

1.1.2) Seminar on 'Chamber management and Administration' and 'Membership Recruitment'

The seminar was, in fact, two, two-day seminars conducted consecutively by Peter Bishop, Deputy CEO, London Chamber of Commerce, the first 2 days attended by executive members of 15 IBOs (September 3 & 4, 2008), the second 2 days by IBO secretariat staff (September 5 & 6, 2008).

The contents of the seminar are as follows:

Chamber management and Administration: When designing, and implementing specific projects, significant benefits can be achieved by addressing management activities and capacity-building in an integrated manner. Multiplier effects will be achieved by careful attention, and support for development of local institutions and their human resources. It is important to fully understand the interests and institutional capabilities of local stakeholders specifically for regionally based activities and to factor in sufficient time and resources to build a consensus for reform, agreement on issues and long-term objectives. This part of the training programme was, therefore, fundamental to the involved parties, their Board of Directors as well as staff members in order to create a platform for a modern and unitary management and administration. Methodology was largely based on exchange of experiences and best practise components.

The following themes were included:

- The role and responsibility of a modern business intermediary organisation,
- Management and role of the Board of Directors and the CEO,
- Financial management and monitoring,
- Economy/budget/accounting including computerised transparent accounting,
- Human resources management,
- Setting visions and goals for the organisation,
- Strategic analysis,
- Business planning – creation and follow-up,
- Co-operation with other networks and with authorities including lobbying activities.

Membership Development: In order for the Nepalese Chamber to maintain self-sustainability upon project completion and show its visibility and recognition they must have a strong membership base. The activities for this part of the training programme were divided into 1) training and 2) practical assistance in performing membership recruitment campaigns.

The training component included in part practical examples of how LCCI has succeeded in recruiting and keeping companies as members by:

- Analysing the market situation in the region, the companies and their need of business support services,
- Analysing what makes companies (individual and in general) become members,
- Arranging a variety of networking opportunities between member companies,
- Focusing on four key concepts of membership development: Retention; Recruitment; Recognition; Reward.

The training components were highlighted by various examples of membership recruitment campaigns and strategies undertaken by LCCI and experiences and lessons learned vis-à-vis successes and failures.

One important point stressed during the training sessions was the importance of making a realistic plan for building up a membership base, the importance of sticking to the plan and continuously following it up.

Expert summarised the course objectives in practical terms at the beginning of each seminar as follows:

- We all run or work for organisations – IBOs - whose objective was to help members succeed in their business
- We all wished to run those organisations better so that: we had more members who were better serviced
- By the end of the two days we should understand better what we wanted to achieve, and how we should go about achieving it
- We would have examined all aspects of running an Intermediary Business Organisation, and would take back ideas for enhancing and improving our own operations, and indeed to introduce new ideas to our set-ups.