

EFFECT OF CHANGING INTERNAL BUSINESS PROCESS AND LEARNING CULTURE ON GRANT-MAKING EFFECTIVENESS AT THE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH CENTRE

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ABSTRACT

An assessment of the programmed strategy for CARIAA –a 7- years, US\$70 million research initiative for Africa and Asia by Canada’ IDRC and UK’s DFID- reveal the need to increase the strategy’s potential impact on grant-making by, first, adjusting relevant internal business processes at CARIA to create the necessary space and structure for strategic learning, secondly, creating a culture for change towards strategic learning. The purpose of the project was to create conditions that allow for real time strategy adoption for the highly complex CARIAA programmed, hence resolving one of grant-makers long-standing challenge of using critical lessons from monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of complex programmed to modify already running grant-making strategies. By the qualitative analysis, three critical internal business process identified include the strengthening of tracking and feedback mechanisms, integrating more support staff into CARIAA planning and grantee interaction (Particularly the Information Management Officers and Grants Administrators), and developing an integrated and interactive strategy management system using the balanced scorecard, to anchor the implementation of the CARIAA strategy. The study also found numerous organizational learning sub-cultures that varied from one SBU to another and with mixed influence on strategic learning. The study concludes that to achieve high impact grant-making at CARIAA organizational changes around the identified internal business processes and learning culture are imperative. It therefore recommends the development and nurturing of an effective learning culture by putting in place leadership and structures that facilitate inter-SBU learning as well as the efficient capturing of lessons from adapting the strategy with new lessons