



Case Study 8

HR/OD Intervention Focus: Institutional Interventions

Shifting Perspectives and Behaviour

Over the years, the Department of Education (DepEd) has maintained a long and beneficial relationship with the Government of Australia through PAHRODF and other major investments.

Catering to the various needs of DepEd, PAHRODF has provided several programs and interventions for the DepEd.

Jess Mateo, currently Assistant Secretary for Planning and Development, describes DepEd's relationship with PAHRODF as an open dialogue, an open conversation. "It is because of this that our partnership with PAHRODF has evolved and continues to evolve. They listen to our requirements, our needs. Unlike in other scholarship programs that have prescribed areas for study, PAHRODF works with us in determining the type and the study areas that respond to DepEd's needs and requirements," he reveals. Asec. Mateo has high praises too for the various Learning Service Providers (LSPs) that have worked with them. He says, "On a 10-point scale with 10 as the highest score, I give the LSPs a 10. They take into account the feedback from participants, they listen to us, and they consider our inputs to come up with relevant programs."

Asec. Mateo, who has been with DepEd for more than two decades, is grateful for the time and assistance that PAHRODF has devoted to the DepEd through the years. PAHRODF has provided invaluable support to DepEd and to his portfolio that involves determining and addressing the needs of the whole organisation, which includes 46,000 public schools. As Asec. Mateo shares, "PAHRODF helped us determine the needs of the Department and ensure that we sustain the reforms that we have initiated. The Facility has assisted us in determining the capacities that need to be strengthened and what kind of training—both short and long term—our people need and will benefit from so that they operate efficiently and effectively. The Facility was instrumental in helping the us zero in on areas for improvement and what we need focus on."

Asec. Mateo has also witnessed Australia Awards scholars and training participants from DepEd who have applied and used what they have learned to benefit the Department through their REAPs. He stresses that although he has not participated in any PAHRODF intervention, he plays an important role in the process and ensures that REAPs are aligned with DepEd's goals. "My role is to make sure that the REAPs fit in with the plans of the Department and that the participants and scholars are fully utilised," he elaborates. He further emphasises that it is his job to ensure that the REAPs are all in consonance with the K-12 program and DepEd's rationalisation plan.

Full support

Asec. Mateo reveals that he supports the REAPs of participants and scholars because of the recognition that these cannot be implemented without the engagement of the entire DepEd. In reviewing individual REAPs, he takes a proactive approach and gives feedback and advice to participants and scholars to test the viability of their proposed REAPs.

He shares his interaction with a scholar who was in the process of finalizing her REAP. "I told her to look at the requirements, to make sure that we do a quick impact evaluation of the proposed policy, and to determine the resource requirements." Aware of how difficult it is to implement the REAP if scholars and participants are not supported, Asec. Mateo tries to help wherever he can so progress is achieved. The support he provides includes not only his inputs, but also human resources and resources they might require. He also tries to respond to requests for support as quickly as possible so that implementation can be facilitated.

He believes that the implementation of the REAPs in DepEd had been relatively smooth. With the REAPs going through him before finalisation to ensure that these are aligned with the mission and vision of the Department, he feels that implementation is easier as it comes across as a priority that has full support from top management.

Outcome of interventions

Asec. Mateo singles out the change in the perspective of the participants, reflected in the REAPs, as a significant outcome of PAHRODF interventions. He also noticed the shift in the behaviour and mindset of scholars after completing their studies abroad. Asec. Mateo shares, "I have noticed changes in most of the scholars under my wing. The scholarship has a positive impact on them – the way they carry themselves, the way they think. I know because I have seen and observed them before their scholarship. For example, they are now more critical. They now question some of the existing policies and they initiate activities on how we can improve our policies."

Asec. Mateo feels that these scholars are now more confident and can think more critically about the Department and its plans. He feels that this change in behaviour and mindset had been infectious and has even trickled down to the other members of the Department. "With the scholars as catalysts, everyone has become motivated to work towards the improvement of the whole Department," he shares.

The ultimate goal of DepEd is to become a global organisation that is efficient and effective. Asec. Mateo reveals, "We dream of ensuring that no child is left behind. That everyone has access to quality education. And since the Department is mandated to provide quality

education, we really need to be more creative and innovative. PAHRODF has helped us change paradigms. PAHRODF has always been there to push the Department towards the right direction.”

To emphasise his point, he shares, “I have always likened the DepEd to an elephant – big and slow moving. You, therefore, need motivation and force to move it. To move the elephant that is DepEd quickly, PAHRODF trained and helped us change the way we think.” This is one clear way to describe the role of the Facility in DepEd.

Asec Jess Mateo, Assistant Secretary for Planning and Development, was a change sponsor in various HR/OD interventions implemented in DEPED in partnership with PAHRODF.