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| Respondent 2 (R2) |
| **Onderhoud voerder:** Nioma Venter (NV) |
| **Tyd:** 36:30 |

R2 I am respondent number two, from the strategic and operational team of Little Seeds. I have been in the process of collaboration between Badisa and Diaconia since January 2019, at the time when Little Seeds was formed in May 2019

NV Thank you.

Us, I gave you three questions beforehand. We will discuss these. So the first question was about, what I call two worlds that meet. There is Diaconia on the one hand and we have Badisa on the other side. And we're talking about the idea of ​​an integrated approach. In other words, that we work together on a vision and a strategy.

What has been your experience? When Badisa and Diaconia started coming together as partners in ECD?

R2 When I became involved in 2019, I was not yet so aware of the history – the path that everyone had walked, up to and including the decision to confirm this ECD. My experience at that point was, that it was something new for both of them. But my observation was that it was the right time. And that there was an absolute agreement, between the two parties. That this is the most meaningful, logical step for both.

NV The principle of collaboration, in other words, was to be accepted by both.

R2 The principle, absolutely. From both churches and where the church was at that time, in terms of the importance of ECD. And also from Badisa which was expanding its service offering. And the absolute urgency to, to give more focused attention to ECD. It was my experience that it was the right time for both parties. Maybe a bumpy road at the beginning, but both parties knew the time was right. But with it, it also had an emotional element. Both had to sacrifice something to some extent, and create something new. It was not only about working together; they also had to get to know each other. Their different ways of doing stuff – different cultures.

So they had to find each other first, around their personal ways.

Their culture of work. The culture and way of working of Badisa which is a more regulated way towards Diaconia which for me was more of a free flowing environment where decisions can be made faster and implemented more swiftly.

While on Badisa's side, one has the reassurance of matters being thought through thoroughly. But decision making is slower. The wheels turn more slowly.

But what was the biggest advantage for me at that point, is that what both of them brought to the table, that is what made me personally most excited. The stability that Badisa brought; and the will to seize opportunities, innovation, creativity - that culture that Diaconia brought to the table. And I think it was, and still is, for us to establish a new culture in which both of those things can work well integrated.

NV I want to come back to your experience that both had to give up something

R2 Yes

NV Want to expand on that a little bit more? What exactly did you experience?

R2 At that time Diaconia was able to run two programmes well, even without being expers; by learning as they go along and being successful. It's a child you raise, a project like this. And the same with Badisa. They have a very good track record – over a long period already - managing programs. And we were looking at each other an realized we that our way of working differs.

So there is a nostalgic experience on the one hand, you realize, this child you raised, you have to give up to some extent. You need to start and develop anew.

So both had to be supported and both had to feel safe. Its not just about throwing everything together in one pot.

NV Was there uncertainty about the process or was it more a matter of willingness to give up ‘what is ours’?

R2 I must say I have not experienced this. I experienced more, especially at the beginning, the excitement of something new is going to happen here. And I think that's one of the most important things for me, if I may, the question of how we're going to build momentum going forward. We had to remember why we're in this venture. And the potential and energy that can be unlocked, if we can manage it right, is an amazing opportunity.

NV Okay so we'll get to that… And you said that your initial experience was that, at least in principle, both parties were in agreement…

R2 And ready, yes

NV And ready, even though it was new terrain, and with it some uncertainty. So something else – maybe more on an emotional level - if you think back now, was it a challenge for a new team to form? In terms of relationships?

R2 I think it was much more challenging than what we could initially thought. Because it's one thing to say that we are going to work together. We had to start understanding each other's structures and systems. How does Badisa work, how does the church work? From human resource matters, throughout to how I budget. And this was true for all the different levels: The management team had to establish themselves as a team; the operational team had to go through this change; and even in communities – to understand who Little Seeds is and how this will change things. To establishment the new brand. Is it going to be different now than it was working with Diaconia? What will be the different roles? Where will the congregation fit in? And I think we are still working out these answers. But I think it also caused a lot of confusion on the ground. There are many role players involved.

NV I want to get back to this, because I think it's an important thing you say. So it was not so much an emotional reaction as it was a matter of people and systems unfamiliar to each other and a process of getting to know each other? There was a learning curve to the process?

R2 Yes

NV To find each other in these different worlds ?

R2 Absolutely. And I think there was an absolute ignorance, on the part of both parties perhaps, around the different worlds. I thought it should actually be quite simple, between Badisa and Diaconia, but if you do not know what is going on in the others one’s world… You have to see each other as partners.

And it's so simple, to sit around a table and say 'hey who are you, this is what I do'. And it instantly breaks down so many walls. And I think we just realized - I do not like the word but it's very descriptive – that we are working in silos. And I think it's all because of ignorance, and a lack of communication. And if you can create the platform, where people can physically look each other in the eye and say what the other one is doing. Then you realize 'hey we're doing the same thing'

NV Is then when Little Seeds started in May 2019?

R2 We only started to realize the value later – of what we are actually busy doing. When we started working together, it also exposes to some extent where we are. It reveals how we think of each other, it reveals where we stopped communicating with each other. And for us to exploit this network now, to both sides. It opens up to you as you begin to get involved. You did not realize it in the beginning. We realize the value of the network, and we realize the value of collaboration, but we do not really…

NV We have not yet calculated the cost, actually…

R2 No, we lost touch with where we stopped talking to each other.

NV Ja

R2 This is actually just what it is.

NV And then just had to get out of the silos

R2 Exactly.

NV And then deliberately create spaces to meet.

R2 Exactly. And how wonderful it is. It was nice for me, the first moments are those you just say to each other again 'I see you' that's all. I recognize you. I know you. ' And actually, I've always thought you were great, we just did not actually talk to each other yet. And I think it breaks down a lot of walls. I have experienced this since we have started communicating within, it had spin offs externally.

NV What do you mean by within? Inside the team?

R2 From within the team, the church, the organization. I take it a little wider now, but yes, within our different teams.

NV No-no, that's fine.

R2 From the micro level to all the levels within Little Seeds.

NV ja

R2 My experience is that even within the management team it was an eye opener to get to know each other and each other’s worlds better.

NV So what you say that the efforts we make within the team, pays off to the outside. .

R2 Absolutely

NV So it had definite relationship openness, implications. So what exactly did you experience when the two silos opened and we met at the same level. What did you experience in terms of operating scene?

R2 I'm going to say a difficult thing today. I think… I was in a situation where I was recently confronted about the different ways of working. Putting Diaconia and Badisa next to each other. Badisa brings good governance to the table. Very good systems and structures that work well. And the church on the other hand the church has a more fluid approach. For us to move forward and to truly establish partnerships and relationships that take us forward, relationships and the ability to establish partnerships and work together with others – there the church is more effective than Badisa. I think you can always polish, on your operational processes. You can always refine it but it's not what makes you strong, what makes you strong is your relationships. It's your ability to network, your ability to position yourself that way. But I also realize, if someone offers you five million and you can not say what you are going to do with those five million, how you are going to manage it, then you are not going to get it either. So you desperately need both. And I think that's what this process has taught me. These are the two elements of a successful organization being represented to by Diaconia and Badisa. And if you alienate one from the other, both losses out and are at risk.

But with more fluidity … you can get very far. I think the other thing I learned is that we are too clumsy. We need to be able to react faster in a world where situations quickly change.

You need to be smaller, able to make decisions faster, you need to be able to respond to new opportunities. And I think there was, as Little Seeds is set up now, and initially we were able to do it faster. But, with an organization like Badisa, where decisions take much longer, where the wheels turn more slowly, it is the one thing that holds us back.

And I know sometimes for your long-term processes or your big contracts, like if you do it with DSD or major role player, it's important to them - you really need to be able to prove that you have good governance. But, you need to be able to do both. Because what is it that makes the difference for us to move forward? Yes the money we get from DSD grounds us, but the money I get from an organization or from a business like ABAX, means you can do a little extra. And that sponsor came through relationships. It is through networking, opening myself up to many more opportunities. So I think Badisa and Diaconia are a perfect marriage. They just need to sort out their marital problems. They should go to a counselor more often. But I really think it's the best of both worlds for me.

NV Y That brings us to our next question. Who brings what to the table. What I hear you say is that Badisa brings, without a doubt, the good governing that is essential. And your experience is that Diaconia brings to the table, that which is non-negotiable, the ability to connect and form relationships. And you used the word openness, open to relationship in other words.

R2 Absolutely.

NV You have been part of the operational and strategic team for four years. Would you say these are the two big things that stand out? Anything else? Other unique contributions from Badisa and unique contributions from Diaconia?

R2 I would say, for me also the network that Badisa has in terms of social work programs also involved with ECD, even on a very small scale. But if we organize it well it's really something that can make a difference. Then also their community-based programs. I think this is something both the church and Badisa feels the same about. Especially when programmes then are run by volunteers – that is the perfect situation.

Diaconia brought many more volunteers. Congregants are nothing else than volunteers.

NV So before the merge, both had volunteers, but now we have even more?

R2 Both had it, but Diaconia made accessing them easier.

NV Okay so you say the merge helped with that? What I hear you saying is Badisa brought the programmes and Diaconia brought those willing to volunteer within programmes?

R2 Yes. To me, if I think Diaconia, I think bridge-builders, facilitators, taking hands, interpreting contexts. And that all comes back to relationships.

NV An absolute necessity.

R2 Yes, and a 100% understanding of both sides

NV Explain that please?

R2 Understanding how the organization works. If you think about how an organization Badisa must be run; and then you think of all the potential in the church. Understanding each other’s businesses well, will guarantee your success in combining these assets.

R2 To some extents they already worked integrated, even before the merge. Members meetings and committee already had representatives both ways. So, there was an extend of knowledge and understanding already. There is good reporting there are good systems in place. What we found in Little Seeds is that there are great value in working integrated and as a network. To see each other's value, the strength we discover in each other. We must explore that further. Even networking with others outside of the church and Badisa. The value of networking, and that our eyes are starting to open to each other, this is for me where the miracles lie. Also if congregants discover what difference their contribution can make by becoming involved in Badisa, Diaconia or Little Seeds. Their contribution have an unique fit somewhere.

Does this answer your question

NV Yes . I gather this is also how you see the way forward? That it should play out in networking and building that approach out?

R2 Yes

NV What do you think will be the biggest challenges on the way forward?

R2 The church is Little Seed’s biggest asset, and we need to put energy in unlocking the potential we see there. Then strengthening the relationship between church and organization. To demolish the silos. To start working together in local communities as well. Start learning from prototypes in local communities and drawing those lessons up. This is almost the most important thing for me because that is what will make the collaboration grow. We will have to raise awareness on this approach. It is a new culture of cooperation that we must establish. I think it is important to do an assessment of existing roles different service providers play in a community before anything else. I'm afraid if we do not spend enough time and enough energy, Little Seeds might even trample where they do more damage than good, given the local context.

NV So what I hear you say, is that our traditional way of working in silos has to change. That it requires a culture change and that the new culture should be one of effective networking?

R2 Yes, yes!

NV And you mentioned several times now, that this should start in local communities.

R2 Absolutely

NV So it is one thing to have Little Seeds, an operational team in Bellville, but success lies in what happens in communities and we need to hear that stories, that testimonies of communities working together and how they approach it, so that we can learn from it?

R2 This is the risk going forward, yes. We build ourselves up as a team in Bellville, with a brand and a logo and everything, but then we go and alienate ourselves again in the way we enter communities. We must work in such a way that Church and Badisa are always aware of each other.

NV You also said that building relationship with the local congregation should be Little Seed’s main strategy for entrance? And together with that collaboration is the strategy?

R2 Yes

NV But the church is a primary player in that strategy

R2 Yes and then I include the ecumenical church, I'm not just talking about the Dutch Reformed Church

NV Yes, it's good, it's important that you… say something about it

R2 Yes to me, the church is an incredibly important role player to organize in a community. Bringing people together. It continues to build that bridge to people in the community. You can not expect the churches to do everything that needs to be done, but you can use volunteers to strengthen your programs, to get the word out…

And I think that's where the fault lies, we always thought our congregations will spontaneously join all these initiatives, but they do not. It is something you have to work at. There are often only a few congregations that are geared and willing.

NV The church can create spaces, I hear you say, spaces for networks.

R2 Yes

NV And look after these networks and make them grow.

R2 Yes! Absolutely. The church is a fantastic maintainer if we talk about maintenance now. Because then it's almost like emotional maintenance. Programs with the best results are where congregations have remained involved by basically just giving love, support, help where they can. Not necessarily start like a new creche or something, but just help maintaining an existing service.

NV Do you see it as a challenge – to keep that awareness going – to understand the unique role of the Church.

R2 That's right

NV And not to fall back into a silo, where we alienate ourselves from our beginning establishment of our services.

R2 Absolutely

NV This is the point you make.

R2 Unique to the role an organization plays, yes. In the DNA of the church is something very unique.

NV Ja

R2 I do not know how to put it another way.

NV So what exactly are you saying?

R2 I want to rephrase by saying we are some of the programs that are less clumsy and less slow. Because we have the direct representation of both groups.

NV From Badisa and Diaconia?

R2 Yes, we learn how to do the right things and make the processes move a little faster

NV You have also made this point before

R2 Yes, because what if I get a big sponsorship and we cannot move quickly We need to be set up to handle something unexpected like this.

NV So what would make a system clumsy?

R2 Clumsy? Slow decision making, and strategically not clear in our operations.

What we do not consider is how to be more integrated and break down the silos.

And realize the value of each role player

And what we need to do for everyone to work together, and more….

Sorry my words are limited today…but to unlock each opportunity coming our way.

NV So you say there are opportunities but we need to be ready and able to unlock it.

R2 Absolutely

NV And we will be better able to do that if we use the strengths of both parties integrated?

R2 Yes

NV We can go to communities unified.

R2 Yes. And for too long we shied away from each other. Worked together with the misplaced assumption that we were critical of each other – watching each other. What do you expect of me? What am I doing wrong? And then slowly but surely, we started to notice each other and each other’s strengths. Started to reach out in our own time

NV Thank you for your valuable contribution.