Golden Circle by Simon Sinek

Simon Sinek has developed a methodology to find the soul (the purpose, the why) of an organisation and link innovation to it. Successful organisations are driven by three questions that make up the Golden circle:

1. the WHY or the core question.
2. the HOW
3. the WHAT

The WHY is about what an organisation believes in. Therefore, inspired and influential organisations communicate from the inside out rather than outside in.

The story I want to share

Innovation for the sake of innovation alone is doomed to fail. Innovation needs an intrinsic driving force – as do each one of us – to drive millions of people and organisations every day.

In the humanitarian field, the why is the somewhat demoralising fact that humanity won’t meet the humanitarian challenges with traditional means.

Thanks to our strong roots in the Swiss public and civic society, we can utilise a large network to initiate and support cross-sector cooperation and collaboration.

We launched an innovation fund to support the Swiss NGOs to develop innovation within their projects; it contributes to identifying and implementing innovative solutions, to encouraging cooperation and knowledge-sharing.

The Innovation Fund currently finances 7 innovative projects. For 2020 we have doubled our financial support to CHF 1 million per year and our aim is to create a Swiss coalition for humanitarian innovation.

Lessons learnt

- Start with ‘why’
- Identify needs via bottom up approach and focus on them and not politics
- Look and pursue win-win-win-situations in tangible pilot projects
- Let people fail and learn quickly but be even quicker in telling and scaling up success stories
- Help the ‘children’ of innovation to walk but then let them unfold their full potential and don’t hold them back