

4. The Collaboration Process

The collaboration process occurred in the project management structure although we are talking about a client-provider kind of relationship. Collaboration with DMR to write the project management handbook created rules that guided relationships between the partners.

The involvement of DMR in the redefinition of the cadastre reengineering project as a consultant in 1985 and 1989 played a role in the collaboration process. The first study contained the roots of the project later implemented, and the second one included its organizational aspects. The partners knew each other and shared the same understanding of the cadastre reengineering program objectives.

There was a similarity in the way the two partners, DMR and MNR, worked as they used the same project management handbooks(13). They spoke the same language, graduated from the same universities, most of them had an IT background and some of them were colleagues before. They reacted to problems the same way. For example, in some situations, they did not hesitate to hire consultants to fill the gaps of their respective weaknesses.

Internally, everything was well organized: the planning, monitoring, contracts management, quality control, schedules, but it does not mean that the collaboration process did not encounter difficulties in the implementation of the contract. The integrator was responsible for delivering the results and tensions became very high, almost unfathomable, especially during the testing periods when the systems showed operation problems.

There were other tensions and divergence of opinions when modification requests did not receive the approval of DMR or MNR. The main source of conflict came from the discussions about the implementation of the contract.

Although the work of the DMR team was made in parallel to the activities of the Ministry, the two teams shared the same working space. This physical proximity made the collaboration easier but also amplified the conflicts. The deliverables periods created an atmosphere of tension. However, as soon as the deliverables were approved, there was improvement in the relations between MNR and DMR, and a trust relationship was established. Success led to a feeling of mutual respect and satisfaction.

For example, at the beginning of the contract, an understanding took place between the DMR manager and the MNR manager responsible for the billing. The rules were clear, they shared the same rigor, they disseminated the same information. When the DMR encountered financial difficulties, a collaboration spirit emerged. The MNR realized the importance of the resources provided by its provider and offered a mode of payment that was taking into account not only the deliverables but also the investments that were made. As a matter of fact, the risk of penalties created an incentive to respect the schedules.

In the long term, the intensive work performed by the two teams developed a mutual understanding, a spirit of collaboration, and the sharing of a common vision. Differences between public and private sectors disappeared in front of the common objective to reach. There was even mobility of staff between the two organizations.

(13) Especially DMR Productivity Handbook adopted by the MNR. Mentioned in the Call for Proposal.