

“CHPD’s experience of working in varied sectors and parts of the world gave them a cultural sensitivity that meant they worked well with our participants.”

**Tracy Gill - Parker**

Global Talent Management Diversity and Inclusion Manager for Plan

CHPD case studies



## Plan unlocks its potential

The challenge for this development agency was to find a talent management solution that would provide all staff with the opportunity to demonstrate their potential and progress their career aspirations.

## The challenge

Like many companies today, Plan wanted to build a talent pipeline for their senior leadership roles across their organisation.

Tracy Gill – Parker, Global Talent Management Diversity and Inclusion Manager for Plan, explains: “Country director is one of our most critical roles and it has changed significantly over the last ten years. At one stage this role was occupied by someone with a strong programmatic background, a technical expertise, who was extremely dedicated and with real hands-on experience in the field. Over the years, this role has changed. It now needs a wider skill set, including strategic planning, coaching and developing a team, building strategic alliances and representing Plan at national and international forums.

“There was an immediate need for us to find innovative and better ways to identify talent both within and outside of Plan. It was not enough for us to keep on doing the same kind of internal recruitment that we have done in the past. We needed to build a database of potential external candidates, to supplement what have historically been internal appointments.”

## The solution

Plan appointed the Centre *for* High Performance Development (CHPD), a global expert in leadership development, to identify candidates for country director and deputy country director roles.

“We approached CHPD for two reasons:

The first reason was their research base. They were able to provide us with data and explain the research behind their high performance behaviours. That was a big seller for me, as I knew that our organisation would be looking for this level of credibility.

Second, they offered us flexibility. They listened and wanted to deliver what we needed. I didn’t feel as though we were taking a product and being made to fit it,” explains Gill-Parker.

The first step for CHPD was to work with Plan country directors and the senior leadership group to identify the behaviours most important for these roles. These behaviours were then mapped against CHPD’s framework of high performance leadership behaviours. This proved a critical step in securing the confidence of senior management.

“Demand is for transparency, consistency and equal treatment of all applicants in selection of posts. Country director role is one that many of our people aspire to”, states Gill- Parker.

A talent centre was then designed to reflect the demands of the role. Candidates participated in a series of exercises designed to measure performance in the behaviours of strategic thinking, organisational and people development, inspirational leadership and achievement. All exercises were designed to predict future performance in role.

The one-day talent centre was then followed by a review forum attended by Plan’s regional directors and leadership team. With consultancy from CHPD, Plan looked at the candidates and jointly agreed who the top candidates were. For Gill-Parker, this follow-up

day was critical. She explains: “We had consensus and made a commitment as an organisation that these were the people that we were going to invest available resources in, to ensure a pipeline for the country director role.”

She continues: “Feedback about the talent centres has been very positive. People have valued the interest that the organisation is making in them. It has reinforced the message that we consider them strong performers in their current roles.”

The outcomes and data from the talent centres are now being used as a part of Plan’s learning and development and talent management programme.

“We launched a number of things at the same time that complement the talent centres. We have developed our own e-learning programme based on Harvard modules. We are also developing coaching and mentoring for those identified as high potentials for future country director roles.”

## The future

The CHPD talent centres are providing Plan with a long-term approach to talent management within their organisation.

Gill-Parkers explains: “One of our strategic goals is to know that we have a succession plan for every critical role that falls into the ready now, ready in one year, ready in two, the next three to five.

“We have functional leadership in finance and HR who meet to have honest discussions about our future leaders. These conversations are based on a common understanding about what behaviours a person is demonstrating that means they are ready. Through development forums we are all talking about people and making joint decisions.”

This common language and criteria for assessment is one of the critical outcomes of the CHPD talent centres.

And finally, Plan is implementing a talent management programme that is aligned to its values as an organisation.

“Talent management is a tool for our diversity and inclusion programme. It means that we can be quite focused about building the number of women in senior management roles as well as the number of people from developing countries that are in the most senior roles within our organisation. We want an employee profile that mirrors the profile of the countries that we work with”, concludes Gill - Parker.

## Further information

To speak to one of our consultants about talent management or any other of our leadership solutions, please contact us at [info@chpd.com](mailto:info@chpd.com) or 020 7940 5120.