LET IT GO, LET IT FLOW

Last month I had the opportunity to be both a table facilitator and a lead facilitator within the same week. As a table facilitator I took part in a large conference about biodiversity, with around 30 tables in the room. My role as a lead facilitator was at a much smaller session and we had trained seven table facilitators in the first two steps of Appreciative Inquiry: the discovery of treasures and dreaming up the future. At both meetings, the diversity of people around the tables was quite impressive. We spoke with people from different European countries in the large meeting, from Finland to Italy, and from different professional backgrounds – scientists, artists, philosophers, politicians and civil society activists. The smaller meeting was held at a migrant community in the Hague, and I think we had about ten different nationalities from four different continents.

Having these two meetings within a week's time was very helpful. As a table facilitator I had the perfect reminder of what happens when the lead facilitator doesn't give enough space to the table discussion to actually take off. At first, the group (especially one with a wide variety in backgrounds) needs time to find a common level ground, before the content discussion can even take place. Secondly, once this discussion has finally taken off, it is of course impossible for the lead facilitator to find a moment to say something, which is appropriate for all the tables. Therefore, the plenary instructions need to be short and supportive to the process. Several times, however, I found that the plenary interruptions were too long and that I had to repeat the instructions at the table anyway. Had it been left to me, I would have known when to introduce these instructions at the appropriate time without any disruption to the process.

Had it not been for this experience I do not know what I would have done as a lead facilitator later that week. We were supposed to share a meal before the session started, but the food was late and the schedule got up-side down. We all had to improvise and I found out that at some tables the people were still introducing themselves while others had started the first content phase. I had prepared this sweet little story to introduce this phase and wow, I had to bite my tongue not to interrupt! We all know it: trust the process; 'let it go, let it flow' as I always call it. Time and again, trust is one of the major ingredients for a successful process.

Luckily for me, one of the tables got stuck, asked me to help and I found a perfect space for my sweet little story anyway.

In this newsletter you will find more about trust. The information about Melbourne will set us yearning for the next conference and we have some great feedback and reflections about the special conference in Budapest. Apart from that, Avi Altmann has written his analysis on IODA down, which is partly represented here and John Adams, the life time achievement Award Winner, tells us about his working life. You will have to trust us that we will bring the second half of Avi's story later while we will also interview Noble Kumawu, the winner of the Richard Beckhard Award, for the next newsletter.

Finally there are two interesting articles that have everything to do with trust. John Cimino gives his first impressions of the new process 'Partners for a new beginning' between the US and the Maghreb (North Africa). Last but not least, Ana Vasilache gives us a very interesting insight into the way her organization has started a process to curb corruption in Eastern Europe.
Our conference theme - journeys that make us

In the act of living and working, we continuously travel through experiences, places and times that alter it. Many would argue that who we are as people is the product of such journeys. The act and art of journeying then is as inherent in the human experience as it is for the OD practitioner, no matter your age, origin or tradition. We all undergo journeys in life, love and learning. We can travel across countries too, through new roles in different organizations and communities. The best journeys are had when we open ourselves up to the possibility of being taken to unknown places, accepting, even hoping that what we find on arrival is unpredictable. In this sense, we are never simply passengers, rather we are active co-creators of our experience, curious and embracing of the diverse colours, formations and inhabitants of the new landscapes we discover.

The conference itself is another journey, bringing together people similarly ready to “travel” through a process of working with a divergent group of professionals and practitioners. And, as is always the goal of IODA conferences, we will celebrate the differences, the positives, the tensions and challenges presented in learning about new and different ways of thinking and being.

Faced with a future which is more unknown and dynamically complex than ever, it is critical for us to strengthen our capability as “journeyers”, just as we need to support our clients confronting the same world order. By focusing on the act and art of journeys past and present, this conference seeks to truly honour, celebrate and build on the richness of our experiences and to draw on insights and new strategies to strengthen ourselves for our future travels. We invite you to join us in this journey and come to Australia!
Pre-Conference Communication. I bet I received 25 emails and pieces before the conference about everything!

Graphics. From beginning to end the graphics were great. Well-done signage in front of the main room and throughout the spaces. The real-time graphic artists were especially good.

Registration. What’s always a hassle, was basically hassle-free. There were always several helpful people at the IODA registration desk ready and eager to help, smiling throughout the four days. It was easy to tell they had been well-briefed or even trained about who we were and how we were to be treated. (I bet there was a lot of team-building and mission-directed work done with the conference team before we arrived.)

Emcee Roles. Both Imre Lővey and Pete Kalmár were authentic, smooth and unruffled when things didn’t go as planned (it always happens), and carried the energy in the room with clarity, grace and ease.

Smooth Segues. Each element built on what went before, and set us up for what came next. Having been in their shoes a few times, I could tell a lot of thought (and some tough conversations) went into the design and the flow of the conference.

Thought Leader Panels. As I recall, it started with each of the OD content-area thought leaders being introduced by ODN Executive Peter Norlin, a perfect choice for many reasons. He said a few things about each one and asked them to speak about their discipline and their history in that modality – Gestalt, TA, Open Space, Future Search, America Speaks, Appreciative Inquiry (AI), and Kathy as Facilitator. Then they were guided into a kind of non-verbal sociogram with instructions to “take a physical position relative to each of the other modalities that reflects your reality.” Personally, I thought several of them “bailed” a little on this one, not acknowledging the rivalry and/or adversarial relationships that I believe has been present between practitioners (e.g. AI and Future Search), but it was fun to watch them struggle together to make it happen. Then there were questions submitted in writing (anonymously) from the room to be fielded by the members of the group. One of my questions got selected actually by Peter, which was “What is the shadow of each of your ways? And/or When does your modality NOT work?” The hour or two went by very fast, something that rarely happens with “expert panels.” Hats off to whoever put that one together.

Honoring/Hosting the Presenters. As a presenter at one of the concurrent breakout sessions, I had a “buddy” from the moment I arrived, who was responsible for helping me in any way I needed. The planners revealed an understanding that we who were presenting had invested time and resources to be there, and I felt recognized and appreciated for my simple 1½ hour presentation as if I had been a keynoter being paid megabucks. We were treated almost like rock stars! If you have ever presented or addressed a conference, you know how good it feels to be treated with respect and appreciation. They did it before, during and after.

Case Presentations. This aspect of the design also really worked. Each of the OD cases being presented had a client/owner and his/her OD consultant(s). Ours was a fascinating situation involving four Hungarian meat processing plants led by a Dutch CEO and guided by two very talented OD colleagues. They kicked it off, described the situation very briefly from their point of view, then introduced the client, who spoke for 20 minutes or so and responded to questions from us, another 25-30 OD consultants sitting at tables of six. They invited each table to become a consulting organization and make a PowerPoint-based presentation to the client and the consultants as to what should be done next. We had about an hour and a half, and could visit each of the other “firms” as they did their work. (Nice touch!) We came back, made our presentations and the client responded to each one and then “chose” the firm with the best approach. It worked like a charm and everyone in the room learned a lot, no one more than I did, a 35-year pro in the field.

Electronics and IT Support. Every time I needed any kind of IT support, someone who knew what they were doing and could talk to a non-IT person was right there to help. I had trouble getting online with the WiFi system and got immediate help. There were screens where people could see Tweets and an ongoing blog about the conference.
Food. For me, the food was tasty, well-presented and served, and came at just the right times. There were vegetarian alternatives, too, that showed they understood what that entails. Not too much sugar, either, even though it was Hungarian food.

Holding the Space. You know how every gathering, like any human system, develops a kind of “DNA.” This one supported learning, collegial exchange and networking, with a minimum of showing off and/or superficial card-exchanges. Somebody was “holding the space” for sure.

Suggestions:

1. I would have liked to have seen Five Questions for sale in the bookstore (which was well-positioned), but I must have missed the communication about that beforehand. IS FIVE QUESTIONS A BOOK?

2. The daily schedule was a little confusing, with separate pages for the names of presenters and their time slots (but no workshop titles), a page with workshop titles, and another with room locations.

3. Whoever decided to have presentations going on while we were eating (e.g. on the wonderful boat down the Danube), didn’t understand the importance of that being free time for networking and talking with friends. Let us eat in peace.

This is only my second IODA Conference (I went to Canada two years ago), so maybe this is the standard, but man, this team raised the bar for any group coming after. Get ready, Melbourne. And ODN. And NTL. And any conference I might help plan in the future.

John Scherer
john@scherercenter.com

Go to places that scare you.
Confess your hidden faults.
Approach what you find repulsive.
Help those you think you cannot help.
Anything you are attached to, let it go.
–Machik Labdron, Tibetan Yogini

Outstanding financial management by ODWS results in a large donation for IODA

Our Hungarian colleagues have not only given us a superb conference. They have also presented IODA with another wonderful gift. Peter Kalmar, who acted as the treasurer of the summit, informed us that considerable gains have been made. In accordance with our agreement with ODWS, IODA will be receiving a portion of these gains.

The ODWS contribution to IODA’s funding is 10,000 US dollars.

Wow! A big hug and a thousand thanks to our Hungarian host team!

As the President of IODA I would like to express my deep respect and appreciation!

Dr. Ulla Nagel
As one of the pillars of the OD World Summit (ODWS) in Budapest Hungary, August 22-26, the conference was launching a related project called “Social Impact – Leave your Development Footprint”. It aimed to create a unique opportunity for the Summit participants to develop local non-profit organizations and communities before and after the Summit. The Social Impact team coordinated the local development projects, where the international participants worked together with one of the local OD or community development practitioners on a development project. By learning from each other, the participants would create a new methodology and new ways of thinking, which were presented with case studies at the Summit in the Social Impact Parallel Sessions.

Joske Diesfeldt and Johann Wuestenberg are co-founders of the Association for Organisation Development in the Netherlands (www.aoopartners.com). They choose to work with VGYKE, the Regional Association of Blind People and Partially Sighted in Central Hungary. (www.vgyke.com)

The reasons why they did choose to work for this specific organization is both professional (they have branche experience in the field of ‘blind people organizations’ in Belgium) and personal (the mother of Johann is 95% blind and one of their best friends is partially sighted, due to a brain tumor). Joske and Johann offered their services as they take the view that these kind of organizations often lack the financial capacity to work with external consultants. It is their strong belief that these organizations should benefit from what has been developed in our profession as well.

VGYKE applied to participate in this Social Impact Project with the following description of their project: Social Impact, description of VGYKE project

So we organized different tracks:

A development track concerning strategy
Workshop that addressed questions of VGYKE

Ad 1. A development track concerning strategy (See background information)

- After they got linked by the conference’s Social Impact Team, Joske and Johann received general background information on VGYKE and on the question they were expected to work on. Based on this information and in spite of the many questions that remained unanswered in this stage, it gave Joske and Johann though the opportunity to select a number of texts, exercises and approaches that might be useful in Hungary.

- Once in Budapest (a few days before the conference) there were several contacts both by e-mail and over the phone with Helga Répássy, the local developer. She plays a crucial role in making the bridge between the management of VGYKE, Ágnes Fodor and Orsolya Németh, on the one hand and Joske and Johann as international developers on the other hand.

- There was a first meeting with Orsolya Németh (deputy of VGYKE), Helga Répássy (local developer for VGYKE), Dóra Pekár (contact for the Social Impact Project), Joske and Johann. Basically they talked about the development in VGYKE, what kind of interventions had been taken place already, and what would be a next step. More specific Joske and Johann got answers to most of their questions and learned that a strategy for VGYKE had been developed. There is now the need for a more collective understood and supported vision amongst the members, so that they can participate in bringing this future vision into practice. Of course to do this, it requires a more specific and more concrete future vision.

- In the second part of this meeting Joske and Johann suggested an approach. They handed over a questionnaire they developed and an approach to work with during a conference with the leaders of VGYKE and their local leaders. This questionnaire and approach have proven to help people in organizations to build for themselves a very specific image of how the future might become in their organization. Besides this method creates a tremendous energy for future steps.
Joske and Johann suggested to discuss the individual answers on the questionnaire in the top team of VGYKE. This team is composed by the management of the head office and the 8 representatives of regional offices. Such a vision building conference could be conducted by the local developer. Both the management of VGYKE and the local consultant are enthusiastic about this approach. They plan to work this way with the top team to build a common, supported and specific vision for the organization.

Next step could then be that in each of the 8 regions a similar team conference takes place. This approach has proven to bring a lot of dynamics and energy in an organization, and it leads to concrete suggestions, also from the local members.

VGYKE will start these activities after the conference. Joske and Johann are stand by for more suggestions once the vision building conferences are planned.

Ad 2. Workshop that addressed questions of VGYKE
Social Impact Parallel Sessions as part of the project called “Social Impact – Leave your Development Footprint” were organized during the Summit. In one of these parallel sessions some 20 international consultants worked together with VGYKE on one of their development projects. The aim of this workshop was to produce a number of suggestions that might be useful for the development of VGYKE.

This special workshop was conducted by Helga Répássy, the local developer, with Orsolya Németh, deputy of VGYKE, Ágnes Fodor, president of VGYKE as client and principal, and with the participation of Joske and Johann among the 20 international consultants.

The workshop started with a presentation of the deputy of VGYKE. In her presentation she talked about what VGYKE is about, its development over the last few years, and the challenges for the near future. Subsequently she asked the international consultants to come with suggestions. These consultants discussed in small groups and then reported the results of their discussions to the president Ágnes Fodor. For some results see the presentation: Four leaf clover Blindness unfolded.

Conclusions
Both tracks were very successful. The management will discuss the track concerning strategy after the conference together with many constructive ideas they received during the workshop that took place later in the conference. And they decided to start with the activities of the strategy track.

As for the role of Joske and Johann: They left Budapest but are standing by for more suggestions once the vision building conferences are planned and for advice concerning other activities as well. Besides this they also created a direct link between Belgian and Israeli organizations for blind people and VGYKE.

Joske Diesfeldt and Johann Wuestenberg
joske@wuestenberg-diesfeldt.be
johann@wuestenberg-diesfeldt.be
Dear IODA members, friends and other OD related professionals,

A new year has begun and we wonder what it will bring for all of us. Much will happen over which we have no control, but there will also be many things that are in our own hands.

The question is: What can IODA’s EC and IODA’s community do to make IODA still more interesting and visible, more beneficial and attractive this year?

Thanks to an initiative by Avi Altmann from Israel we gained a deeper insight into what members love most about IODA and want to keep. We’ve also discovered what members would like to see done away with and, at the same time, in what ways they would like IODA to change. Our editor, Alette Vonk, has contributed an article, informing us about the first half of his findings. Here I would like to refer to these investigations and conclusions.

I’m happy to say membership and IODA EC agree on this point. In our EC meeting in Hyderabad in 2009 we took almost half a day to fine tune IODA’s purpose in order to present the essence in the members meeting. I call on everybody to discuss and further develop the understanding of IODA’s essence:

**IODA’s purpose** is to create a vibrant space for face-to-face personal and professional experiences by becoming part of a lively, international, cross-cultural community of OD people.

The annual world conference is seen as the “pearl” on a necklace; the necklace itself and smaller pearls keep the community “together” during the rest of the year.

In our more and more digitalized world in which we are threatened with the loss of deep and meaningful contact and relationship, IODA will remain an example of a “hugging and kissing” organization even as we also desire extending our virtual networking in order to “put additional smaller pearls on our necklace”.

I pay very much attention to the venues and the quality of our annual conferences. They have the greatest potential to spark enthusiasm. Even if these are for only four days a year – they make a difference in our lives and inspire us to return again next year and to pay membership fees. The latter is vital for the organization so that we can offer the services of paid staff. Through the work of Silke Haebold, our IODA Assistant, and Susan O’Leary, our parting Financial Manager, we were able to achieve much better communication and administration in our community.

The criteria for finding appropriate venues for our conferences are in line with our mission which moves us around the globe. **IODA’s mission is to spread the methodology of Organization Development all over the world.** The next conferences to be held are:

- **2011** in Australia
- **2012** in Mozambique
- **2013** in Peru
- **2014** in Japan

Avi’s conclusion No.1: It is important to maintain the intimate spirit and family like feeling of the organization. They are important characteristics of the organizational culture…
Our documents state:
IODA is dedicated to supporting and strengthening OD principles at the international level through research, academic OD programs, peer mentoring and coaching, networking and sharing of knowledge, international projects, and cultural interchange.

Avi’s conclusion No.7: the mission of the organization, and the bylaws that derive from it need to be reinvestigated openly, with active participation of all members.

Please join this discussion about reinvestigation. However, be aware that any change in bylaws entails greater administrative efforts since it has to be confirmed in Alexandria and the procedure then requires further investigation by this federal administration entity. Discussions should be about major changes only.

Avi’s conclusion No.2: We might have to think about the ways in which other members of IODA can ‘bring their dish to the party’.

You have my full support for this direction. By the way, we are already implementing this; the EC now has new members and positions. We have a new treasurer, Roger Drew from Virginia, and a financial committee is in the process of being formed.

A new important position is that of Relationship and Affiliation Coordinator. Peter Kalmar from Hungary has been co-opted for this position. As we live in a world which is characterized by networking on all levels, it was high time to appoint a relationship manager.

Another new seat in the EC has been assumed by Diane L. Katz who serves as IODA Board Secretary. The quality of our Administration and Execution will definitely increase.

Additionally, in 2008 IODA EC has started to influence work that is done in working committees and not just by single board members. The newest committees are the Governance Committee (President, VP, Honorary EC member, Board Secretary), the Conference Coordination Committee (chaired by Mohan Krishnan) and the Financial Committee (currently being formed). Please read more about IODA news and new positions on page 16.

Other working groups are:

1. The Newsletter Committee,
2. The Young Professional Committee,
3. The Richard Beckhard Award Committee,
4. The Resource Management Committee,
5. The OD Education Program Committee,
6. The Marketing Committee etc.

Some of these groups need fresh blood urgently and are looking for members who actively want to contribute. Please think about putting your name forward!

Avi’s conclusion No.4 and 5: IODA should be more transparent in the way it manages itself… The role of its members should be clear and should be made explicit…
IODA’s EC has quarterly teleconferences and in between them the working committees meet. There is email exchange almost every day between myself and other EC directors and members. Some weeks I work more than eight hours for IODA. Other EC members contribute in a similar way. You might wonder what in the world we guys are always writing about and discussing. It is about hundreds of odds and ends that help make an organization such as IODA move on from year to year. Many activities are connected with motivating and conflict clearing. There is a decision making procedure in our EC.

In Hungary we had a facilitator for the board meeting. This was a very positive experience for all of us. We have made proposals about IODA’s further development in 2011 and brought them up at the members’ meeting. The focus has been on new positions and new committees which require volunteers. From 2007 to now we also made a great progress in designing job descriptions for our EC position so that we are able to inspire quality work and goal reaching. Just now we are working on a job description for the treasurer since this has a greater relevance in a 501 (c)3 organization. We will post the job description on the new website.

Avi’s conclusions No.3 and 6: It is necessary to create more active engagement with all IODA members during the year and not settle with the activity that takes place during the annual conference… (for instance) support local OD organizations… (and regional IODA gatherings)...

Yes, yes and yes again! That’s why we were happy to have Christina Wawra from Austria as our group’s new, young membership coordinator. christine.wawra@doujak.eu

Remember, members, we need you! IODA’s board is a board of volunteers who primarily run their own businesses. The EC is not a service provider in a business sense because service providers are paid for their services by their customers. We help to create the space for networking and drive the wheel but we cannot make it without your initiatives and efforts!

Please send your ideas, initiatives or willingness to support IODA’s well-being to president@iodanet.org or ulla.nagel@ipu-nagel.de or silkehaebold@online.de. The more members contribute with a small offering, the more we will be able to experience the beauty of IODA. IODA’s doors are open to everybody. We have no exclusive membership policy.

Because they are suffering from shrinking membership numbers, ODN has started a campaign in which every member is being asked to bring in three new members. Since you have proposed to have a membership of 200 what about every IODA member bringing in just one new member?! That would be a great step forward. And it would only require a little effort from each of you!

Folks, what 2011 will bring to the organization is in our hands! Let’s put our minds and hands together!

All the very best for 2011!
Ulla Nagel
President of IODA
Interview with John Adams - life time achievement award winner

Alette Vonk, NL
OD Consultant and IODA newsletter editor

1. Once more we would like to congratulate you with the Lifetime Achievement Award that you won. Unfortunately you were not able to collect the prize in person, during the OD Summit in Budapest this year; so you were not there to hear your name being called. We were not able to see your first reaction and hear your comments. Could you please tell us what your thoughts were when you heard the news - how did you react?

One person who attended the conference in Budapest sent me an email that said “Congratulations on your Award,” and that was all I heard for some time, so I did not know what this meant. When I later received an email from Ulla Nagel telling me I had been given a “Lifetime Achievement Award” I was very surprised and felt most humble. As the announcement came just as I completed my retirement from Saybrook University, it seemed a bit fitting, but I wasn’t sure I had achieved so much as to deserve such recognition. Many of the first generation people in OD probably don’t think that a lot of my work has actually been OD work – and I would have to agree in the traditional sense, as I always seem to be questioning the edges of the field. But maybe if I have in fact loosened up some of the boundaries between OD and Not-OD, that is an achievement!

2. You’ve won the Lifetime Achievement award. It means you’ve spent a large part of your life developing yourself and the people you worked with in the field of OD. Would it be possible for you to divide this period into phases and could you tell us what characterizes the different phases that you’ve gone through?

I guess there are two ways to look at the phases of my career – which spans a little over 40 years so far – roles and focuses.

My roles:

My career has been symmetrical – Academic, Internal, Private Practice, Internal, Academic.

I started and ended in academia – first at Leeds in the UK and last at Saybrook University. At Leeds (1969-71) I was in the Management Studies program, teaching in the brand new MA in OD program – the first such academic program outside of the USA. Even that early in my career, I managed to stir up trouble by pushing the boundaries of the new field and also the boundaries of “traditional” academic approaches in the UK.

At Saybrook (1999-2010), I was honored to be hired and moved immediately into the program chair position for the new Organizational Systems Ph.D. program. When I attended my first IODA meeting in Bangkok in 2000, no one in attendance had ever heard of Saybrook. Our program that integrates organizational behavior work with human systems design work is now a highly regarded doctoral program.

After Leeds and before Saybrook, I was employed as an insider. First, I was director of the Professional Development Division of NTL from 1971-1975. This was before there were very many academic OD programs, and NTL’s Learning Community in Professional Development was the preferred place for people to receive training in this new profession, in one of the four-week long programs called “Program for Specialists in OD.” While I was there, my focus was on building ties with academic programs that were becoming interested in post-graduate OD training, and was able to lay...
My work at Sun Microsystems (1995-1999) was in Executive Development and in Integrated Work Environments. I created a new program for newly promoted or newly hired Directors and Vice Presidents called “Taking Charge.” It was a mini-MBA and “inner-game of leadership” program that helped new executives think and act differently than when they were hardware or software engineers. My second focus was an interdisciplinary team (with architects and IT staff) that designed work environments for groups moving into new facilities that optimized the group’s success factors across human, technology and spatial systems.

The middle 20 years (1975-1995) I was self-employed as a consultant — but served mostly as a seminar leader, public speaker, and coach in the areas of stress management, transformational change (organizational transformation is a term I introduced in my 1984 anthology called Transforming Work). By the 1990s, I had shifted focus again into the area of sustainability – challenging the OD field on numerous occasions to get involved in this activity or to be marginalized by the eventual overwhelming force of the systems dynamics of sustainability.

My Focuses:
I realized very early in my career that my preferred focus was always on the individual in the workplace. I enjoyed studying systems and group dynamics, but my attention always reverts to the individual experience. More specifically, I have always been deeply connected to the idea that the self-fulfilling prophecy is always at work – that the perspectives and outlooks that one holds are a major factor in one’s experience. Over the years, I brought this viewpoint to my writing, consulting, teaching and managing. In my professional writing and research, this perspective has been core to my work in individual transition (1967…), health and stress in the workplace (1975…), transformational change (1982…), and sustainable living (1993…)

3. What would you consider the most challenging paradigms in OD today?
I continue to believe that the looming challenges to a sustainable future constitute the biggest threats to the relevance of OD. In 1993 I published an article called “The Brighter the light, the Darker the Shadow” which developed the argument that the better an OD person does at meeting the first order (incremental improvements of “what is”) goals of client organizations, the faster we are enabling these organizations to foster an unsustainable social and ecological system. I have also key-noted widely to OD gatherings, including ODN 1993 & 2003, and IODA in Chile in 2002, on this topic. While a few individual practitioners have changed their practices considerably, most have not considered the challenge to be relevant to their work.

It is my present belief that within five years or less, peak oil will make extensive travel prohibitively expensive (including travel to IODA meetings) and that the exponentially increasing debt levels around the world will bring most national economies to their knees. The presently discussed national austerity measures will fall far short of “fixing” the symptoms. Increasingly, societies will have to become much less complex, with the realization that cheap, abundant energy is the number one essential ingredient in ALL prosperity. The economists’ beliefs that we can engage in infinite consumption of finite resources will also soon become seen as a glaring misconception. And not least, the global population continues to add the equivalent of five New York Cities each and every year – 76 million new people to feed, water, clothe, and try to take care of every single year, with declining availability of most key resources. If OD continues to operate in a “business as usual” mode, I fear it will become entirely irrelevant very soon.
4. Could you tell us something about yourself as a person, how would you describe yourself and what makes you 'tick'?

I have never wanted to be entrepreneurial, so I have not attempted to build any organization around my beliefs. My preference is always for freedom and independence over big systems and big money. I think my most natural tendency is to look for chances to network and to build new relationships. Since even before my retirement, I have been highly interested in providing service to less fortunate populations — currently manifesting in our cervical cancer screening and training work in India.

My strongest values are truth, integrity in action, and doing what I promise to do — to promote a sustainable and socially just community with resilience to respond to an uncertain future.

5. Where do you think IODA is heading and do you have suggestions?

I prize the informal and exploratory nature of IODA, and I hope that it will continue to represent exploration of the fuzzy edges of our field. I prize the international participation and the mutual appreciation of all cultures that is present. I hope that the EC will reflect the same values in carrying out its responsibilities. I hope that we will create virtual ways to continue sharing our ideas even if my predictions about peak oil come true.

Appreciation of William (Bill) Kraus

IODA, with great appreciation, thanks Bill Kraus for his service given as Treasurer. He spent time and care ensuring the financial well-being of IODA. He also helped during the process of applying for our 501(c)3 status. Thank you, again, Bill for volunteering your time as Treasurer. Bill has been an IODA member since 1997 and was appointed as IODA treasurer in 2006.
At the OD World Summit that was held in Budapest last August, Avi Altman conducted a session called 'The story of our organization'. Avi has been a longstanding IODA member and has attended about thirteen conferences. This time, the subject of the inquiry was IODA itself, and the session was based on conversations Avi had with members during the previous IODA conference in India. The question he opened these conversations with was: ‘What are your concerns, thoughts and hopes about the future of IODA?’. From these inquiries he identified five themes to be discussed in the session. The themes were:

1. Are we big enough?
2. How do we manage ourselves?
3. IODA and OD around the world.
4. What do I get from IODA?
5. Are we still relevant?

The group that took part in the session was of a good mixture of diverse affiliations concerning IODA. Veterans, short time members and non-members; young professionals and senior professionals: this heterogenic team enabled interesting viewpoints and a stimulating discussion. Avi has written a short report of the session and based on this, he has written a letter to the EC, mentioning the main insights and suggestions. Generally he has pointed out that these 5 themes portray a typical picture of organizations of the kind that IODA is. “The themes and the way people relate to them, reflect tensions that are part of the conflicting trends and interests that exist within organizations like IODA. The manifestations of them in the text indicate a healthy organization.”

At this point I would like to share the answers to the first two questions and the corresponding suggestions, as the EC received them. As Avi also states, this “is a good way to create open discussion on issues of concern within IODA and to let all those who want to take part in it.” Hence, everybody is asked to react and this article can be found interactively online, please go to the group ‘IODA Working Committee’ on LinkedIn and continue to discuss.
### Question 1: Are we big enough?

**Facts: IODA currently has 122 paying members (and far more 'community'-members)**

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<tr>
<th>We should keep our intimate nature</th>
<th>We are too small</th>
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<td>We had the idea that we have to grow, to offer products to the members, to get more finance, but we weren’t successful with that. We could say that we don’t need it. We have enough money and means to do exactly what we want to do.</td>
<td>We are relying on a very small group that takes upon itself the commitment to the continuity of the existence of IODA; and on a bigger group that decides every year to come for four days or not to come. We need to think of the way we should maintain ourselves. We don’t have enough money. Our organizational model is not built on incomes, unlike other organizations.</td>
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<td>We don’t need to be big. Of course it will help if more will join, but I don’t want to stop being what we are. We should keep our intimate nature.</td>
<td>An organization like future search is built upon the support of institutions who believe they can gain a future prospect from it. SoL is built upon selling workshops. No net organization maintains itself on membership fee, you can’t maintain a vision of intimacy on membership fee.</td>
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<td>The conference in Hungary is big. I don’t want it that big every year. It may be too big but it is ok to experience it once and to go back to be the small group that we are.</td>
<td>IODA is not a big organization. May be we should market ourselves better. May be we should have a follow up committee, like in the church, that will tie the newcomers to the rest of the members, introduce them, send them a thank you letter, keep in touch.</td>
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<td>We could grow to 200 but with more than that, we lose our nature.</td>
<td>IODA is a loosely knit. It is not like an organization with a clear mission. There is a core of seniors with strong set of beliefs that make it hard for IODA to grow and to expand.</td>
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### Question 2: How do we manage ourselves?

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<th>Things are not looking so bad now</th>
<th>There is a problem in our culture</th>
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<td>We had a fear of getting old, but we managed to draw young members and we no longer have that fear. Things are not looking so bad. Some of the seniors have left but new members have joined, also from regions we haven’t been represented in.</td>
<td>This is an organization that exists 4 days in a year, and in the rest of the time very small group of volunteers is holding all the commitment. The question is how we share this commitment with more people.</td>
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<td>When something happens in the system we turn to those on office as responsible and we punish them for being responsible. That same dynamic is happening again and again.</td>
<td>We have to be more systematic and more methodical. For me the executive committee represents IODA, but this is only an assumption. This is a member’s organization and the committee should listen to the members. To take decisions, but to listen too.</td>
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<tr>
<td>I am happy to see the young generation in the executive committee.</td>
<td>There is a problem in our culture. We give our heart in organizing the conference and after that there is an atmosphere of criticism. What do I get from it, is it answer my needs, and not – what can I give. The basic position is wrong.</td>
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<td>The executive committee should support more the host country. Today the organizers take the whole responsibility, including the loses. IODA is not taking part in loses but get a share in the surplus if there is. You take all the risks and IODA profit from it.</td>
<td>We should create more supportive and less critical atmosphere. We should give more positive feedbacks on small things, on giving a good lecture, on running a meeting.</td>
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Avi concludes with the following insights and suggestions concerning these two questions:

1. It is important to maintain the intimate spirit and family-like feeling of the organization. They are important characteristics of the organizational culture. This thought was common to almost all those who took part.
2. The gap between the levels of investment in IODA – small group that is working hard during the year and a relative large group who are involved only during the conference – is possibly a source of concern. We might have to think about the ways other members of IODA can ‘bring their dish to the party’. On the other hand, being a member of the EC and taking upon oneself the active role and step into the front of the organization is also rewarding in itself.
3. In regard to the issue of the size of IODA, the organization should be big enough to support local OD organizations and to be strong enough to function as an umbrella, professionally and logistically to the local organizations.
4. IODA should be more transparent in the way it manages itself. It should be clear what the decisions that are taken are and the members should take part in the decision processes.
5. As to the executive committee, the roles of its members should be clear and should be made explicit; inconsistency among members of EC in voting should be amended; Also, the EC should think of itself as a Board.
6. It is necessary to create more active engagement with all IODA members during the year and not settle with the activity that take place during the annual conference.
7. The mission of the organization and the bye laws that derive from it need to be reinvestigated openly, with active participation of all members.

In my final words I have to say that the EC has not been able to discuss these interesting ideas and suggestions, so I cannot give any ‘official answer’ of the EC in this writing. But our president has taken these seven conclusions and commented on them in her Presidential words. As she also says: if others want to comment or react, please do!

As mentioned earlier: these are only two of five themes Avi analysed. I’ll inform you about the other three in the next IODA news.

And finally, finally: thank you Avi for giving IODA another opportunity to look at itself!!

Alette Vonk
alletevonk@yahoo.com

Avi Altman
Avi_Altman@hotmail.com
What is new in IODA?

Change of organizational status according American tax law

The change of IODA’s status has been confirmed. We are now a 501 (c) 3 organization.

What does this mean?

Legally, a 501(c) organization is an American tax-exempt, non-profit corporation or association. Section 501(c) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, provides that 28 types of non-profit organizations are exempt from some federal income taxes. 501(c)(3) exemptions apply to corporations, and any community chest, fund, cooperating association or foundation, organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, testing for public safety, literary, or educational purposes, to foster national or international amateur sports competition, to promote the arts, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals.

IODA is an organization which focuses on educational purposes. In a nutshell, the confirmation of our new status means that donations we receive are tax deductible according U.S. American tax law. With the assistance of our members we will now have to discover how this tax exemption status is regarded in other countries.

Members who run their own companies and who have achieved very good financial success at the end of the tax year are invited to think about making a donation or an endowment to IODA. You can do this for the purpose of furthering education in OD. The benefit to you is that you can contribute to a meaningful mission and maintain your ethical values by making the government “pay” part of your contribution. If you are already considering such a contribution, thank you in advance for thinking of the good of our organization!

Conversely, there will now be new legal obligations: audits, accurate recording, and stricter control by the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Thank you to our parting financial manager Susan O’Leary who played the major part in advancing IODA to this new stage (please don’t miss reading Susan’s parting words in this edition of IODA’s newsletter.)

Position of Treasurer

In regard to these new challenges, IODA announces a change in the position of Treasurer. Bill Kraus who served the board for more than three years in this position has now handed it over to Roger Drew who is from the Washington D.C. area. We thank Bill for his care and service (read the note of appreciation) and welcome Roger Drew who is currently forming his financial team. An Assistant Treasurer will be appointed in the coming days. Those of you who would like to serve on the financial team, please write to Roger. RogerDrewEmail@aol.com.
**New faces in IODA’s EC or IODA’s committees**

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tr>
<td>Roger Drew, U.S.A.</td>
<td>Treasurer of IODA</td>
<td><strong>Roger Drew</strong> assumed the position of treasurer from Bill Kraus who had previously chosen him as Assistant Treasurer. The transition is just taking place. Roger introduced a new financial manager to the EC. His name is Parks Talley. He is a CPA and has gained extensive experience in consulting with 501 (c) 3 organizations.</td>
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<td>Diane Katz, U.S.A.</td>
<td>Board Secretary of IODA</td>
<td>We have appointed a candidate for the vacant position of <strong>Board Secretary</strong>. This was announced at the members’ meeting in Budapest. We are happy to inform you that <strong>Diana Katz</strong>, Arizona, USA, has now begun work with the EC.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mohan Krishnan, India</td>
<td>Conference Coordinator</td>
<td>Our Indian colleague and host of 2009, <strong>Mohan Krishnan</strong>, is appointed as our new <strong>Conference Coordinator</strong>. He took over the position from <strong>Francois Breuer</strong> who wanted to reduce his workload because of health issues. Congratulations to Mohan and many thanks to Francois.</td>
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<td>Peter Kalmar, Hungary</td>
<td>Relationship and Affiliation Coordinator</td>
<td>The EC has implemented a new EC position: a <strong>Relation and Affiliation Coordinator</strong>. We believe that since we live in a world built more and more on networks we should put a stronger focus on our networking activities with other professional organisations and business associations. We received a very convincing application for this position. It came from <strong>Peter Kalmar</strong>, Hungary. He has now been co-opted into the EC until the next elections which will be starting very soon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noble Kumawu, Ghana</td>
<td>Chair of the Richard Beckhard Award Committee</td>
<td>The new head of the Richard Beckhard Award Committee is <strong>Noble Kumawu</strong> from Ghana. Thank you, <strong>Lynne Yeannakis</strong>, for successfully serving the committee in this function in the past.</td>
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Farewell words from Susan O’Leary, IODA outgoing financial administrator

As my tenure with IODA draws to a close I was asked to write a few words about my time with IODA and the changes and growth I have witnessed within the organization. This newsletter is a great example of the change and growth of IODA as it is a wonderful vehicle reaching out to membership and communicating the essence of IODA. I am continually impressed by the professional look and depth of content that has been pulled together by Alette Vonk and her team. I am honored to contribute.

Three years ago I was approached by Ann Clancy to take on the responsibilities of Financial Administrator for an organization called IODA. She proceeded to give me a quick synopsis of IODA and I was immediately captivated. Jackie Binkert was Treasurer at the time and with her help I transitioned into the position with little trouble. However, sooner than I anticipated, there was a complete turnover of the board and I was faced with an Executive Committee and Treasurer I had never met. Add to this I was taking my first step off the North American continent on my way to Accra, Ghana for my first IODA convention which followed with my second conference in Hyderabad, India a year later. Exciting adventures I never would have predicted for myself only months before. I found myself surrounded by the world and I was overwhelmed by the opportunity to casually meet and know representatives from a multitude of nations and cultures. A life experience I taste, see and feel to this day.

During the three years I have worked with the Executive Committee and staff of IODA we have revamped the accountability and transparency of the organization. Following are, in my opinion, the highlights.

1. We took the accounting off my desktop and placed it on the internet for all of the EC to access and review at their convenience.
2. We strengthened the security of financial transactions through the use of Pay Pal which allows membership to enter their sensitive financial information directly.
3. Through work with Treasurers Jackie Binkert and Bill Kraus, the finances of IODA were comprehensively shared with the Executive Committee and membership.
4. Designated funds were established for Fellowship, Marketing, Scholarship, Website development and others for planned use of the treasury accumulated over the past 25 years.
5. With the help of Silke Haebold, we made responsiveness to membership a priority through communication and education of the benefits and obligations of membership in IODA.
6. We also developed a successful drive to present IODA as an organization worthy of annual renewal instead of renewal being tied to participation in the convention.

Once we had successfully accomplished all of the above we began the effort to pursue a change in legal status from a 501c6 organization to a 501c3 organization opening up opportunities for funding and expanded services. The success of this effort was largely due to the Executive Committee’s willingness to take a hard look at the challenges of the organization and address each and every one. The application process was a collective effort that took over nine months to accomplish.

When an organization realizes this level of growth in accountability and responsibility, it is not without pain and frustration, especially within a multi-national and multi-cultural community. However, it has been my observation the commitment of the Executive Committee members, both past and present, has been one of incredible loyalty to IODA and to the world community IODA serves. It takes so much commitment to keep an organization viable and relevant and with the leadership of your president, Ulla Nagel, I believe the membership of IODA is fortunate to have a group of OD professionals giving of their time so generously.

To everyone I have met both personally and over the internet, thank you, dank u wel, merci, danke, koszonom, kop khun kha, gracias, dhanyavad (I could go on and on)! You have forever changed my life. Namaste

Susan O’Leary
s.oleary@bresnan.net
Dear IODA members,

I am happy to have the opportunity to write to you and to once again feel the warm atmosphere of an IODA meeting. I congratulate the Hungarian team for organizing this year’s IODA Conference, as the Conference this year was wonderful, according to what I heard!

I am writing to announce the hosting of the First Russian International HR Congress, which takes place in Moscow from the 15-18 of March, 2011. I am leading the Organizing Committee for the conference and we are searching for International speakers and participants. The Focus of the Congress is: HR in Post-Crisis Economy; The tendencies and priorities of the new decade.

The Crisis in Russia started about two years ago, later than it did in Europe and the USA. It was fully recognized about 1.5 years ago and even now, not everybody understands that after the recovery we will be facing a new economy, especially in Russia. A lot of issues which have been brought to the fore by the crisis are related to basic human nature and sociology and therefore not driven by country or nationality. This gives us the strong belief that experiences in Europe, Asia and America can help HR professionals all over the world, develop effective approaches and tools to deal with the post-crisis challenges.

At the Congress we shall:
- Better understand the new economy and the HR priorities that come with it
- Exchange the tools and approaches for dealing with post-crisis HR issues
- Find solutions for the real business-cases

As OD consultants you often work with HR–related issues yourselves and have good contacts with HR-professionals or HR-associations in your countries. We ask you for recommendations on HR professionals and associations in your country.

We invite everyone to participate, speak, share your experience and tools, or be an expert for the business-case solution sessions. We will have a lot of opportunities to socialize, network, visit tourist attractions in Moscow and organize tourist trips before or after the Congress for international participants. If you are interested please contact me via e-mail at zosia@tmconsult.ru and copy zgerchikova@yandex.ru, because sometimes international mails can be cut at one of the addresses by anti-spam filters.

Here is the Web-site for the HR Congress http://hr-congress.ru/site/?lang=en. Early bird registration is extended until February 4, 2011. The promotion code for discounts is 67966661. Please start your visa application at your earliest convenience since it can take up to one and a half month.

I wish everyone a fruitful year and a crisis free life. I look forward to meeting you in Moscow or at least to hearing from you.

Zosia Gerchikova
Managing Partner
TM Consult.
From Dubai to Algiers: Addressing Conferences in the Muslim World

John Cimino, USA
President Creative Leaps International

Last spring when I went to Dubai for a Middle East HR conference, I was excited to be visiting what was to me a new part of the world. I could not have guessed that I would be going to the Muslim world again in December, nor to such a dramatically contrasting setting. My second visit – a trip to Algiers – resulted from an invitation to help launch the US Department of State’s “Partners for a New Beginning” initiative in North Africa.

In my less confident moments, I was concerned that my inexperience with the language and customs might make for some awkward moments and possibly give offence. Much to my relief, however, everyone seemed to take me completely in stride and for most of the time, paid me no mind whatsoever.

Dazzling Dubai

Dubai, I was told, has been reconceived and recreated by the powerful royal family and a confederation of wealthy princes from five surrounding UAE megacities. Investing in the development of centrally located Dubai has created a hub for the region, multiplying the financial opportunities of all and affording those rich enough a new playground of previously undreamed of proportions. Despite the global recession, 18 of Dubai’s 20 real estate giants were actually still quite strong and smartly riding out the storm when I visited in May 2010. There was plenty of money in Dubai, and not just money, but also power and cunning.

The conference hotel was a five-star affair known as The Address. It gleamed with opulence. Marble, crystal and gold overtook the eye at every turn. Large scale artwork, decorative pools and exotic furnishings rewarded the closest scrutiny. Young people darted about in casual high fashion and great men magisterial in their creamy white robes and cloaks (thobes and bishts) breezed by greeting one another with wonderful affection. Yes, this was Dubai or at least a part of it, with a dazzling line-up of architectural wonders, one after the other in every style imaginable.

Middle East HR Conference

Hosted by the communications giant, Etisalat, the Middle East HR Conference featured an impressive lineup of keynoters from two European and four American corporations and consulting firms. My own role, however, was not that of an HR expert. I was to serve as discussant and synthesizer of my fellow keynoters’ salient insights. Moreover, I was charged with doing so via a lively combination of the dramatic and performing arts.

The “Concert of Ideas” serves as a powerful catalyst for sparking new thinking and harvesting conference take-homes. Most often I have the help of five or six of my colleagues from Creative Leaps International. This time I was on my own and it required a little stretch of one’s game.

Fortunately, I had made it my business to speak with each of my fellow keynoters well in advance of our arrival in Dubai. I had a good grasp of their ideas and had worked out a plan for referencing the essences of their ideas within the music I would perform, the poetry I would recite and the commentary I would give. I would call up the same emotions, inspirations and facets of meaning seeded by my expert colleagues, except now they would emerge larger and more vividly tied to our imaginations and senses. Happily, I managed to squeeze in a few rehearsals with a young pianist in Dubai who would assist me with the music-making.
Creative Juxtaposition

Our presentation, the very last in the conference line-up, was greeted with enthusiasm and delight. It included “Simple Gifts” by Aaron Copland, “The Call” by Ralph Vaughan Williams, snippets for the piano drawn from the Preludes of Frederic Chopin, poetry by Langston Hughes and the Persian master, Hafiz. A culminating visit from Cervantes’s own Don Quixote mingled playfully and evocatively with my narrative, including insights from contemporary neuroscience and archetypal psychology, perceptual curiosities and philosophical reflections.

This technique of tapping multiple interdisciplinary sources while alternating different processing modalities is what we at Creative Leaps International call “creative juxtaposition.” It helps us keep participants engaged, inquisitive, thoughtful and charmed with wonder. Through its artful provocations, we were able this time to tap into some deeply held values and habits of perception and to bring them safely and effectively into the business conversation.

What did I learn through this experience?

There is great beauty in the Muslim heart. It is a profound and yearning heart as full of light and shadow as our own, as full of promise and contradiction. We thirst together for meaning and for love, and we are both responsive to the radiance that is art.

A good beginning, I thought.

North Africa Economic Partnership

It was not my “fame” in Dubai which brought me to the attention of the US Department of State for a gig in North Africa. Rather it was a last-ditch “Google search” on the part of the Aspen Institute to find someone with experience cultivating entrepreneurship and business partnerships in the creative sector. They were getting their ducks in a row plying for the role of secretariat for the North Africa Partnership for Economic Opportunity and came upon our new website launched in collaboration with the Chicago start-up, The Institute for Arts Entrepreneurship.

The plan was to form an initiative called “Partners for a New Beginning” that would create ties of collaboration between entrepreneurs and businesses in the Muslim world and their counterparts here in the US. In the case of North Africa and the region known as the Maghreb (Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Mauritania), the goals are threefold: to promote economic opportunity in the region, to encourage sustainable partnerships with the US, and within the Maghreb to nurture cross-border unity and collaboration among the five nations.

There are five major components:

- Young Business Leaders and Associations Network
- Leadership and Training Academy
- Innovation and Technology Incubator
- Creative Industries Incubator
- Center for Entrepreneurship Excellence.
Each would work with regional partners to develop economic opportunity and entrepreneurship in the region both online and offline through mentorship programs and training academies that focus on areas of education, technology and the arts.

The combination of The Institute for Arts Entrepreneurship and our own Creative Leaps International, an art-based company with two decades experience working in the business sector, the bill for the Creative Industries Incubator. After a few months of deep vetting and proposal development, we were on our way to North Africa.

We joined Intel Corporation, Education for Employment, the Center for Research Development Foundation, the Algeria Start-Up Initiative, and the South Mediterranean University School of Management in Tunisia as partners in the initiative.

Arriving in Algiers
As you may know, North Africa is nothing like Dubai. Although there is oil money in a few of the countries, that money has not found its way into the general economies and certainly not across borders from the “haves” to the “have nots.” Rivalries prevail and “little tussles,” as I heard them called, are not uncommon. Neither are the forms of government particularly compatible. Morocco has a king and is very proud of it. The others wrestle with representative governments in various stages of functionality and disarray.

As I rode the shuttle from the airport to the Algiers Hilton, the traffic was terrible, construction seemingly everywhere and not much to show for it. Military vehicles packed with armed soldiers pushed past us in long columns. Nearly every intersection had police or troops at hand scrutinizing vehicles. Our conference hotel overlooked the Mediterranean, was first-class and well appointed, but unlike The Address in Dubai, there was nothing pretentious about it, and there was no suggestion of an idyllic, unreachable upper class.

Experiencing Algerian Culture
We were soon off to the Algerian Museum of Fine Art to mingle with our fellow speakers, the conference organizers, representatives of the Algerian Business Council, our own State Department and the Aspen Institute. The museum was stunning, both new and ancient in its holdings and construction. The artwork showcased a multitude of styles mostly from France, but also some more recent works from Algeria itself.

In the museum’s library, a vaulted room in the oldest part of the building, I could imagine my alter ego, Don Quixote himself, paging through the ancient manuscripts pouring over the documentation of knight errantry from an era gone by. The romance of that thought jolted a recollection that Quixote’s author, the great Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, had actually spent several years imprisoned somewhere in Algiers following his capture in a sea battle lost by his beloved Spain to the North Africans.

Although the library had no books or documentation about Cervantes from that era, the museum director enthusiastically told me I could see Cervantes’ prison grotto which had been preserved since the 1500s in the hillside just behind the museum!

Focus on Economic Development
From the outset, the December 2010 Maghreb Entrepreneurship Summit proved not only to be a well orchestrated affair, but also a time for work, relationship building, steep learning and concerted action. The president and chair of the US-Algerian Business Council extended their respective welcomes along with US Ambassador David Pearce. Two impressive keynotes followed: Algerian Minister of Industry, Investment and Small and Medium Size Enterprises, Mohamed Benmeradi, and the second by US Assistant Secretary of State for Economic, Energy and Business Affairs, Jose Fernandez.

Secretary Fernandez made a particularly strong and very positive contribution throughout the conference and witnessed the commitment of the nearly 300 Maghreb delegates to the working process detailed in the expert panels which followed. My own presentation moderating a panel on the “Value of Arts Entrepreneurship and Its Potential for Economic Development” was among these. In the final hour of the conference, the room was alive with pride, positivity and unmistakable passion. The desire for unity across the five nations was clear and inspiring as the delegates of the five North African nations caucused to propose their own leadership representatives to the Partnership.

This was a moment of opportunity for the nations of the Maghreb and no less for the US as it reexamines its own place in a diverse and exceedingly complex world. “Partners for a New Beginning” is aptly named and it is a process in which we can all play meaningful roles. If fact, it is essential that we do so.

*  *  *

John Cimino,
jcimino@creativeleaps.org
Democratic Change in Rumania

Using OD Approach to Cure and Prevent Corruption in Local Governments

Ana Vasilache, Rumania
Executive Director,
FPDL – Partners Foundation for Local Development

I will share with you in this article our organizations – Partners Foundation for Local Development (FPDL) - experience in using an OD approach and tools in addressing corruption in local government. I will describe the FPDL mission and its main activities; the reason why we focus on corruption in local governments; the OD concepts that underpin our anticorruption approach; how we applied them in working with a Romanian local government; and what is our strategy to disseminate at CEE/SEE level this anticorruption approach.

FPDL Mission and Main Activities

FPDL is a Romanian NGO, established in 1994 by a group of experts in urban planning, public administration and organizational/community development, having as mission to enhance the democratic processes of governance, to support civil society development, to promote a new culture of change- and conflict management in Romania and worldwide, through capacity building activities.

We decided that one way to achieve our mission is to develop and build the capacity of a network of change agents from our region, so they could build the capacity of local governments and civil society organizations in their respective countries. During the last 12 years we succeeded in building a network of trainers and training institutions from more than 30 CEE/SEE countries: to build the capacity of more than 1500 trainers, facilitators or consultants;and, to disseminate high quality training manuals and interactive/participatory training methodologies.

Why We Focused on Addressing Corruption in Local Governments

If Peter Drucker was right and Government is going to be the most important area of entrepreneurship and innovation over the next 25 years, than the most important challenges ahead of us (not only in our countries, but all over the world) are:
- To make Governments work more effectively and efficiently
- To make Governments be respected and trusted by citizens

More effective and efficient Governments can be made through knowledge and skills transfer. But to make Governments be respected and trusted by citizens cannot be done without addressing corruption.

1. Central - East Europe/South-East Europe
2. www.fpdl.ro
3. All these activities were conducted in the frame of the Regional Program “Working Together” a Capacity Building Program for CEE/SEE countries, supported by Local Government Initiative of the Open Society Institute, LGI
**How to make Governments work in a more effective and efficient way?**

Francis Fukuyama has an interesting diagram in his book *State Building* describing the degrees of knowledge and skills transferability. The knowledge and skills in *Leadership, Management and Design of Organizations* has the highest degree of transferability; the knowledge and skills on *how to design viable democratic political systems* (electoral, judicial, etc) has medium transferability; and the knowledge and skills linked with *Cultural norms and values* has the lowest transferability.

Even before knowing about Francis Fukuyama theory, our strategy was in line with it, focusing FPDL capacity building activities on topics that have the highest degree of knowledge and skills transferability, such as:

- Democratic Leadership
- Local Government General Management
- Local Government Financial Management
- Public Services Management
- Conflict Management
- Participatory Planning
- Local Economic Development
- NGOs Management

**How to Make Governments be Respected and Trusted by Citizens?**

We realized that all our efforts of transferring knowledge and skills to public officials, be they elected or civil servants, were not enough to have effective and efficient local governments, that were trusted and respected by citizens. One of the biggest obstacles we had to overcome was *corruption* that was spreading at local level together with the decentralization of resources and responsibilities.

Our encounter with Ronald MacLean Abaroa and his successful experience as former mayor of La Paz inspired us to focus our anticorruption strategy on **changing the organizational context in which individuals work** and stop focusing exclusively on changing individuals through legalistic or moralistic pressures.

We decided to promote this novel anticorruption approach, by (1) developing a manual and (2) building the capacity of the regional network of change agents so they can support mayors and public managers that have the political will to initiate strategic and participatory interventions in their organizations in order to remove and prevent corruption. That is how the manual “*Restore the Health of Your Organization*” and the capacity building Program for Anticorruption Practitioners (PAP) were born.

**The Main OD Concepts on which Our Anticorruption Approach Relies**

Corruption is a crime determined by the organizational context, not (only) by the personal inherent traits of individuals. It is a crime of rational economic calculation, not a crime of irrational passion. People tend to engage in corrupt behavior when they think they will gain more than they will lose, because the rewards are great and risks of being caught are low, and even if caught, the penalties are mild. People tend to engage in corrupt activities when they work in organizations that give them (1) monopoly power over a good or service delivery; (2) discretion to decide whether someone gets that good or service or how much; and (3) lack of accountability and transparency rules, so that others cannot see when and how they take their decisions. This is the organizational context that breeds corruption.

Robert Klitgaard proposes a metaphorical formula in order to determine the potentially corrupt areas of an organization: C = M+D-T where *Corruption equals Monopoly power plus Discretion by officials minus Accountability/Transparency*. The formula can be applied to public, private or civil society organizations, in poor or rich countries, in Europe, Asia or Africa.

It is true that different individuals may react differently to the temptations offered by the context, and that many public or private officials do not engage in corrupt activities even if the temptations are present. But the important idea is that the more temptation a context provides, the higher the level of vulnerability to corruption. There is a high probability that we encounter corrupt activities in the shadowed and dark areas that lack *Transparency and Accountability*.

If we look at the local government’s organizations from an economic point of view, people can play three main roles: the ‘Principals’ - mayors or public managers, are the decision-makers whose main responsibility is to deliver services/goods to their ‘Clients’ – citizens or companies. They cannot fulfill their responsibilities alone so they do it through their ‘Agents’ – public officials in different positions within the local government organizations.

4. Training of trainers/facilitators or consultants and development of user-friendly training manuals
5. Corruption is defined as the misuse of office for personal gains, where Office is a position of trust, where one receives authority to act on behalf of an institution
6. he manual can be downloaded and details about PAP can be find on www.fpdl.ro
7. “*Corrupt Cities*” by Robert Klitgaard, Ronald MacLean Abaroa and Lindsey Parris
Corrupt acts can take place between all these actors, but most often they take place between Agents and Clients, when the context in which they work offers temptations: when Agents have monopoly power over the provision of the services or goods, have discretion in deciding who will receive what and who find themselves in a non-transparent context where they are not accountable towards their Clients nor toward their Principals.

Mayors, who have the courage of identifying their organizations’ vulnerability to corruption, can change their organizations’ context through the strategic and participatory anticorruption approach we promote. This approach is based on the fact that the instruments and the competencies that mayors have and can use are not those of prosecutors, judges or policemen, but those of managers and institutional reformers.

The FPDL anticorruption approach is:

**Strategic:**
- It focuses on changing corrupt organizational systems not (only) corrupt individuals.
- It identifies and treats with priority the most dangerous forms of corruption.
- It goes through the strategic planning process stages, identifying how to go from where we are to where we want to be.

**Participatory:**
- It involves managers and staff in analyzing the vulnerability to corruption.
- This may be surprising, but it is possible as long as the assumption is that corruption is not (just) a problem of bad people but of bad systems. The outside facilitator/consultant can help people discuss such systems analytically and without fear of punishment. Since corruption is a concept loaded with emotions, with fear, shame or defensiveness, the facilitator’s first task is to demystify corruption and approach it in an analytical way.
- It also involves outside stakeholders in the diagnosis and solutions.
- Elaboration process: citizens, businesses and other public institutions.

From such a participatory process emerges a deeper and shared understanding of the potentially corrupt systems in place and a treatment plan for curing and prevention, including remedial measures that no outsider consultant or expert could better develop. Sometimes the resources are lacking, the expertise and the leverage are lacking or not substantial enough to implement the planned measures. But these can be offered through the support of external consultants, experts and possibly funding.

**Working with a Romanian Local Government**

In 2008, Craiova local government applied and was selected to participate in the International Program 'Cities without Corruption–Cities with Future', initiated by FPDL.

Craiova Municipality is the capital of Dolj County, having more than 300,000 inhabitants. It has a rich history, attested in documents since 1475. Craiova is a powerful industrial city, an important educational center and it has a rich cultural life. Craiova Local Government has more than 500 employees, a directly elected mayor and 27 elected councilors.

Craiova local government received FPDL facilitators and experts’ support in order to elaborate an anticorruption Strategic Plan, through a participatory planning process. The goal was, beyond curing and preventing corruption, to strengthen local government integrity, efficiency, transparency and accountability in order to gain citizens’ trust and respect.

What were the first obstacles we noticed in our first encounter during the diagnosis process? Local government managers and staff did not feel comfortable and were not open to talk about corruption. They spoke defensively when asked about their expectations: Explain to us why we are invited to attend this workshop! Explain to us what corruption in local governments means because we do not know!

It was obvious for us that they were thinking: We can not do anything to change the situation! So, the first thing we did was to change the way they perceived the situation. Together we found reasons that proved the assumptions false - those widely used almost by everybody to excuse the passive acceptance of corruption in their lives and organizations (10).

8. Supported financially by Local Government Initiative of the Open Society Institute
9. Find more about Craiova on www.primariacraiova.ro
10. The 7 excuses not to fight corruption, Corrupt Cities – a practical guide to cure and prevention, by Robert Klitgaard, Ronald MacLean, Abaroa and Lindsey Parris
In the self-diagnosis process that followed, 315 employees from the total of 500 were involved. They individually evaluated the level of monopoly, discretion and transparency/accountability of 33 activities/services their organization is providing. Fifteen (15) were identified as vulnerable to corruption; six were selected to be the focus of the Strategic Plan:

1: Issuing of urban certificates, building and demolition permits
2: Control of discipline in construction works
3: Public assets management
4: Public procurement
5: Properties registration
6: Human Resources Management

The diagnosis process continued with a more in-depth analysis of each of these six activities: individually, managers and staff answered the following questions:

What corrupt activities could take place?
Who may gain and who may lose if this happens?
Why, what are the causes that may allow these corrupt activities to happen?

Working groups were formed, supported by experts, to analyze the causes and formulate solutions/strategies and action plans to address them. Workshops were organized to allow working groups to meet and exchange the results of their work. Councilors were invited to join the process and improve relations with the executive side of the organization. Training was embedded in the workshops: (1) to improve managers, staff and councilors understanding and knowledge of their organizational culture; (2) to learn about the use of different managerial styles for staff development; and, (3) to learn about the process of change management. Outside stakeholders, target beneficiaries/clients of the activities/services identified as vulnerable to corruption, were also involved in the process. They confirmed the internal diagnosis results and proposed solutions.

Central government representatives were invited to discuss the causes of vulnerability to corruption that could not be addressed only at local level; causes that are found in other municipalities as well. This is a very short, simplified and concentrated description of a two year effort.

The process of the strategic plan implementation is on-going, in order to achieve five main strategic objectives;
1: Improve the responsible management of public funds and assets
2: Consolidate the Quality Management System
3: Increase activities' transparency
4: Implement a modern Human Resource Management system
5: Improve internal control mechanisms

Disseminating in CEE/SEE Countries the Anticorruption Approach

We launched a two-year capacity building Program for Anticorruption Practitioners – PAP to build the capacity of the change agents. There were three main components:

Knowledge Building Component based on self study and on-line distance learning including reading, exercises, paper writing, aimed at deepening participants understanding and improving their knowledge in the field of curing and preventing corruption in Local Governments organizations.

Skills Building Component, an interactive and participatory Training Program aimed at improving participants training, consulting and facilitation skills.

In-country Anticorruption Programs, during which practitioners apply the anticorruption approach in local governments, by supporting mayors that initiate and implement curing/preventing corruption interventions.

Our ultimate aim is to have, within the CEE/SEE region, an increasing number of local governments, that are successful in addressing corruption, that become more reliable and accountable, effective and just organizations, and at the same time become role-models to be followed.

I have to recognize that there were moments when we felt discouraged and thought that our efforts impact was like a drop in the ocean. In those moments we always remember what Margaret Mead wrote:

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world.
Indeed, is the only thing that ever has.

Ana Vasilache , Ana@fpdl.ro
From the newsletter team

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support and contributions to this issue.

We are always looking for more IODA News items from members. To make a submission to the Newsletter, please email Alette Vonk: alettevonk@yahoo.com or silkehaebold@online.de.

We welcome other individuals interested in working with the newsletter team, to make sure that the newsletter content is as representative as possible of the interests and activities of the IODA community.

Like always, we welcome any feedback that will help us to provide a great newsletter to IODA members and friends.

Sincerely,

The newsletter team

Alette Vonk
Michelle de Bruyn
Toki Mabogunje
Gloria Sarku
K.C. Soares
Silke Häbold