse constituency, this needs to be also balanced with considerations of efficacy. This balance is frequently missing.

Confusion about the objective of representational units at EU level

In quite a few cases, we have found confusion about the role and tasks of an organisation's representation at EU level, or hidden -or not so hidden- disagreements about them. Basically, these differences seem to be about whether the representation at EU level sees its task mainly as a duty to monitor developments and reporting back to members, as a duty to influence decision-making, in Brussels, at the level of the European Commission and the Parliament only, or as a duty to involve the Council and the Member States as well. In many cases, we see that

these differences also lead to disagreement and unhelpful conflicts about what the organisation's position is, who should be allowed to travel, be a delegate, represent an organisation or speak in meetings and at events.

In addition, quite a few (umbrella) organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination not only hold the view that their beneficiaries in the member states are too poor to be able to pay membership fees, but also that the bodies that represent them at the local or national level cannot be expected to pay membership fees to their representational unit or umbrella structure at European level either. On the contrary, they often think that just because their organisation supports a 'good cause', it is entitled to grants from the European Union, national public authorities or foundations.

This attitude does not help to create a functional and independent European platform that can competently represent the interests of their members, and is sufficiently focussed on programmatic, policy-oriented objectives in the EU, where advocacy needs a combination of work in Brussels and the capitals.

Attrition

Salaries in the sector are not impressive and career prospects are limited. This can lead to the kind of attrition where good workers may seek opportunities elsewhere and the less-mobile may overstay their welcome. In quite a few cases, this situation has led to employees staying too long in their positions. While twenty to thirty years ago it was absolutely normal and completely acceptable for individuals to stay with the same employer for their whole working life, most experts now seriously doubt that this practice keeps organisations flexible and on the ball.

In addition, there is a mindset among CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination that their staff should consist of idealists who should accept low salaries because remuneration is not really the point. Often, staff is seen as a kind of 'compensated volunteers' rather than professionals with a right to decent and commensurate remuneration. This also leads to ambitious employees leaving the organization fairly soon. Often, mid-career staff or those with four to six years of experience are missing in these organisations.

Resistance to professionalism

On the operational side, we often see a certain resistance to professional development and change. Quality control or drawing lessons are underdeveloped. Often, these CSOs do the same things in the same way they always have done them. Not infrequently, boards put pressure on representations at EU level to take on even more obligations. Work plans then get overloaded with too many projects and tasks, while the complexity of their implementation is often underestimated and the resources needed are lacking, all of which threatens delivery.

In addition, quite a few representations at EU level tend to shun priority-setting. Even without board pressure, they tend to work on too many issues at the same time and show a marked

resistance to dropping any of them. Not surprisingly, we have found many organisations in this field to be overly optimistic about the number of priorities they can set and unrealistic about the timelines for their activities.

Furthermore, impact often stays unmeasured and campaigns are not properly evaluated. Sometimes, this is because those involved conflate meaning well and working well, in which case there is no need to monitor and evaluate. Sometimes, no tradition to scrutinise their own operations and output for efficiency and effectiveness exists. Where monitoring and evaluation do happen, they are often the consequence of a grantmaker's conditions rather than of the organisation's genuine wish to assess its own output and outcomes.

Finally, and in spite of the current hard times, there is not an awful lot of collaboration on either campaigning or operations between like-minded organisations, and ideas for mergers or shared services are few on the ground. Therefore, opportunities are lost and output can be suboptimal. Governance a cause for concern

Last, but not least, many organisations' governance leaves something to be desired. Frequently, there is a mutual disconnect between board and management. While those in management positions may see boards as either irrelevant or a nuisance, those in governance tend to think of their positions as awards or medals rather than as serious responsibilities. Often, board members have no clear understanding of their duties, and a limited concept of good governance. Very common are boards that have far too many members to function properly or members who lack the right skills, while other boards see their function as limited to ensuring financial stability without offering strategic guidance or constructive questions to the CSOs. Serious recruitment procedures or board performance assessments are scarce, while life membership instead of rotation is the rule. In the end, many board members defend their own interest or that of the member organisation they represent, rather than the interest of the entire organisation, and conflicts of interest are not uncommon.

While all this –at least at the European level- has gone relatively unnoticed for the past decades, the current changing environment may yet trip weakly-governed organisations up. A well-governed organisation has a good system of checks and balances in place. A well-functioning, well-respected board is part of that system. CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination should therefore invest more in good governance and best practices.

Conclusion

We think that organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination, have the big disadvantage that the people they represent –migrants, ethnic minorities and refugees- form exactly that part of society that is attractive to no one. They work for the poorest, least educated, ill-housed and most vulnerable residents, who are usually neglected, if not used as scapegoats, by policy makers and politicians.

On the other hand, these groups themselves are often fragmented and internally divided; their organisational skills are limited or underdeveloped, and therefore fall short of the needs and expectations of policy makers and politicians. At the same time, unfortunately, they are also the groups most under attack these days. These CSOs and the groups whose interests they defend are an easy target for populists, who depict them as having the wrong religion, ethnicity, culture, gender attitude, education level or work ethos and blame them for anything from mass unemployment, criminality, a housing shortage or the financial crisis, to unpopular European or Human Rights Law.

Where the objectives are so difficult to achieve, circumstances are so complicated and resources are so limited, the highest forms of professionalism are necessary. Only then we can optimise the chances to achieve a maximum of impact with the limited resources available. In particular a self-critical attitude, a practice to assess strategies and ways of working, adaptability and sophisticated communication are needed. Unfortunately, compared to other CSOs such as those working on health issues, the environment, development or consumer interests, the level of professionalism of those working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination seems to be lower.

In the near future, money for operations -be it from membership fees, public funding or private donors- will be harder to get and more difficult to keep coming in. Individuals will think harder about what to spend their money on, public authorities are under increased scrutiny from the public, and private donors become more critical. That will cause all potential givers to be more critical about an organisation's appeal for grants and donations, its reason for being, its strategies and operations, or its theories of change. In other words, their legitimacy, efficiency and effectiveness will get questioned more now than they would be in good times.

III. Addressing the problems

To make CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination fit for the future, the problems we mentioned above should be addressed. Although we are not talking rocket science, finding solutions will often not be easy and they will always take time. And it is not about money. While many organisations will react by saying that without more money -for extra board meetings, more staff, more equipment or more travel- nothing can be done, in our view money is not the real issue.

The real issue is the genuine wish, shared by governing body and management alike, to do the right things and do them the right way. It is the real and lasting wish to be result-oriented, well-structured, well-governed, rational about resources, adaptable, accountable and transparent. In other words, it is about professionalism in word and deed. This may sound like an open door, but in practice, it proves to be difficult for most CSOs working in this field to take a step back, look at themselves and decide to professionalise. Yet, some of them have done so -even if only because their managing of public funds required them to or because their donors stimulated them to- and have the results to show for it.

But if they do, what are the right things, what is the right way and how does one get from here to there?

Over the years, a lot of guidance has been produced on these issues by international organisations, non-profit researchers and infrastructure organisations. Having worked with many European migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination organisations, ODS can offer the following observations and suggestions:

Governance

Governance is a problematic issue for all organisations, in our entire society, and affects the public and private sectors as well.

Governance is about the systems and processes that concern the overall direction, oversight, performance and accountability of an organisation. Consensus among experts has it that in CSOs, it is the duty of the board to provide strategic guidance, exercise accountability to an organisation's key stakeholders, protect reputation and brand, delegate powers to paid staff if those exist, and oversee working practices, work plan implementation, follow-up of decisions taken. This means that boards decide on an organisation's vision, mission, strategy, priorities, work programme and budget, and ideally in that order. Depending on the legal situation in a country, boards can have from two to countless members, and in some cases paid staff can be part of a board.

In our opinion, boards should consist of no more than about eleven members in order to remain workable, which is a challenge of course. Apart from being representative for the organisation's diversity, together, they also need to have skills in meeting, public policy, HR issues,

administrative and financial affairs, marketing and fundraising. This means that being appointed as a delegate should not be an automatic process.

In our view, bigger boards, which often meet just a few times a year, should appoint an executive committee to take care of their organisation's governing issues. If serious material expertise is required, advisory councils or committees can be set up, but without decision-making powers and only to advise board and staff.

Because governance is such a complex issue that it goes beyond the scope of this guide, we should like to make a number of points that seem most relevant for CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination.

Most CSOs have democratic structures and decision-making processes. In this case, it is the General Assembly that has the highest powers to decide. Because a General Assembly rarely meets more than once a year, it appoints a Board to act on its behalf during the year. On their behalf the board supervises the strategy and budget, appoints and evaluates the highest staff member if the organisation has paid staff, but is not involved in any day-to-day management. The board then delegates operational authority to the highest staff member -usually a director or secretary-general- and leaves further implementation of general assembly or board decisions to the staff. Boards have a substantial responsibility and when things go wrong in an organisation, the board carries a lot of responsibility. Therefore, board members need to be nominated or chosen carefully.

In practice, however, we see that many board members are recruited informally or put up for nomination without ever having to satisfy a job description. Board members often have insufficient understanding of their responsibilities and most of them do not take governing seriously. In many of the boards we assessed in the past there are gaps in skills (even the most basic skills such as meeting skills, chairing qualities, understanding a budget or putting decisions in writing) and in fields of expertise like in marketing, HR, IT or fundraising. Although board members are unpaid volunteers by principle (with the occasional exception) it would be wrong to think that having unpaid board members or volunteers means that organisations cannot make demands or require these individuals to be professional, which is indeed something that professional organisations do.

Also, boards do not always understand their legal duties and often underestimate them. In many cases, board members stay too long in their position, preventing new blood coming in or new, up-to-date skills being added to the board. Furthermore, the crucial relationship between presidents/chairs and directors is not always satisfying and their division of tasks is often unclear. Where this is the case, many other problems also arise. In the majority of cases, only a serious external threat or a big internal crisis then forces organisations to change.

Therefore, we offer the following suggestions:

- Define necessary board skills and recruit new board members strictly on the basis of the required skills, including team spirit and strategic leadership skills. Develop job descriptions; in democratic structures, ask member organisations to designate delegates and/or board members with the skills that are needed rather than to just nominate whoever is first in line.
- Organise thorough induction and training for new board members and make sure that they have all relevant documents, have met relevant staff and are briefed properly.
- Limit the number of board members and introduce a rotation system as well as a maximum number of mandate periods.
- Carry out board appraisals and have a system in place to end the mandate of ill-functioning board members.
- Have the organisations' way of working and results evaluated yearly, including through the use of external evaluators.
- Clarify the relationship between board and director/secretary general to make sure that all sides get the support they need.
- Carry out a yearly appraisal of directors/secretaries general, but make sure that they know what is expected from them and what they are going to be evaluated on.
- Work on a respectful, open and constructive relationship between board and director and make sure that information can flow freely between board and director. This is because board and director need each other; they need to respect each other's role and need to work together to advance the organisation's mission.

Management

An organisation's management, contrary to its board, is responsible for the day-to-day running of the organisation. The management is responsible for implementing the strategic decisions taken by the board, normally on the basis of a formally agreed strategy, work programme and budget. If there is no paid staff at all, board members and other volunteers often do the practical work. This is not necessarily a problem, but depending on the amount of work that needs to be done, most organisations try to have at least one paid function, which is often a kind of coordinators' position. When there is more than one paid position, the highest in command is often the director or secretary-general. In our practice, we see many CSOs with irrational or ad-hoc structures, positions and salaries. This is often the result of an organisation having organically grown and it often leads to inefficiencies and tensions. What we also see is many directors/secretaries general who neglect their responsibility for leading their organisation in favour of external representational tasks. Although external work is important, it should not be a director's/secretary general's only focus, as it leaves the organisation without guidance or direction.

At European level, whether an organisation is small or big, flat or hierarchical, there is often not only a director but a secretariat with other employees as well. In this case, the director is appointed and overseen by the board. If there is a Senior Management team, its members are often recruited in close cooperation with the board, while the director in turn hires and manages

them as well as other staff. Given the importance of clarifying mutual expectations and monitoring progress, boards should carry out yearly appraisals of directors/secretary-generals, and take action if results are disappointing. Directors/secretary-generals in their turn need to do the same for their staff, by carrying out yearly staff appraisals.

More specifically, we offer the following suggestions:

- Directors/secretary generals should carry out board decisions loyally.
- Directors/secretary generals should provide their boards with comprehensive reports and information and bring strategic decisions to their boards in a timely manner.
- Directors/secretary generals should invest time into a good, constructive and open relationship with their board, and especially with their chair.
- Directors/secretary generals should explain to their staff what the role and responsibility of the board are, and that they must carry out board decisions. This to prevent the misconception that the director/secretary general is by definition 'with the staff' rather than 'with the board'. Ideally, the director/secretary general builds a solid and well-functioning bridge between the two sides and is credible to both sides.
- When Directors/secretary generals disagree with board or chair, they should address the issue before the situation deteriorates.
- Agree for the management how to deal administratively with GA/board meetings and documents.
- Check if the organisation's legal form is up to date.

Separation between governance and management

Most of the CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination have democratic structures and decision making processes. It is the General Assembly which has the highest power to decide. Because a General Assembly rarely meets more than once a year, it appoints a board to act on its behalf during the year. The board then delegates operational authority; the responsibility for the management; to the director or secretary general and leaves further implementation of general assembly or board decisions to them.

It is not always clear what exactly is the general assemblies' and/or boards' remit and what is managements' remit. In general, general assemblies and boards take care of agreeing on, and safeguarding, the organisation's vision, mission, strategy, work programme and budget. The management then takes care of implementing the vision, mission, strategy and work programme, and using the available budget for this. The director has a special responsibility to make sure that his/her staff understands what (general assemblies and) boards want and what is expected from them.

To clarify separation between governance and management, organisations would do well to draft fairly extensive Internal Rules to guide them on these issues. The process itself of drafting and debating internal rules will help to clarify distinctions, while the rules, once established, provide guidance for years to come. For bigger organisations, a detailed manual can even be composed.

Organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination tend to pay a lot of attention to the democratic process, trying to make sure that all interests of all member organisations are well-represented and defended. This often produces far too many priorities, too many projects and an overestimation of what can reasonably be expected from the representation at European level. In practice, this leads to secretariats deciding by themselves what is going to be done and what is not.

Therefore, we offer the following suggestions:

- Draft detailed internal rules and maybe a manual that describes the organisation's bodies, their powers and their responsibilities.
- Agree for boards on how to liaise and communicate officially with employees and create informal meetings as well.
- Prevent boards from being involved in the day-to-day running of an organisation.
- Let directors/secretary generals explain clearly and fully what a board's role is.

Stakeholder relations

It is our experience that many CSOs working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination have no clear idea of how narrowly or broadly to define the concept of 'stakeholder' and how to agree on who, in their case, the stakeholders are. In practice, many organisations restrict their stakeholder policies to liaising with their beneficiaries or members only, in a rather haphazard way. As a consequence, related marketing, PR, fundraising and communications policies tend to be limited to these two groups, often in a rather one-way manner.

This is an important window of opportunity neglected. Stakeholders should be taken to be all those (groups) that have an interest in the organisation's dealings, the policies it pursues or the activities it carries out, even if they dislike them. Of course beneficiaries and members are among them, and CSOs in this field should take great care to involve them in a structured way and nurture this relationship, but policy and decision-makers, donors, grantmakers, employees, suppliers, neighbors, adversaries, allies, supporters, and the wider public can also be seen as stakeholders.

Concerning this issue, we offer the following suggestions:

- Identify and list all possible stakeholders.
- Pay special attention to beneficiaries.
- Define these stakeholders' interests.
- Develop tailored stakeholder strategies for the different types of stakeholders, in particular for beneficiary involvement.
- Include all stakeholders –favorable or critical- in advocacy & lobbying strategies.
- Make sure the organisation has a communication strategy to reach these stakeholders.
- Adapt communication in terms of attitude, message and medium to specific stakeholders

Funding issues and fundraising

At the local and national level, many organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination subsist on membership fees, statutory funders (public authorities) and big donors such as foundations with a national remit. We have found that, especially when no major problems with traditional funders have occurred, many organisations do not pay sufficient attention to diversifying their funding sources or to communicating sufficiently with their existing funders.

Many have limited knowledge of modern fundraising and often show aversion of sophisticated methods and techniques (sometimes straight out of the corporate sector's book), in particular those methods and practices that concern marketing, branding and PR. Understandable as this attitude may be, this reluctance and aversion against PR, marketing and branding is an obstacle to becoming better known and creating a stronger basis to raise funds.

Furthermore, it is a common misconception among them that hiring a fundraiser is the solution of all funding problems. This is hardly ever the case. Funding is so scarce that fundraisers cannot solve this problem on their own. Fundraising needs concerted action of all staff and board members, supported by a dedicated person for fundraising; it involves the whole organisation.

At European level, many organisations have subsisted for a long time on operating grants and/or project grants, sometimes supplemented by membership fees. For many years, EU funding was maybe not easy to obtain, but once obtained quite a reliable source of income. In a number of cases, this has given CSOs at EU level and their members the impression that representing their beneficiaries' interests and advocating & lobbying for fairer policies and a better world would automatically lead to EU funding. Some members at national level occasionally even seem to think that the specific purpose of being part of an EU network is to get European money to fund national or local causes.

However, quite apart from the fact that European money is by definition awarded for implementing European Union policy priorities, EU funding is also changing in character. Operational grants are disappearing, project funding is on the rise and many organisations are struggling to convert their operations to fit project funding. But preparing applications is an underestimated art, and we often see it underfunded in terms of manpower and collaboration. It is not exceptional to see projects designed by a single employee. If partner organisations are required to receive funding, we often see that these partners are contacted last minute without being an integrated part in the set-up of the whole project. Where partners have limited understanding of the project's purpose, projects' designs tend to show serious gaps in rigorous reasoning (the famous log frame) or have serious flaws in its 'theory of change'.

Many insiders defend the practice of poorly-designed applications with either the argument that they do not have time and money enough for the process, or that applicant organisations may be

very good at what they do, but not at writing applications. However, this overlooks the argument by the EU funder that an organisation which does not have time, expertise or money for preparing decent applications rarely has the operational strength to implement them. Being good at what you do without being able to put the reasons for it in writing, i.e. to make your theory of change explicit, often does not convince the EU.

Traditionally, there are two ways to look at possible grants. The first is to try and find sources of funding that give money for the kind of mission and objectives an organisation pursues, or the kind of activities it carries out. The second is to 'tweak' these to fit existing funding programmes and funding requirements.

Obviously, the second approach makes a lot of sense for struggling organisations, but it can also lead to so-called 'mission drift'; i.e. deviating from your mission and strategy in order to either survive or fund part of your core business. Organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination should be more aware of this risk.

Therefore, we offer the following suggestions:

- Make clear that fundraising is a responsibility of the whole organisation, including board members, and make sure that all staff understand how they can contribute.
- Fundraising should at least twice a year be debated in senior management teams and boards, where the current situation and the prospects for income sources should be analysed.
- If possible, make a specific individual responsible for fundraising; this should not be the director.
- Define organisational segments and specific activities/projects to be funded yearly and try to see which funder could be interested in financing this specific project.
- Dedicate part of your communications work to communicating with (potential) funders on a regular basis and make sure you understand what kind of information funders need to (continue) funding your organisation.
- For EU grants: calculate your investment and chance of success before starting the application. Start the application process early enough to ensure that the project is sound and well-structured. Try actively to find the right kind of partners and involve them fully in the design of the project.
- Describe your theory of change before drafting proposals and use it for a logical design of your project.
- Be aware of the possible mission drift resulting from tweaking project proposals in order to comply with funders' requirements.

Lobbying & Advocacy

Lobbying & advocacy in organisations working in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination varies widely in scope and quality. Some organisations have fairly sophisticated policies in this area, others wait for policy decisions to happen and then react. Sometimes, they

are so internally focused they miss external opportunities for lobbying or advocacy. Indeed, we have observed that in general, advocacy activities starts too late and are too reactive. Often, a well-structured, well-organized lobbying and advocacy approach is lacking and its elements are not in place.

In many organisations we have worked with, communications work is limited to updating the website and firing off more or less regular press releases and newsletters. Explicit communication plans, well integrated in an overall advocacy strategy, are scarce. Therefore, it makes sense to draft communication plans that distinguish between internal and external communication, and define distinct audiences, messages, tools and intended results, as well as the means required to implement them and the possible obstacles to implementation. In the same vein, it makes sense to train policy staff in communicating well.

More specifically, we recommend to:

- Make an inventory of the policy areas and developments that matter to your cause.
- Carry out a power mapping exercise to identify all actors who are influential in and rank them.
- Monitor developments closely.
- Define your advocacy objectives.
- Develop explicit strategies to achieve them.
- Calculate the necessary resources for implementation; these resources include staff time and money.
- Define obstacles to implementation and allow flexibility for unexpected events that might slow things down or make them more complicated.
- Define the various audiences and diversify messages, tools and intended results.
- Underpin strategies with tailored communications work.
- Offer training opportunities in communication issues to staff involved in policy and advocacy work.

Operations

Many organisations in the field of migration, refugees, anti-racism and discrimination have grown organically. Many have started as small volunteer units; as interest or pressure groups; and have gone on to be formal associations -sometimes after mergers- and often in the form of membership organisations.

Their division of tasks and distribution of positions is often a result of this unstructured process. Often, HR policies (such as those on diversity, training, remuneration, special leave etc.) are absent, job descriptions are lacking and performance appraisals have been neglected. In quite a few cases, employees have not had salary increases in years and salaries may differ from person to person, even if they do the same type of work. New employees often need to deal with challenging circumstances upon their arrival and induction programmes are an exception. In addition, salaries seem to be fairly low.

But the existing competition in Brussels also means that competent staff can easily transfer to jobs within the European Institutions, other CSOs, Think Tanks or consultancies. This may lead to a drain of expertise and the departure of the best employees.

Against this background, we offer the following suggestions:

- Draft a work programme if it does not exist; revise it if it does to suit your priorities and to weed out unnecessary activities.
- Define the main tasks related to your main activities and combine them into logical positions.
- Scrutinise the organisational chart, draft one if it is absent or revise it where necessary.
- Draft or assess all job descriptions and adapt to the present situation.
- Plan recruitment procedures well before the actual recruiting has to start. Factor in diversity among employees and strive for it.
- Draft a transparent remuneration policy.
- Carry out yearly appraisals.
- Provide regular feedback to staff on staff performance.
- Assess all organisational procedures and routines for efficiency and effectiveness and adapt where necessary.
- Consider using a retreat –at least once a year– to discuss all internal matters and to make sure that the ways of working are understood and supported by everyone.

IV. Summary Checklist

Governance

- Define representation by delegates
- Define necessary board skills
- Recruit according to job descriptions
- Organise induction and training for new board members
- Limit and rotate board membership
- Carry out board appraisals
- Agree on liaising and communicating with employees
- Have the organisations' ways of working and results evaluated yearly

Management

- Liaise with board
- Carry out board decisions
- Report on developments
- Ask board for guidance and clarification

Operations

- Organise operations rationally
- Establish organisation chart
- Define tasks
- Assign tasks to positions
- Draft job descriptions
- Decide on how to communicate internally
- Carry out yearly staff appraisals
- Have clear remuneration policy

Separation of governance and management

- Draft internal rules; maybe a manual
- Respect board and management remits
- Avoid direct board involvement in operations

Cooperation between board and management

- Nurture relation between president/chair and director/secretary-general/coordinator
- Agree on how to deal administratively with meetings and documents

Stakeholder relations

- List stakeholders
- Define stakeholders' type of interest
- Develop stakeholder involvement policies
- Adapt communication in terms of attitude, message and medium

Sources of funding/fundraising

- Define organisational segments and activities to be funded yearly
- List types of financial support for them
- Investigate donor potential
- Adapt approach to donors
- Underpin with communications work

EU grants

- Start early
- Calculate your investment and dare to say no or abolish plan
- Check chance of success
- Describe theory of change
- Invite partners' input

Donor-driven agenda

- Make risk assessment
- Discuss with board

Lobbying & Advocacy

- Map relevant policy fields
- Monitor developments
- Identify relevant actors
- Make stakeholder analysis
- Draft strategies
- Underpin with tailored communication work

Communications

- Draft communication plan
- Distinguish between internal and external communications
- Define different audiences, messages, tools and intended results
- Calculate the necessary resources for implementation
- Define obstacles to implementation
- Offer training to policy/advocacy staff