On Thursday, November 28, 2019, the Dutch Platform Leave No One Behind (LNOB) held its fifth and last meeting of the year at COC Nederland. Thanks for the hospitality!

This session brought together a various group of NGOs who shared their experiences on the graduation approach, (un)conditional cash transfers and on the support of the (international) LBHTI-community.

**100Weeks**

*100weeks* is a revolutionary project, initiated by Gitte Büch & Jeroen de Lange, in which poor women receive unconditional cash transfers (weekly 8 euros) for a period of 2 years. The target-group which must be representative of the population, structurally receives cash transfers by a mobile phone which is provided by the project itself. The only condition for participation is training and (peer to peer) coaching which is provided by local partners. At the start of the project, a face to face base-line measurement is taken on basis of which the progress achieved can be monitored. In rapidly processing internal feedback, the project quickly evolves while implementing their strategy.

**Data Collection**

Two locally trained and - based employees form small call-centres through which a rich body of data about the participating women is collected. During the 2 years the women are called every 2-3 months to see what they are doing. A year after the cash transfers are stopped the women are called again to check on their status. The security of this data is taken into account during the collecting and processing process, approach supported by PWC. The data collection forms a kind of ‘hub’ on economic and social aspects which serves multiple purposes. The data analysis enables 100weeks to learn about their impact and results in research on how to improve the project. These studies then lead to evidence-based alterations to the initiative. Besides this, the data collection (on aggregated level) also helps to make the impact specific and eventually resulting in comprehensive graphs and infographics which will be shared with the donors. In this...
way, transparency is created about the exact purpose that their money serves. This is made even more tangible for donors when they are connected to (a specific group of) women who receive their donations. Donors are enthusiastic about the detailed reporting on their own contribution. 100weeks publishes graphs in which important long-term trends can be monitored.

Where does the money go?
During the project, the women spend their received money freely and 100weeks deliberately wants to have no control. The money is spent from buying land, starting a business, buying materials, building up savings or investing in their kids’ education. The direct transfer of money has therefore not only a direct link with the improvement of economic status but can also influence the social status of households, improvement on self-esteem and has apparently also positive effects on the neighbours.

Points of interest
In answering a question about the collaboration with local governments, Gitte explained that 100weeks wants to retain their flexibility and capacity to act/intervene quickly. Possible collaboration with local governments could hamper this strategy because of lengthy/slow processes.

100weeks is a fast-growing initiative nowadays and more focus will be on fundraising in the coming year. In extending their media coverage they aim to reach more potential donors in order to scale up the project. 100weeks is becoming a service platform that can be customised and can be used by different organisations.

Joyce from COC Nederland showed an interest in exploring the possibilities to support excluded women socially but also financially together with 100weeks. To be continued.

Dorcas

Flourish
Flourish is Dorcas’ project to sustainably alleviate people from poverty by taking a graduation approach. The Flourish programme seeks to help people in poverty and crisis in a holistic way. Therefore, a graduation approach combines weekly or monthly unconditional cash transfer (consumption support) with training and coaching. The programme is designed for (sometimes incomplete) families/households to participate in household plan development. The trainings are aimed at practical skills like financials management (like saving) and entrepreneurship. The project is currently implemented in Albania, Moldavia and Ukraine. The challenge is not only to support the participants to climb out of poverty but ensure that they remain empowered and minimise the risk of falling back.

Challenging Context
Programme coordinator Nico Smith shared recent experiences with the Flourish programme. It turns out that the context in which Dorcas operates in is very complex. First, many participants are living in (post) conflict zones or are displaced victims of violence. Poverty cannot be treated as an isolated problem but is connected to
many more challenges. The conditions are additionally characterised by poor economic status, little employment opportunities, chronically ill or disabled family members, lack of social security and coping with isolation and depression. The long-term consequences of the restrictive communist era have taken a toll on physical and mental health. Because the conditions of the people involved are multi-layered and complex, there seems to be no blueprint or linear roadmap towards easy solutions.

**Pieces of the puzzle**
Because there is no easy fix, Dorcas is identifying important elements that should be integrated in the programme. An important starting point is the autonomy of the participants. Dorcas did not design the programme to target them, they are instead invited to participate. This starts with building trust and building long-lasting relations between coaches and families. Local partners have been helping to identify the neediest areas and people. When people commit to the programme, the offered resources, services and support are specified through household plan development: what are the needs, the potentials, the possibilities? This process needs time and is quite labour intensive. By giving consumption support, which is freely spendable, Dorcas aims to temporarily alleviate people from their basic financial burdens to give them the chance to flourish. A key element in this process is the (re)connection with the social environment in order to encourage community building & support.

For participating families, it is important to get insights and a grip on their own situation. To achieve this, Dorcas is exploring ways in which poverty and crisis can be categorised easily by the participants themselves. As example, Nico shows *Semáforo de la pobreza* (the poverty traffic light), a Paraguayan digital platform that helps communities to escape poverty. This system is also used in the UK. Self-assessment on fifty indicators help to prioritise the efforts of the community and development agencies. This strategy is also pursued in the Flourish programme, which results in the largest contribution of the participants themselves.

**Points of interest**
The question is raised how collaboration with local governments is designed. Until now, the government has mostly been contributing by assigning social workers to participating families. Mental health workers may be more included in the project in the future because of the complex nature of the situation. Financial support of governments may be possible in the future, but currently that is not yet been realised.

Although 100weeks and Dorcas both have projects that focus on direct cash transfer, they have not been working together until now. As presented, the graduation approach of their programs is their common ground.

**COC Nederland**

**The international work of COC Nederland**
Joyce Hamilton of COC Nederland, who hosts this meeting of the Leave No One Behind platform, presented on the international activities of the organisation. COC Nederland supports LHBTI-organisations and its community around the globe. They were founded
in 1946, in tandem with the United Nations. With their international division, they actively support civil society organisations and activist groups in 35 different countries. They advocate a strong, self-conscious LHBTI-community worldwide. COC operates according to the Inside-Out strategy. They serve the interest of many organisations by providing coaching and trainings for activists. Additionally, they realise an active lobby towards national and international organisations like the United Nations, the European Organisation for Security and Cooperation and the European Council. Through the international partnership Pride, COC international offers its partner organisations resources and technical and financial support. In absorbing political risks and minimising administrative burdens, they seek to create a strong, empowered and mobilised LHBTI-community within capable civil society organisations.

COC as facilitator
Because sexuality and gender are highly sensitive topics in many countries, COC international chooses to maintain an open model in their Theory of change. This entails that COC aims for long term relations and respects the pluralism within their global community and does not interfere in local organisations’ strategies. They offer a ‘toolkit’, and no ready-made strategies. It is often seen that migrated LHBTI people adopt a more activist stance than their fellows who stay in the context where they remain discriminated or prosecuted.

COC-advocates 1. Sustainable change, 2. Local communities in the lead, 3. Local activism only, no border crossing interpretations and 4. ‘it might get worse, before it gets better’. The open model functions on the basis of trust towards all local partners. Financial support can therefore be freely spent.

National activities
COC Nederland organises various actions to support the national LBHTI-community. One of their roles is to address taboos or themes that are difficult to discuss. By providing gender-neutral toilet stickers, they seek to open discussion about gender and inclusivity. COC also supports the organisation of Purple Friday on December 13th with tools or materials. This day celebrates solidarity towards LHBTI-pupils at secondary schools. The young people themselves decide what they want to do. Accents of COC are on mobilisation, organising allies and policy & law. Community based research is done to influence the agendas and stories of change are collected, see here.

There was a question about mental support towards the community, COC would like to do more on this. Digital support might be also a possibility, see for example ‘Grip op je Dip’ in the Netherlands. Prof Mirjam van Reisen has a PhD-er working on mobile support for people/refugees with post-traumatic stress.

Joint request
The members of the LNOB platform who were present at the meeting expressed their interest to commonly create a visual representation (infographic/mind map) of the platform’s topics, members’ expertise and levels of intervention. Creating an overview like this may give insight in the impact that the platform has and might focus the efforts.
Digitalisation

The Spindle likes to explore with the Platform LNOB the question of digitalisation & use of data in the principle of Leave No One Behind. It will be about what you do and what might be the (im)possibilities! Digital power will be a central and cross-cutting theme for The Spindle in 2020. The world in which traditional development cooperation has emerged is changing drastically. Digitalisation is a trend that offers civil society a great number of opportunities, but just as many challenges at the same time. The questions asked to elaborate on were:

1. What is your organisation doing in this digital field to promote inclusion, address exclusion or better engage everybody in the design, execution and evaluation of projects and activities?
2. If you are using digital means already: how, what, and what fore you do use it for?
3. What is your feedback, feedforward and reflection on the risk and challenges?

100weeks

- Next to their internal monitoring and evaluation system 100weeks is using a digital tool to conduct surveys. In collaboration with Media Monks they develop an application that contains both their curriculum and the financial features required like crowdfunding. They want to integrate secure signing in for participants and staff with a data hub function. To facilitate this process, 100weeks recently hired an ICT specialist. Before they used the humanitarian app Kobo as basis for analysis but this is in need for replacement. They are thinking of digital training possibilities, inspired on Aflatoun and Skill-ed. Also the platform of coursera was mentioned by participants.

Plan NL

- Plan nl connects young activists to each other via online platforms. Here they share information but also start and expand their communities. Currently Whatsapp, Facebook and Signal, are used often in various contexts, Google Drive to work together. There is a need for a platform that facilitates this interaction in a safe way.
- For (internal) communication (chatting and document exchange) the software of Basecamp is used. There are good experiences with this platform.
- For learning trajectories there is a need for a platform that can host webinars. BlueJeans, Zoom and Google Hangouts, GoTo meeting is additionally proposed.

ICCO

- ICCO currently conducts a pilot with the platform of RNW Media. With this platform they target their community of young people. They want to be able to interact with them in order to collect data. This data is consequently used as input for an effective lobby. The platform is now however used little for this purpose. The main challenge until now is to keep the platforms alive over a longer period. Google mailing groups and Google Drive is commonly used for the exchange of documents. Further communication with partners is organised via various digital channels. Also Facebook is used.
- ICCO has additionally partnered up with Data4Development to make the ProMEva application. This platform seeks to make monitoring and evaluation in the development sector easy and efficient. They have designed the initiative to make the tool accessible for all organisations who are interested!

**COC Nederland**

- COC represents many smaller organisations that organise their internal communication via Signal and Facebook. They note that that the security of data is often being underestimated by users. A participant mentioned Kik, a messaging platform that enables users to communicate online without exchange of phone numbers. This might be a good option if sensitive data is being transmitted. Nowadays there is even a risk of governments infiltrating dating platforms to target people.
- COC uses also mailing groups, and Google drive

**Liliane Fonds**

- The Liliane Fonds has an online platform which features upcoming events, agenda, (open) calls and additional information of the organisations involved. The platform is increasingly being used but horizontal communication remains a challenge. For the development of the platform Liliane Fonds has contracted [https://mett.nl/](https://mett.nl/) as their technical partner.
- In collaboration with Enablement they have created a mobile knowledge base, Rehapp which provides information about disabilities and helps to diagnose patients.
- On the 29th of January 2020, Liliane Fonds, with Voice’s support, organises a meeting: *‘Pushing boundaries in advocacy for inclusion’*.

**Dorcas**

- Dorcas is busy becoming internally fit with regard to digital systems. Currently they are improving their monitoring and evaluation system as starting point for more innovations. They have developed this service in collaboration with Salesforce with whom they have worked pleasurably.
- There are additional ideas about e-learning trajectories for farming communities that are accessible in rural areas. The services of Skill-ed, could possibly provide these features, an online & offline learning platform. Also mentioned by participants was WeFarm.

**Voice**

- Voice has a Digital Grant Application System which combines multiple services. The platform supports audio and video files, enables translation of text and facilitates quick processing of data. Next to this platform Voice’s community is active on various social media channels, depending on the country these are Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram and Twitter. No chat boxes are used.
- In accordance with the ministry of foreign affairs’ policy guidelines Voice stresses the security of data collection, storage and processing. In 2020 Voice will collaborate on this topic in the Digital Defenders Partnership (DDP). In this Podcast Ugandan transgender activist Anna Xwexx tells about her experience during the journey to asylum.

- Because there is a need to coordinate Voice’s activities on various media platforms they recently hired an employee for this task. This measure has been taken to ensure that media expressions connect to the local context and will not lead to any form of exclusion.

**Safety and Privacy challenges**

- Digital Defenders operates on this topic.

- As mentioned, Kik has high security standards (not traceable)

- Radically Open Security of Melanie Rieback, she is also Spindle Inspiration Swarm member

- In September 2018 The Spindle had a Future Session on ‘exclusion by technology’. You can find the notes and many important links on responsible data and privacy here

- The 9 Principles for Digital Development can be found here

We closed up the session by thanking Joyce for hosting the platform at COC’s office and thanking the participants for sharing their experiences.

Next session will be in 2020.