

*Assessment of
Save the Children Sweden's
support to organisational
capacity development
of partner organisations*

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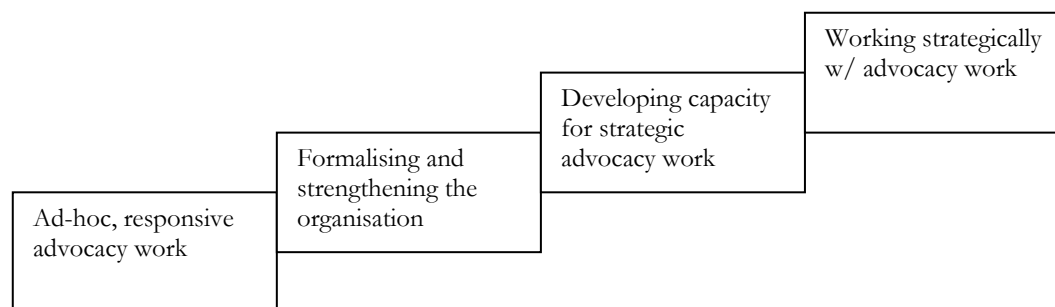
I Executive Summary

1.1 Overall conclusions on SCS's support to organisational capacity development

The present approach

This study has revealed that the support to organisational capacity development (OCD) provided by Save the Children Sweden's (SCS) regional and country offices has mainly focused on providing support to child rights programming and supporting networking. To a much lesser extent the partner organisations are regularly supported in their internal functioning. The latter type of support is almost only provided in deeper organisational development (OD) projects with a few partner organisations. There is a wide gap between the standard support and the OD projects.

SCS strives for supporting partner organisations to become independent, sustainable and competent actors to advocate for children's rights in a changing climate. A process of how an organisation can mature into a competent advocacy organisation for children's rights can be illustrated by the following graph.



In the initial step the organisation is reacting to various violations of children's rights and are doing some advocacy work spontaneously, but not in a planned, strategic manner. To move from the first step of working to the fourth, where it works co-ordinated and strategically with influencing the environment, the organisation needs to move through the two middle steps.

The second step symbolises the dimensions of “to be” and “to relate”. To be a competent and credible advocacy actor basic structures and systems needs to be in place. Important questions to discuss are: How is the organisation set up? Does it have appropriate statutes and is it registered in a suitable way? Does it have basic systems in place for financial management, human resources and operational management? Does it have an internal governance system that is honoured? How does the organisation relate to its constituency and is made accountable to it? Is it considered legitimate to speak on behalf of children? How transparent is the leadership? Has it joined forces with others to have a greater outreach and more strengths and credibility?

The third step relates mainly to the skills of the organisation for “doing the job”, i.e. the advocacy work. Does it know the subject well enough? Is it using available research in a good way? Does it know the skills of how to do the advocacy job? How are lobby issues identified? Does the organisation base its work on facts on the ground? Is it part of strategic networks and participates in joint actions?

The general support from the regional and country offices has mainly been to offer training focused on the third box. In the second box mainly training in financial management (and particularly in how to relate to SCS) has been provided as part of the standard type of support. If resources have been available the offices have responded to some requests from the organisations for ad hoc organisational support, but not in a systematic manner.

A general awareness is prevalent among the offices that more support is needed in the second step if the partners shall be able to make effective use of the child rights programming skills. The extensive OD programmes of a few offices have focused on the second step but these programmes are considered so heavy that it is not possible to provide this type of support to all partners.

The main conclusion is thus that a systematic, less comprehensive support compared to the OD programmes, but a broader support than the present child rights programming is needed to *all* partner organisations, i.e. a basic support of how to function as a rights based organisation. Such support needs to a greater extent to be based on the organisations' needs.

As the general support has been mainly supply driven, needs assessments of partner organisations is found to be a weak area. Since needs assessments have mainly been done informally the whole following process of documentation, formalising agreements, providing and monitoring support and follow-up and documenting results is likewise informal and not done in a systematic way. There is a need to develop common methods, tools and systems for this project cycle management.

Selection on partners

SCS is going through a process of reducing the numbers of partners. This is in line with the ambition of being able to support each partner organisation in a more holistic way as this will require more time and capacity per organisation. There is some confusion regarding the terminology of partners which needs to be sorted out. Some are called "strategic", while others can be equally strategic but are more limited, one-issue organisations. To have selection criteria for partner organisations would help clarifying this. Any organisation that is selected according to the criteria would be a long term partner that SCS needs to support in a comprehensive manner.

The role and contributions of SCS

The assessment has shown that there are differences among the offices whether they consider themselves mainly as partners to the organisations or as donors and that this has implications for the approach chosen for support.

SCS is of course both a donor and a partner. The power of money will always influence organisations' interests and willingness to participate in various programmes, which can never be completely avoided. However, SCS as a child rights organisation in the Swedish civil society has more to contribute with as a partner to organisations with similar objectives, than only as a donor providing financial support. The added value that SCS can bring into a relationship based on its own identity and experiences in comparison with other international civil society organisations is a resource that should be captured and made use of in the support to the organisations. This is better done with a partnership approach than in a more limited donor relation.

It appears that it is left to each office to decide on its role and contributions, with limited guidance from the head office. It would be healthy if the head office takes a firmer position in the donor/partner discussion.

The role of the head office

Since 2002 organisational development of partner organisations has been one of SCS's priority areas. It is clear from this study that the head office has not yet given enough attention to this area of work, considering that common approaches, tools and systems are still missing. The project "Strengthening partner organisations through organisational capacity development", of which this study is the first component, is thus a much needed initiative to assume the responsibility for leading the process of developing a systematic approach with common methods and tools to support organisational capacity development of partner organisations.¹

Apart from leading this development process the head office also needs to become more of a resource centre for the regional and country offices. It needs to provide planned programmes and internships

¹ Find the Project Plan in Annex 1.

for capacity development of field staff, particularly the focal points, and to support the staff with advice and guidance. Sharing of experiences between the offices also appears weak. A role for the head office is thus to collect, analyse and share good practices among the offices. Finally the head office needs to assume its responsibility of monitoring and analysing SCS's support to organisations in order to be able to draw conclusions on more aggregated levels of how the civil societies have been strengthened and the situation of children improved.

1.2 Recommendations for improvements

Throughout this report recommendations will be given in the contexts where the findings are discussed. In this chapter the main recommendations are summarised. It is recommended that:

1. A common definition of organisational capacity development of partner organisations is developed.
2. SCS clarifies its position on the rationale for working with or through different categories of partners. If there are valid reasons for working with some partners on a short term basis or with less intensity this should be made clear so that the type and extent of support to this group could easier be elaborated.
3. Common criteria for selecting long term partner organisations should be developed.
4. The experiences brought forward from supporting organisations with a rights based approach should be further studied, with the aim of identifying common practices that can be multiplied.
5. A decision needs to be taken by the head office that the needs of all partner organisations should be analysed and used as a basis for planned change. The process for organisational needs assessment should be formalised. The following is needed:
 - For a basic compulsory level, a common check-list and a simple manual should be developed, building on the examples available. The basic assessment should be done by the programme officer. The level of ambition needs to be set realistically so it can be handled by the offices.
 - The status of the Octagon+ needs to be clarified, whether and how it should be used. If decided to keep it as a tool, training in using it is needed for programme officers and OCD focal points.
 - For a deeper situational analysis the Octagon+ (if decided) can be used in workshops facilitated by SCS staff. Another alternative is that the partner organisations are supported to do self assessments, using a tool that needs to be developed for this purpose drawing on the experiences from OD assessments. The findings of self assessments should be validated in discussions with an organisational development expert.
 - The idea of developing a leadership programme for the heads of organisations where needs assessments of their own organisations are a part of the programme, coached by programme staff should be further explored.
 - External consultants, if available, could be used if deeper organisational analysis is required.
 - To document the needs assessment one assessment report per organisation should be prepared and shared with the partner organisation. A standard format for this should be

developed using the OD assessment reports that some offices have developed for guidance.

6. Based on the needs assessment the organisation should be requested to develop an action plan as its response to it. This should form the basis for the future support. If the organisation is more mature its strategic plan should be used as the basis for SCS's support. If SCS wants to move towards a more holistic support to a partner organisation, core funding based on a strategic plan is a recommended direction to take. It is recommended that identified and agreed organisational capacity development activities are included in the organisation's next project document and agreement.
7. The "standard package of support" should be broadened from trainings to include individualised organisational specific activities and be extended to all partners as part of a long term relation. Training in isolation from a plan for change and planned follow-up activities should not be provided.
8. The organisational support to the partners should be included in SCS's regular planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) system, i.e in annual regional plans and reports so that follow-up and analysis is made possible at head office level.
9. SCS should develop a format for a PME system per organisation for the country offices. Such system needs to contain a situational analysis and the documented needs, an action plan/project plan/strategic plan for the planned change with expected results and indicators, the organisation's annual reports indicating changes within the organisation and progress towards the plan, and finally the analysed results in improved organisational performance documented by the programme officer. The Global Impact Monitoring (GIM) method should be assessed if this is an appropriate tool to introduce to the other offices for measuring impact of the organisations' work.
10. A common job description for focal points should be developed and a common programme for their capacity development organised by the head office.
11. A decision should be taken by the head office on what perspective to apply on the role of SCS as a donor or partner and if a partnership approach should be applied more consistently.
12. The experiences from exit strategies should be analysed by the head office and shared with all offices.
13. The role and responsibility of the head office as a source of references and good practices and training provider for internal capacity for organisational capacity development for the field offices should be further strengthened.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background to the project

Save the Children Sweden (SCS) primarily works in other countries by supporting the work of national NGOs for children's rights. In addition to direct operations with children, many of these organisations have assumed growing roles as observers, advocates and creative engines for children's rights in relation to governments. The basic conditions for organisations to be able to fulfil this part vary depending on the political, economical and social situation in each country, and depending on the size, coverage, focus and level of professionalism of the respective organisation.

SCS has for many years supported capacity building of partner organisations. However, the support has focused mainly on individuals within the organisations, rather than the functioning of the organisation itself. This approach has been successful in developing programme skills in many organisations, but less successful in supporting organisations to become independent, sustainable and competent to advocate for children's rights in a changing environment.

Since 2002, SCS has therefore identified organisational development of partner organisations as one of its prioritised areas of work in Priority Area number 5 ("Strengthening partner organisations and contributing to a global child rights movement"). For the planning period 2005-2008, the specific aim is to support civil society to become a social force for children, through capacity building of partner organisations, advocacy for a beneficial climate for child rights organisations to work in, and systematic cooperation between organisations at national, regional and global levels.

As part of Priority Area 5, a project has been initiated aiming at a more strategic approach to organisational capacity development of our partner organisations. The project is a continuation of the discussions and the list of priorities developed by the civil society group in the Dakar workshop in June 2006.² A reference group with representatives from Head Office and regional offices, including the Swedish programme, is guiding the work of the project. Sofia Pehrsson at the Section for Knowledge Management and Development is the project co-ordinator and she is supported by an external consultant, Cecilia Karlstedt. The project will address capacity building specifically and intends to strengthen Save the Children Sweden's approaches and systems for supporting organisational capacity development of partner organisations. The project plan is attached in Annex 1.

The overall objectives for the project are:

1. At the end of the project, Save the Children Sweden shall have a common understanding of organisational capacity development of partner organisations and have introduced an appropriate strategy, tools and routines for use in the regional and country offices. Save the Children Sweden shall be able to evaluate impact of its support on, at least, an organisational level.
2. At the end of the project, all programme staff at Save the Children Sweden's regional and country offices will be able (in a participatory process together with the partner organisation) to:
 - (i) analyse and document the partner organisation's basic development needs from a rights based approach;
 - (ii) develop a plan for basic organisational capacity development, indicating internal (Save the Children Sweden) and external (consultants) resources needed;
 - (iii) support the organisation in the implementation of the plan;
 - (iv) monitor and evaluate changes in the organisation's development.

² Global Workshop on Good Governance and Civil Society, Senegal 27-30 June 2006

2.2 The purpose of the study

The starting point for the project is to undertake an assessment of practises and experiences in SCS's regional and country offices from building organisational capacity in partner organisations.

The purpose of the study is to document and assess Save the Children Sweden's experiences from building organisational capacity of partner organisations with the intention to learn from experiences, share good practices within the organisation and provide recommendations for how to improve Save the Children Sweden's strategies and approaches.

2.3 Method

The study was mainly carried out through semi-structured telephone interviews with focal points at SCS's regional and country offices. A questionnaire was developed based on the findings from the Dakar workshop and the theoretical discussion papers developed in 2005³. Particularly the model of three circles for understanding organisations was found useful, see Annex 3.

The questionnaire was tested in an interview with staff from the Europe region and revised by the reference group before being finalised. It was thereafter shared with all offices. A contact person, often the focal point for organisational development, was appointed in each office. He or she was requested to, based on the questionnaire, conduct internal discussions with relevant colleagues (manager, programme staff, possibly administrative staff) before the telephone interview to be able to answer on behalf of the whole office.

The interviews were conducted by the project co-ordinator with 18 focal points during the time period 26 February-27 March, 2007. Each interview lasted for approximately one hour. In Annex 4, a list of interviewed persons is found. The data from the interviews was compiled and analysed by the external consultant. The findings are presented in this report. Often findings are given as percentages, meaning the percentage of the 18 offices replying in a certain way.

As part of the data collection process three field visits were undertaken. The intention of the visits was to make the assessment further inclusive and to gain deeper understanding of some approaches used. The project co-ordinator, Sofia Pehrsson, visited the country offices of Northern Sudan and Ethiopia during March 11–16, 2007 and Eva Geidenmark, Senior Advisor at the Section for Knowledge Management and Development, visited the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean on February 20, 2007. Both conducted their respective interviews based on the questionnaire during the visits, in addition to conducting other discussions with the staff. These offices were selected for visits based on different reasons. Northern Sudan and Ethiopia had shown great interest in developing programmes to strengthen their partners. While Ethiopia is already implementing such an organisational development programme, Northern Sudan is just about to initiate one. The Latin American Regional Office is interesting as it has a different structure from most regional offices with no country offices and in that it has long experiences from supporting partners in strategic planning. It has also gone through a process of drastically reducing the numbers of partner organisations. Also practical reasons influenced the choice of destination for field visits. The findings from the field visits are compiled by Sofia Pehrsson and Eva Geidenmark and included in chapter 5.

Based on the findings from the interviews and the field visits conclusions were drawn and recommendations for improvements given.

³ *Towards a common understanding – Partner or partnership?, Towards a common understanding – Capacity-building, Towards a common understanding – Organisational development*, Carin Åström, 7 March 2005.

2.4 Definitions and limitations

Organisational development project or programmes (OD) have been implemented in some of the offices. Therefore the concept of “organisational development” has in many offices already gained the meaning of an extensive, deep and long term process using external consultants to improve the structure and functioning of an organisation. It was therefore decided to use the terminology “*organisational capacity development*” for the study not to get stuck in the more technical dimension of how to do capacity building and to keep the scope for discussion broader.

It was decided that the focus shall be on organisations, not on capacity building of individuals or on a more societal level.

Only support to civil society organisations is included in the study, meaning that the partner organisations that are included are not part of government structures.

It was further decided that networks and child and youth led organisations should not be included in this project as these entities have different needs from adult led organisation and most likely demand different approaches to organisational strengthening. A parallel work is being done in developing approaches for supporting networks and child and youth led organisations.

3 Description of portfolios of partner organisations

The number of partner organisations varies between the offices. The following table illustrates the number of partners per country and regional office:

Country Offices:	Approx. no. of partner organisations included in the assessment ⁴	No. of organisations involved in more extensive OD support
Less than 10:		
Vietnam	3	
Côte d'Ivoire	4	
Jerusalem (OPT)	5	
The Philippines	7	
Pakistan	8	
Afghanistan	8	
Northern Sudan	9	
11-20:		
Lebanon	11	5
Ethiopia	18	5
More than 20:		
Yemen	20+	
Bangladesh	22	
Southern Sudan*	217	
Sweden **	230	50
Regional offices***:		
Europe (8 countries)	10	2
West Africa (14 countries)	40	
Southern Africa (8 countries)	15-20	5
South East Asia and Pacific (9 countries)	30	3
Latin America (20 countries)	50-60	

* Community Support Groups

** Local branches

*** Approximate number of countries. East and Central Africa, Middle East and North Africa and South and Central Asia did not take part in the assessment at a regional level.

As shown, the majority of the offices, both country and regional offices, have a limited number of partners per country.

Sweden and Southern Sudan are two separate cases from the other country offices. In Sweden support is given to local Save the Children Sweden branches. There are 230 such branches of which 50 have been involved in a specific organisational support. In Southern Sudan the civil society is extremely weak and there are very few existing civil society organisations. The focus is therefore on strengthening informal community support groups in three states. There are more than 200 such groups, but according to a recent strategy the office will in the future concentrate on ten groups in each state. In both these cases the focus is more on supporting local mobilisation rather than working with partner organisations. Apart from these two countries, only three other countries stick out with a larger portfolio of partners than the rest.

⁴ The composition of the civil society varies in different societies. As stated in section 2.4 the intention was to *not* include networks, semi-government organisations or child led organisations. As definitions are always tricky to apply there still might be some boarder line cases included in the numbers given.

It can also be seen that one third of the offices give more extensive organisational development support to a limited group of organisations that due to different reasons have been singled out from the rest.

4 Findings from interviews

4.1 Common understanding of organisational support

When asked what the offices include in their understanding of the concept of providing organisational support to partner organisations it reveals that there are some differences in the interpretation. One group, about one third of the offices, uses a holistic approach and considers everything that makes the organisation more capable to function in the field where it operates as organisational support. This includes strengthening its skills and methods in thematic issues (“to do”), developing the organisation’s basic systems and structures (“to be”) and promoting its links to other important actors (“to relate”).

Another third of the respondents mention support to the organisations’ skills in programmatic issues (“to do”) and strengthening the internal systems (“to be”) as organisational support, without reflecting on the relational aspects.

The last group considers mainly support in one of the three dimensions, and most commonly in the “to be” category, as organisational support. In some cases the interpretation also appears to vary among the programme officers within the same office.

Conclusions and Recommendations

There is a need to develop and apply a common definition of organisational capacity development of partner organisations.

4.2 Methods used by the offices

All of the interviewed offices have provided support to organisational capacity development beyond providing financial support for programme activities.

The offices were asked to mention which methods they use to support their partners. Some examples were given in the question as guidance. The most commonly mentioned methods were:

Type of support	Mentioned by % of offices
1. Advisory support for programme work	100%
2. Thematic trainings	100%
3. Methodological trainings	88%
4. Dialogue with the partner on its strengths and weaknesses	88%
5. Financial support for programme work	77%
6. Support to participation in networks	70%
7. Administrative trainings	66%

The main focus is thus in the area of “to do”, where four of the most commonly mentioned methods fall. The methods that fall in the areas of “to be” and “to relate” are less commonly mentioned. This could of course depend on that some offices did not think of stating such methods, even if they use them. However the findings point towards that organisational capacity building is mainly given as programmatic support.

Looking more specifically at support aimed at strengthening the functioning of the organisations (“to be”) the answers are divided as follows:

Type of support	Mentioned by % of offices
1. Dialogue with partners on strengths and weaknesses	88%
2. Administrative trainings	66%
3. Advisory support in organisational development	44%
4. OD related trainings	38%
5. Support for needs analysis	38%
6. Support to leadership development	38%
7. Consultancies for OD	17%

To have a continuous dialogue between the programme officers and the organisations and to conduct administrative workshops stand out as the main methods stated for supporting the functioning of the organisations.

Only about 40% of the offices mention that they have supported more specific activities aimed at strengthening the functioning of the organisations per se. There is thus a wide gap between the rather limited support to the functioning of the partner organisations of the majority and the deep OD programmes of a few offices.

Looking at the third area - the organisations’ abilities to relate with other actors - most of the offices highlight the importance of both informal and formal networking and declare that they promote linkages between organisations (83%). 66% of the offices respond that they are supporting their partners to participate in various local and international networks (66%). 39% of the offices also mention that they have facilitated exchange visits. Other methods mentioned are supporting the organisations to participate in various meetings (29%) and to facilitate donor contacts (12%).

Conclusions and Recommendations

The partner organisations have different needs for support to their functioning as child right organisations, depending on the maturity of each organisation and what support is received from other actors. It is recommended that SCS analyses the needs of the partner organisations in this sense and broadens its “standard package of support” from trainings to also include more organisational specific activities.

4.3 Approaches

In this section the approaches used by the offices are studied more closely according to various dimensions.

Mainstreamed support

Most of the offices (78%) invite all their partners to participate in the courses they offer. This could be labelled as a basic support that they provide to all SCS partners. It normally comprises of a series of workshops on the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC), how to work with Child Rights Programming, other thematic trainings on issues such as child protection, HIV/Aids and gender, and training in financial management.

Additional support

In addition to the basic support offered to all, almost all of the offices (95%) offer some *additional* individualised support to some of their partners. This additional support can be categorised in two groups:

1. Half of the offices have indicated that they have taken an active decision to provide more comprehensive organisational support to some partners. The terminology for this group varies. They are called “key partners”, “strategic partners”, “core partners”, “stronger organisations”, or are other Save the Children organisations. Quite often this support has taken the form of the separate, more extensive organisational development programmes.
2. Additional support is also given to the rest of the partners by most of the offices (70%). This however appears to be more ad hoc, responsive to requests from the organisations and dependent on if resources are available in the office. The impression is that this has lower priority than the mainstreamed basic support and the OD support outlined above.

Supply or needs based?

All of the offices plan and provide organisational capacity building activities based on the priority areas of SCS with child rights as the base and in combination with the skills they have in the office. In that sense it is “supply driven” and a somewhat “missionary approach”. One office comments and says *“we facilitate and manipulate in a good way, as we know the direction we want the partner to take. They also know our interests and ask for support accordingly.”*

Whether this is good or bad could be discussed. SCS has its objectives to achieve by working through and with its partner organisations. Thus, the selection of partners is a crucial aspect. SCS searches ideally for partners that are operating with similar visions and objectives and that have a certain level of capacity already for doing the job. Hence, with a good selection it is quite logical that the bulk work is to strengthen the skills and knowledge for the advocacy job of the organisations. One can argue that SCS’s contribution in a relation based on a shared vision and identity is to contribute with skills and experiences from how to work efficiently with child rights and child right programming. If proper selection has not been done and there is a big discrepancy between the objectives of SCS and the partner organisations, this approach becomes less appropriate as it might impose a certain direction on the organisation.

A lot of skills training have been provided by SCS in child rights programming. Maybe it has been assumed that sufficient and functional organisational structures and systems were already in place in the organisations and that they had the capacity to make use of the skills provided, without this being checked or discussed? Then only later does one realise that some organisations lack sufficient organisational capacity to use the skills received effectively to make a change. Hence, it is important to ensure that the support provided enables the organisations to be active and competent advocacy organisations for children’s rights and does not stop with providing advocacy tools and knowledge. It is thus equally important to consider the needs of the partner organisations. Only 40% of the offices indicate that they also plan the organisational capacity building work according to such needs of the partners. Again this is differentiated between the so called “strategic partners” and the rest. Some offices comment that they *would like to* be able to plan and work more individually and needs based and is either moving in that direction or are due to financial constraints are not able to do it yet.

Individual or institutional capacity building?

Four out of five offices reply that they try to have an institutional focus on the support they offer. Clearly there is a movement in the direction towards having an institutional focus and leaving the individual approach behind. The offices can be grouped in three categories:

1. Those that have taken an institutional focus and are trying to base training offered on the organisations’ needs, ensure organisational commitment prior to training, ensure that the appropriate persons are coming for training, otherwise taking action and making sure that groups are trained rather than single individuals from each organisation.

2. Those that see the importance of having an institutional focus but do not consequently apply it yet. Half of the offices still regard their support as mainly focused on building the skills of individuals in the partner organisations, even if many of them also replied that they have an institutional focus.
3. Those that are still using the individual approach where open invitations are sent, individuals are trained, and SCS *hopes* that the persons trained will spread the skills and knowledge further in his or her organisations, but this is not followed up. There seems however to be some doubt among the offices whether this trickle down approach is working efficiently.

Links between strengthening the organisations from a rights perspective and organisational capacity building

Strengthening an organisation to work more strategically towards its objectives can be done with different starting points:

1. To look at the functioning of the entire organisation and to strengthen the basic structures and systems it needs to be a capable and credible actor; e.g. the internal governance system including the functioning of the board of directors and its relation to the executive function, the strategic and operative planning systems, the financial management and financial strategies, the human resources management, the operative systems for implementation, follow-up and reporting, the internal systems for organisational learning.
2. To look at the specific skills and knowledge needed for the organisation's areas of operation and strengthen its capacity to do the job; e.g. advocacy skills and methods, methods for delivery of the social services it works with, increase subject knowledge in crucial aspects, planning, implementation and monitoring systems for its operations only.
3. To look at the organisation from a rights based perspective and strengthen its structures, systems and methods with the specific purpose of functioning as a rights based organisation; e.g. how the organisation gains its legitimacy by relating with and representing the rights holders, methods used for basing advocacy work on facts from the ground, the values it stands for, the transparency of the leadership or how the organisation creates accountability towards its constituency.

The offices were asked about to what extent their work with child rights programming (as the selected Save the Children working method within the second approach above) also included a wider perspective to strengthen the partner organisations as rights based organisations (as in the third approach). 72% of the offices replied that they try to link activities of increasing awareness of child rights and child rights programming to some other efforts of strengthening the organisations as rights based organisations, but do not do this systematically and consistently. 44% of the offices tend to regard the work with child rights programming as a separate work from the strengthening of the organisations.

From the comments given the integration of child rights programming into organisational development seems to take place in the specific OD programmes. In the basic support, principles like accountability, participation and non-discrimination might be included in the trainings and informally in the dialogue.

The offices were also asked if they could provide some examples of how they had supported organisational development processes from a rights based perspective. Slightly more than half of the offices felt they did not have any such experiences, which contradicts the more positive reply above. As these questions were found difficult to answer to it could be an indication that the understanding of what it means to strengthen an organisation using a rights based approach is not completely clear.

The following practical experiences from using a rights based approach were brought forward:

Tools developed

The Europe region has together with its partners developed a list of characteristics of a good child rights organisation which could be used for organisational needs assessment applying a rights based perspective.

The West Africa region has developed OD plans where programme work and OD work are linked with a rights perspective.

The Swedish regional office has developed a training package called “The Meeting for the Future” (Framtidsmötet) which applies the rights based perspective when facilitating members of a local Save the Children Sweden branch to design their own work organisation to be able to work rights based to promote a change for the children in the local municipality.

The SEAP region together with an interagency group has developed a set of minimum standards for involving children in formal consultations. The process of developing and applying these standards promoted competence development of management and staff in the partner organisations in how they involve children, being one dimension of working rights based.

Approaches

Pakistan has found it useful to introduce the rights based perspective in relation to the programme work first. When partners feel comfortable and understand it well, discussions on organisational consequences of applying a rights based approach will follow.

Ethiopia has implemented an OD programme applying the principles of a rights based approach on the programme design and in the expected development processes of the partner organisations.

Conclusions and recommendations

Selection of partners is the starting point for being able to work in a long term relation with shared objectives. It is recommended that SCS develops common criteria for selecting long term partner organisations.

SCS is recommended to clarify its position on the rational and need for working with or through different categories of partners. The term “strategic partners” seems to be used on more broad-based child rights organisations that resemble Save the Children. Other partners with a more narrow focus can for different reasons be equally strategic to work with, but are not called strategic. The terminology thus becomes confusing. If there are valid reasons for working with some partners on a short term basis or with less intensity this should be made clear so that the type and extent of support to this group could easier be elaborated.

There seems to be a tendency to focus on fewer and more long-term partners. With such focus it is natural to move from a supply driven approach to a more needs based approach. If all partners share common objectives as well as some common needs a certain degree of standardisation is still possible. If they don't, the danger of imposing programmes is great with the supply approach.

There appears to be a wide gap between providing programming support (approach 2 above) complemented with some ad hoc support to the organisational structures and systems and the extensive OD programmes, some with a rights based perspective. There is scope for basic support for organisational development which could be extended to all partners as part of a long term relation.

There seems to be a common understanding among most offices that the focus on building capacity of individuals in organisations is not sustainable or an effective strategy for strengthening the organisational capacity. Training in isolation from an organisational commitment and plan for change does not lead to great results. It is recommended that this approach is left behind.

It is recommended that the internal project further studies the experiences brought forward through the assessment of supporting organisations with a rights based approach, with the aim of identifying common practices that can be multiplied.

4.4 Needs assessment

Methods

The most commonly used method for identifying needs for organisational support is through the informal dialogues (78%) that take place between programme offices and the organisations continuously and during the monitoring visits. It is therefore difficult to separate the informal, continuous dialogue from specific activities aimed at undertaking organisational assessments. Two thirds of the offices reply that they do some kind of organisational assessments of partners' needs, but this is done mainly informally, either jointly with the partners or by themselves. To a very limited extent (17%) the needs assessment are more formally organised exercises, e.g. three offices have used external consultants for facilitating organisational needs assessments of the partners.

Other methods that some offices mention for identifying organisational needs are through the regular trainings and workshops, through project proposals and reports, through explicit requests from the organisations, through evaluations and investigations and through audits.

Tools

Even if the needs assessment is mainly done informally two thirds of the offices have tried to use different tools for organisational needs assessment with some partners. In most cases this appears not to have been done systematically.

SCS's head office has modified the Octagon model and called it the Octagon + children's rights (Octagon+) and distributed it to the regional and country offices. Six offices have tried it. Two offices have used the SWOT analysis (looking at internal factors strengths and weaknesses and external factors opportunities and threats) for needs assessments. Another four other offices have developed their own tools; a partner control check list, two further modifications and developments of the Octagon+ and a child rights programming tool presently being developed in the South East Asia and Pacific Region.

The use of the Octagon+ has not completely landed in the organisation. On the positive side the offices comment that they have found it to be a good and useful tool to get a picture of the present status in the organisations and its strengths and weaknesses.

On the negative side some offices find it too ambitious, while others, not comprehensive enough and are missing different aspects. The main criticism is that it only gives a picture of the present situation and the offices find it difficult to use for designing a change process. It is described as too static. Probably the most important comment is that since no training has been provided on the tool, the offices do not know if they are using it properly.

The original intention of the Octagon is to provide a tool for a situational analysis. In that sense it is correct that it is static. It provides a snapshot of the present status in an organisation in a number of crucial dimensions. Any planned change process needs to start from an understanding of the present situation. To gain such a common understanding is what the Octagon can be used for and where it has also been found useful, as commented above.

The next step is to formulate a vision for the desired situation of the organisation and to plan a process for how to reach it. The Octagon cannot do this for an organisation. However the results of such a change process can later be evaluated through the Octagon, since as a new situational analysis can be done after a certain time and compared with that past situation, being a base line. In that sense the use of the Octagon is not static. Organisational analysis is fairly complex and therefore the Octagon is not recommended to be used as a tool for self analysis. It is recommended that it is used by a facilitator who has been trained in using it or is used to undertake organisational assessments. This last aspect was somewhat misunderstood by SCS when modifying the Octagon into the Octagon+ which is

presented as a self assessment tool. Some of the confusion around the tool could also be explained by the fact that the Octagon+ was introduced to the offices as a tool for organisational *development*, not as a tool for situational analysis.

An interesting idea brought forward by some offices is to develop common leadership programmes, e.g. for a region. Due to the character of many organisations their leaders are often quite isolated from the rest of the staff. Such a programme could become an entry point for further organisational needs analysis with the leader as the change agent.

Documentation of organisational needs

Around two thirds of the offices respond that they in some way document findings from organisational needs assessments. 40%, mainly the offices with OD programmes for their strategic partners, are using organisation specific assessment reports.

The other methods for documentation are more informal and less structured. Travel reports (33%), minutes from meetings (28%) and workshop reports (28%) are the most frequently mentioned forms for documenting needs. Other forms of documenting organisational needs that only one or two offices mention are partners' progress reports, project proposals, audit reports and evaluations. These various documents and reports may very well contain relevant information, but as they are not compiled into one document per organisation the institutional memory is weak and is completely dependent on each programme officer.

The Swedish tool called "Meeting for the Future" ("Framtidsmötet") has been used in 50 local Save the Children Sweden branches. The method focuses on developing a vision and a plan of operation for a local branch's work with child rights starting from what the members want, what they can and how they can do it. The final step focuses on developing an appropriate work organisation. The whole process is done as workshops and is documented. Some parts are included in the branches' annual plans. The package has a pedagogic and systematic approach. It should be possible to draw interesting learnings from this systematic and rather straightforward approach.

Agreements

According to 72% of the offices the informal or formal needs assessments may lead to some type of written agreements for organisational capacity building of the organisations. This happens, at least to some extent, in the upcoming project document and project agreement with the organisation (66%). Half of the offices also include some of such identified needs in their own annual regional plans, at least needs that will result in the basic training courses.

40% of the offices work with specific action plans for organisational capacity development with some of their partners.

Conclusions and recommendations

SCS is recommended to formalise the process for organisational needs assessment. A first step is to agree on a certain minimum level of information about partner organisations that should be known in all collaborations. It could be possible to build on the check-list established in the MENA region and the criteria of a good child rights organisation established by the Europe region to develop one list of basic organisational aspects that should be checked, discussed and documented with each partner before initiating support. The programme officer would be responsible for undertaking this basic assessment of the organisation's capacity. The same aspects could thereafter be followed up every year or every second year. A simple manual for using such a list is most likely required.

A second step would be to go deeper into joint understanding of the organisation. This might not be possible initially or even desirable when starting a relationship as it requires trustful relationship between the partner organisation and SCS. It requires active participation of the organisation itself and should not be done as an analytical exercise *outside* the organisation.

It is recommended that the status of the Octagon+ is clarified and a decision is taken whether it should be used as a common tool or not. This second step could be done as an Octagon workshop, where the programme officers or the OD focal point, after being trained appropriately in using it, act as facilitators.

Another alternative is that the organisation is supported to do a self-assessment. If so, it is suggested that a tool or list of questions, with instructions, are developed. The content of the OD assessments that have been done in Ethiopia, West Africa and Southern Africa could be used as starting points for this. When choosing the self-assessment approach it is suggested that the organisation shall discuss the findings of the self-assessment with an organisational development expert afterwards in order to validate their findings. Such a person could e.g. be the OD focal point, staff from SCS Head Office, a local consultant or an international consultant. By knowing that a validation will take place might be an incentive for the organisations to make the self-assessment more self reflective.

A third option could be to develop a leadership programme for the heads of organisations where needs assessments of their own organisations are assignments and part of the programme, coached by programme staff. By using these approaches SCS would make itself self-sufficient and less dependent on the existence of qualified local organisational consultants.

A deeper assessment of a partner organisation could of course also be done by external consultants, if competent consultants are available which appears to be one problem. To be able to contract a consultant the programme officers also need to understand the subject well. The terms of reference should preferably be developed in collaboration with the partner organisation and the assessment process should be participative. The terms of references should stipulate the areas to assess, using the same list or tool for self-assessment, but the choice of method should be left to the consultant. It is less suitable to recommend the consultant to use the Octagon or the Octagon+ if the he or she is not familiar with it.

If an organisational assessment shall be of any use for SCS and the partner organisation it needs to be documented. For a partner organisation an organisational assessment report can be an eye opener as it gives a comprehensive picture of the organisation and its needs and thereby becomes a useful tool for their own internal processes. For both parties a documented analysis is needed as a base line for future follow-up. The more informal tools as travel reports and workshop reports are not sufficient for these purposes, nor are they transparent towards the organisation. It is hence recommended that any organisational needs assessment should be documented in one report per organisation and shared with the organisation, regardless how it is made. The formats used in the OD assessment reports of some offices could provide guidance for a standardised format.

The organisation is then requested to respond to the assessment in an action plan. If the organisation has a long term strategic plan or wish to be supported in developing one, preferably its organisational development needs should also be included in it. Any project agreement with this organisation should build on such a plan, even if SCS only funds parts of it. If SCS wants to move towards a more comprehensive support to a partner organisation, core funding based the partner's strategic plan would be a recommended direction to take. Even if the support is given as project funding it is recommended that identified and agreed organisational capacity development activities are included in the organisation's next project document (based on the strategic plan) and agreement. Thereby SCS is taking a first step to apply a more holistic approach in their support to partner organisations, supporting both activities and organisational capacity development, as well as applying a more structured approach that can later be followed up.

In SCS's annual regional plans it should likewise be included what type of institutional support is planned for the partners so that follow-up and analysis is made possible at head office level.

4.5 The roles of SCS staff in organisational capacity development

The Programme officers

The programme officers are the key persons in the relations with the partner organisations. Apart from being instrumental in the thematic and programmatic support to the organisations, their main responsibility when it comes to organisational capacity building is to carry the continuous dialogue with the organisations regarding their developments. They have a close relation to the organisations and know them well. Previously the programme officers' work was more restricted to the thematic work. This seems still to be the case in four of the offices, while in at least ten offices they are together with the focal points for organisational capacity development and the financial advisors involved in the organisational capacity building work. Thus, to a great extent the programme officers have active roles in assessing (78%), agreeing (72%), implementing (66%) and monitoring (78%) organisational capacity development support to the organisations.

The focal points for organisational capacity development

The use of focal points for organisational capacity development has been developed independently by the regions and their scope of work therefore differs between the offices. In four of the offices there is no focal point or it is a very recent position. Among the 14 offices that have a focal point, there seems to be consensus on that one of its main roles is to undertake organisational needs assessments. The focal points are in many offices involved in the closing of agreements for organisational capacity development (78%) and implementing the interventions (78%), more so than the programme officers. In most offices they are also involved in the continuous dialogue (71%) and in monitoring the organisations development (71%). Most offices reply that the work of the focal point is done as a team approach in close collaboration with the programme officers who are having the deeper insights of the organisations.

In all offices with focal points, he or she has the responsibility for further competence development of programme officers in organisational capacity development. Most commonly this is done by organising and conducting internal trainings (50%) and by initiating internal discussions on organisational development (36%). Other responsibilities are sharing relevant information, developing tools and methods, providing advice and coaching and mentoring. In some offices the focal points have more of a thematic responsibility for analysing the civil society.

Other staff

In almost all offices (89%) other staff members are also involved in the organisational support to the partner organisations. Most heavily involved are finance staff members (67%). They are part of the team supporting the organisations and conduct workshops on financial management, give on-the-job-training, follow up on audits and give feedback on financial reports. In a third of the offices other administrative staff members are also involved in the workshops and trainings.

The representative or country manager is sometimes the focal point for organisational capacity development. In 40% of the offices he or she is involved in the dialogue with the partner organisations and sometimes conducts some sessions in workshops.

Conclusions and recommendations

The team approach with teams composing programme officers, focal points, financial officers and country managers appears to be a suitable set up for supporting the partner organisations in a competent manner. The integration of programme officers and financial officers in the overall strengthening processes of partner organisations should be further strengthened and planned for in their appraisal interviews.

A common job description for focal points would be useful, as well as a joint programme for their capacity development organised by head office.

4.6 Follow-up of results

Methods

Approximately half of the offices state that they follow-up their support for strengthening partner organisations. However this seems to mainly apply for following up the programmatic support. Another five offices are quite vague in their answers whether they follow-up or not. Three offices state that they do not follow-up their organisational support and lack a system for this. Follow-up hence appears to be a weak link in SCS's project cycle.

Among the 15 offices which try to follow-up their support to organisational capacity development most agree that this is done informally through a combination of dialogue with the partner organisations, visits to the organisations and internal discussions in the country or regional offices on the organisations. Other tools used are the partner organisations' annual reports in relation to project documents, the country plans and reports and in some cases evaluations. The OD programmes are more developed in this respect, e.g. Ethiopia uses OD action plans with objectives that can be followed-up.

Levels for follow-up

78% of the offices follow-up that the planned activities have been implemented. This relates mainly to programme activities. Both narrative reports and informal dialogue are used for this. It is unclear how far the offices go in analysing what results the activities have led to.

72% of the offices try to follow-up results in improved organisational performances. This is mainly done informally by e.g. noticing that the organisations improve in their planning and reporting skills, improvements in how they network or by seeing an increase in the number of donors. Many mention that the partner organisations' annual reports may include some results regarding the strengthening of the organisations. The problem appears to be however that results indicators for stronger organisations are not identified beforehand in project documents and it is therefore difficult to assess the actual results in a more structured way.

28% of the offices try to follow-up if the work of the partner organisations has had positive effects on the situation of children. A method called "the Global Impact Monitoring System" (GIM), developed by Save the Children UK, is used by the offices in Bangladesh and the Philippines to measure such effects.

Systems for documentation

Even if results in improved strength of the organisations are seen and felt by the programme officers, there is no system in the offices for documenting these results in increased performance of the organisations or their effects on the situation of children. The findings then become the knowledge of each programme officer and when the person leaves such knowledge is lost for SCS.

Conclusions and recommendations

Planned support to organisational capacity development and results of the support need to be included in SCS regular planning and monitoring system, i.e in annual plans and annual reports to head office. Then the results can be used in SCS's analysis and reports of its work to strengthen the civil society. SCS's PME system is under revision and these aspects need to be included in the new system. A systematic approach is also needed in relation to each partner organisation, requiring a PME system of the country offices. Such system needs to start from a situational analysis and the documented needs, the desired direction and an action plan/project plan/strategic plan for moving towards it with expected results and indicators, the organisation's annual reports reporting progress towards the plan and finally analysed results documented by the programme officer.

It is recommended that this project learns more about the GIM method and assess if this is an appropriate tool to introduce to the other offices for measuring impact of the organisations' work.

4.7 Shared lessons

The offices were asked to share important lessons which they had drawn from their work with supporting organisational capacity development. The findings have been grouped under six headings below.

Pros and cons of different methods used

Training has been the main method used by SCS in building capacity. The offices have drawn several lessons regarding how training has been provided:

- Training without follow-up should not be done. Once off events should be avoided as they have very limited impact.
- It is difficult to select the “right persons” for trainings. It is concluded that the intended trickle down of skills and knowledge in the organisation does not take place. A more organisational approach needs to be taken where i.e. training of all staff should be strived for instead of taking individuals on a course, in order to create stronger possibilities for change and better sustainability.
- Standardised support offered to a group of organisations in the form of workshops needs to be complemented with tailor-made, needs based interventions.

Another common type of support is support to *financial management*. The following lesson was drawn:

- To only provide support to improved financial systems and fund rising is not enough as organisational support. There has been a too narrow focus on improving financial sustainability of partners instead of a more comprehensive analysis of needs.

Some offices have been more intensively involved in supporting *OD programmes*. They have learnt that:

- OD processes should not be donor driven. The processes need to be owned and driven by the organisations if change shall happen.
- Organisational capacity development has to be holistic, needs based, systematic, planned and based on a long term commitment. It is a long term process and not a once off activity. For successful OD support there needs to be a process starting with selection of partners (through criteria) resulting in having fully committed partners. Thereafter it is needed to undertake needs analysis. OD support can thereafter be designed and provided.
- SCS should shift from project support to a holistic approach if the aim is to strengthen the organisations.
- Situational analysis and the desired change should be based on visions rather than on the organisations’ resources.
- OD support should not be made conditional for continued funding.

In many offices support to thematic work and skills development is seen as separate processes from organisational capacity building. Several offices reflected on this:

- There is a need to find balance between programme work and organisational capacity development.
- OD must not be separated from programme work.
- Child rights programming and continuous dialogue can change organisations.
- There needs to be a more efficient link between child rights programming and OD as SCS’s goal is strong organisations that can monitor and advocate for children’s rights.

Other methods that offices had positive experiences from are:

- Exchange visits
- Networking as a method to strengthen partners all in the network
- To create a position for the organisation by bringing it to regional meetings

The role and identity of SCS

To be able to provide good support SCS needs to be very clear on its own role and reasons for being involved in the support. Many offices reflected on what the role of SCS is:

- Is SCS a donor or partner, or both? Does this matter for how SCS collaborates with partner organisations? One office takes a position that SCS is a donor and therefore should not be directly involved in OD processes in the organisations, nor does it have the competence for it. Many of the other offices see the role of SCS more as a partner and wish to strive for a open and honest collaboration and exchange of skills on as equal terms as possible. How the two perspectives are balanced have implications for how to plan and design organisation development processes.
- In being a responsible partner some offices bring forward the importance of improved coordination among donors and international NGOs supporting the same organisations so efforts are not duplicated, messages are consistent and costs shared. In this perspective a role for SCS would be to influence other donors and other Alliance members to work with a common long term, holistic approach.
- SCS needs to assess itself to see if it practices what it preaches e.g. in terms of using a rights based approach in its own organisation. In order to be a credible organisation, SCS also needs to know its comparative skills and advantages so it can add value to a collaboration. SCS needs to know its strength and weaknesses and its capacity to facilitate processes to strengthen partners.
- To build internal capacity and skills needs to be prioritised. The Head Office needs to be more active in supporting the regional and country offices in these processes.
- A systematic approach to follow-up of results of organisational capacity building processes and documentation of successes and mistakes is needed so that good practices can be shared. This is a role for the head office.
- In countries in conflicts and with weak civil societies the local presence of SCS is needed if organisational capacity building shall be facilitated. It is difficult to facilitate this from a regional office.

Selection of partners

Many of the offices touch on issues that relate to the idea of better selections on partner organisations:

- Proper selection is crucial.
- How to identify partners that are interested in developing themselves?
- Some important selection criteria identified are:
 - a common vision with SCS
 - the organisations' potential,
 - commitment by both leadership and staff
 - a willingness to work according to rights based principles
 - to have a clear direction
 - to be aware of its role and identity in civil society
 - to have a basic organisational platform/a certain organisational strength to act from
- It needs to be recognised that organisations are at different levels of knowledge
- SCS cannot only use the Swedish membership based model for civil society organisations in all contexts, as such organisations might not even exist in some countries. A more flexible understanding of the different types of organisations in the civil society is needed.

Phasing out of partners

Closely linked to the aspect of selecting partners is the aspect also being able to phase out partners that for different reasons do not any longer fit as partner organisations. The offices have found that partners that are not considered strategic or do not want to change need to be phased out. How can such an exit be done in a proper way? Exit strategies are requested. In the Europe region they have found that planned exits with three years exit strategies have proven to be useful. This example could be used to draw common principles for how plan and support a responsible exit.

The partnership approach

SCS has not clearly taken a stance that the work should be done in a *partnership* with the organisations supported. Many offices request a clearer partnership framework, with agreed partnership criteria, as they actually are applying a partnership model on their work. Such partnership criteria that are brought forwards are:

- To share a common vision and identity as rights based organisations before starting a collaboration and to be committed to work towards that vision
- To know and understand each others organisations, programmes and contexts very well
- To understand the respective different roles in the collaboration
- To trust each other
- To be open and transparent towards each other, sharing intentions, skills and methods in both directions and be willing to change
- To regard the relation as a long term commitment towards each other
- To ensure that the partner organisation owns its own programmes and its own development
- For SCS to not be the only financier to the local partner

A consequence of applying a partnership approach on the collaboration is that the number of partner organisations needs to be kept low as each relationship requires substantial capacity from SCS. This process of moving towards a more limited group of partners is already taking place.

New initiatives for organisational capacity development

To better support the partner organisations to realise the rights of the child is a challenge for all offices. 60% of the offices are involved in developing new approaches for their support to organisational capacity development. The initiatives that are being developed are:

- Long term development programmes for middle management levels.
- Applying a check list to assess all new partners in a regional programme and provide organisational capacity building based on this.
- Explore possibilities to provide core funding
- Develop leadership coaching, mentorship and peer support
- Establish a Save the Children supply organisation selling training to other organisations
- Promoting new leadership approaches for local Save branches

Conclusions and recommendations

Many of these issues have apparently been substantially discussed in internal processes for some time. It is therefore recommended that SCS takes a decision on the role of SCS as a donor/partner and if a partnership approach should be applied more consistently.

It is also recommended that selection criteria for partner organisations are elaborated and shared with all offices. The experiences from exit strategies should also be further analysed and made use of.

The role and responsibility of the head office as a source of references and good practices and training provider for internal capacity for organisational capacity development for the field offices needs to be further elaborated.

5 Findings from field visits

5.1 Ethiopia

Methods used

In Ethiopia, five partner organisations are benefiting from a comprehensive organisational development programme. The key aspects of the programme are described in Annex 5 (prepared by the Ethiopia office).

Other partners are receiving capacity building support in a less systematic and holistic way, mainly focusing on skills needed in order to implement programmes efficiently such as knowledge of CRC, CRP, child participation and HIV/Aids. The basic support to all partners also includes strengthening of financial systems through audits and regular monitoring and feedback from the financial officer.

Positive and negative experiences

Selection of partners for the OD programme: The partners included in the programme were selected solely on the basis of interest. This approach has the clear benefit that all partners are committed and has a positive mindset to organisational change. A dilemma might however occur when partners that SCS has a strong interest in supporting are not included in the programme, while other, less important, partners are. Although commitment by the partner is a key for success, this aspect should be balanced with the legitimate interest by SCS to prioritise among its partners since proper OD demands a lot of resources.

Support to OD partners vs. other partners: The gap in support to the various partners is wide and only the five OD partners have been properly assessed. Support to capacity building could be more mainstreamed to cover all partners; the level of support adapted to each individual partner.

Methods of capacity building: Although the aim is always that organisations become stronger, much of the capacity building to all partners has focused on training of individuals. The assumption has been that the new knowledge will trickle down through the various levels of the organisation; however, this does not always happen. The Ethiopian staff reflected on new approaches that may prove more effective, such as training of all staff instead of individuals.

Consultants vs. Save the Children Sweden as facilitators: Since it is often difficult to find good OD consultants it is worth exploring to what extent Save the Children Sweden staff can facilitate organisational strengthening processes. Consultants are also expensive and it is not likely that more than a few partners will benefit from such in-depth processes. Representatives of the OD partner organisations suggested that they would have preferred to have Save the Children Sweden staff facilitating the needs assessment rather than an external consultant, since they trusted us more and felt we understood their organisations better.

Thoughts about the future

Future of OD programme: The OD programme will be evaluated this year to assess if the SCS approach was effective in reaching set goals and to give recommendations about future support to the OD partners. In particular the selection of partners and the secondments of child rights promotions officers will be of interest to assess.

Systematic approach: The Ethiopian programme expressed that they want to duplicate their good experiences with more partners, but in a more strategic and systematic manner.

Holistic approach: Another thought raised was that if the aim of the programme was to build strong organisations Save the Children Sweden need to shift from supporting projects to a more holistic organisational approach, e.g. to start with selection criteria for partners and organisational strengthening and later move into programmes and projects.

5.2 Northern Sudan

Methods used

Capacity building of partner organisations in Northern Sudan has traditionally taken the form of provision of trainings in skills deemed as important by SCS, such as thematic skills, CRC, CRP, fundraising, gender mainstreaming and child participation. These trainings have been open to all partners and often the organisations have had the opportunity to send several participants. In addition, individual capacity building activities have been funded based on demand by some organisations. Such activities have been supported based on available resources.

In 2004, the Sudan office carried out an assessment of nine of their partner organisations. For six partners the focus was on the organisational capacity, while for three partners the focus of the assessment was on the impact from the cooperation with SCS and what results have been achieved to improve the lives of children. Based on the assessment, but also their own knowledge and experience of the partners, the staff in the office jointly selected four partners as “strategic partners” that would receive more comprehensive OD support. The set of indicators agreed upon was: willingness, performance, availability of basic resources, relevance to Plan of Operation and strategy, mandate, diversity, linkages, image and context, and legal status.

In the next step the office developed terms of reference and started searching for OD consultants to lead the process, including more in-depth assessments of the selected partners and the preparation of unique development plans for each partners. The process stalled when the office failed to identify qualified consultants.

Positive and negative experiences

Training: There is a need to find an alternative to training in capacity building. Training of individuals does not automatically lead to the information trickle down in the organisation. Other methods, such as exchange visits and on the job-training may have stronger impact. There was also a question on how to measure commitment and will of partners when it comes to training. Partners may feel obliged to participate. Also, SCS needs to share training plans with partners each year, and with other training providers, to avoid too many trainings and duplication.

Organisational development: Since the office did not manage to identify qualified consultants there is a need to find an alternative approach to supporting the organisational strengthening of the partners. The following options were discussed:

- Review of the required qualifications. It may be too optimistic to look for an OD practitioner with knowledge of child rights and child participation in Sudan. If the office can find a good OD consultant, SCS could consider contributing the child rights perspective.
- Bring in a consultant from abroad. Possible but expensive.
- SCS could conduct the assessment, with participation of the partner. The selected approach should depend on the relationship between the partner and us, considering that SCS is a donor as well as a partner. Without the appropriate skills the assessment may not be as in-depth as if done by a consultant.
- A self-assessment approach, possibly facilitated by SCS, could be an alternative if the right tools are used. The result may not be the whole “truth” about the organisation but maybe it is enough as a start.

Octagon+: As an assessment tool for OD the Octagon+ has limitations. Consultants should be given the right to select tools according to their experience and the context. Also for self assessments the Octagon+ may not be the most appropriate tool.

Thoughts about the future

Selection criteria: Before reviving the programme to strengthen partners the office will review the selection criteria for deciding what partner should benefit from what level of support. For example, a youth led organisation, YFC, is included in the current OD project; however, it may be too early, and

anyway a different approach would be needed. Maybe this year it would be enough to focus on a few aspects of this organisation, such as support to strategic planning.

Ownership: The issue of ownership was not fully reflected on in the first phase of the programme. Since commitment in the organisations is crucial for change to occur it was agreed that before initiating any processes in the future, SCS needs to ensure that the partners are fully informed and have expressed will and commitment to the process.

If consultants are to be involved the partner should be involved in writing the terms of reference and in the contracting and selecting processes. It could be discussed if the partner even should be responsible to contracting the consultant, with SCS providing support as needed.

Approach: Rather than providing same support to all, the office is keen to move towards individual approaches, based on assessment of the needs of the specific partner. Still, with most partners suffering from the lack of middle-management structure, this issue was identified as important to address with most partners urgently if the organisations will survive in the future.

5.3 Latin America

The Latin American programme has about 90 partners in more than 20 countries in the region. The region is different from the other SCS regions in the sense that there are no country offices or country managers. All programme coordinators report directly to the representative and they do all have a regional mandate. There are two sub-offices in Costa Rica and Brazil, but they do not have the same tasks as the country offices in the other regions.

Methods used

In Latin America a major emphasis has been placed on trainings. Due to the merger of the two offices in South and Central America and the necessity to uniform the relationship with partner organisations, a lot of trainings on administrative procedures and routines were carried out in 2004 and 2005. The purpose of these trainings was mainly to familiarize the organisations with the financial and bureaucratic requirements of SCS. CRP trainings were also massively rolled out in 2002 - 2005 in the region. This has resulted in the fact that there is a high level of conceptual understanding of a rights based perspective among our partner organisations. There is now a need to support the organisations to go from theory to practice which might imply organizational development interventions.

An important role of SCS in Latin America is to facilitate and promote regional cooperation among partner organisations. SCS organises workshops, seminars and other types of events to enable partners to meet, exchange experiences and build common agendas on child rights issues. One outcome of this approach has been that partners continue to keep in contact, organise their own meetings and cooperate at regional level without the support from SCS.

As a result of a regional workshop on organisational capacity building in 2004, the Web site “Mirando al Futuro” (Looking towards the future) was created. It contains general information on issues related to civil society actors, including private sector initiatives as well as specific information on five themes on organisational capacity-building/organisational support. Each theme has its editor, and the idea is to create an interactive discussion on the various themes with civil society organisations, private sector and the editor.

In terms of organisational development, quite an ambitious plan was launched in 2003 to strengthen the capacity of the strategic partners. For various reasons, it was not implemented. However, some of the organisations that were included in the above-mentioned organisational development effort have had some specific projects related to strengthening of fundraising skills, working through volunteers, strategic planning, etc.

Positive and negative experiences

The CRP trainings, primarily focusing on methodological aspects have had implications on the organisational development of the organisations though there has not been a concerted effort from SCS to respond to these implications.

The creation of “Save Marketing”, including a training component in 2004-2005, shifted the focus of the OD programme to be placed on capacity building of external actors and to charge and get a profit from the trainings. This new marked oriented approach based on the demands for trainings raised SCS’s profile as a provider of capacity building workshops on child rights issues and to a certain extent made it possible for SCS to capitalise on its knowledge. On the other hand, the organisational development programme for partner organisations was not specifically developed, though they could also take part in the trainings provided by Save Marketing.

So far the focus of the projects undertaken under the programme area on civil society has been on improving the financial sustainability of the partners and less on other organisational shortcomings. It is true that this aspect has been raised as being one of the weakest in several organisations, but the interventions have not been based on a more systematic needs assessment of the partner organisations.

The lack of a systematic follow-up has resulted in that successes and mistakes have not been properly documented. SCS has played an important role in strengthening the capacity of the partners in rights-based approaches, the use of the regional human rights system and strategic planning. There are also some tangible results in terms of increased capacity to raise funds mainly for one partner in Venezuela. The success of this intervention builds a lot on the high competence and strategic thinking of the partner, where SCS's role has mainly been to facilitate and technically support the process.

The focal point is mainly involved in the processes related to projects related to the programme area and does not have the full picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the partners, with the exception of the partners that are included in his/her geographical responsibility.

The creation of *technical teams* for the follow-up of the partners has promoted a more integrated approach to our partners and organisational capacity building. The teams consist of the relevant programme coordinator, programme assistant and financial officer. Their task is to revise the financial and narrative reports and take the adequate decisions in relation to money transfers, revisions of budgets, etc.

Thoughts about the future

Some conclusions about future directions could be summarised as follows:

- It is important that the work of the focal point for civil society is not viewed in isolation, but is mainstreamed throughout the whole programme.
- There should be a continuous dialogue between the focal point person and the other coordinators to ensure that the focal point is familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the partners. This will enable a more systematic approach to organisational capacity building.
- There is a need for a more holistic approach based on a needs analysis of the partners.
- It is important to relate thematic capacity building efforts to organisational development interventions in order to link more closely working methods based on child rights programming to organizational development processes and vice-versa.

Annex I

STRENGTHENING PARTNER ORGANISATIONS THROUGH ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT PLAN

BACKGROUND

Save the Children Sweden primarily works in other countries by supporting the work of national NGOs for children's rights. In addition to direct operations with children, many of these organisations have assumed growing roles as observers, advocates and creative engines for children's rights in relation to governments. However, the basic conditions for organisations to be able to fulfil this part vary depending on the political, economical and social situation in each country, and depending on the size, coverage, focus and level of professionalism of the respective organisation.

Although Save the Children Sweden has for many years supported capacity building of partner organisations, support has focused mainly on individuals within the organisations, rather than the functioning of the organisation itself. This approach has been successful in developing programme skills in many organisations, but less successful in supporting organisations to become independent, sustainable and competent to advocate for children's rights in a changing environment.

Since 2002, Save the Children Sweden has therefore identified organisational development (OD) of partner organisations as one of its prioritised areas of work. For the planning period 2005-2008, the specific aim is to support civil society to become a social force for children, through capacity building of partner organisations, advocacy for a beneficial climate for child rights organisations to work in, and systematic cooperation between organisations at national, regional and global levels.

This project will address the component of capacity building specifically and intends to strengthen Save the Children Sweden's approaches and systems for supporting organisational capacity development of partner organisations.

Terminology and limitation of project

*The term **organisational capacity development** will be used for the purpose of this project since the term organisational development is generally understood as a very specific technical area of capacity building. The term capacity building is too broad as it can cover capacity building at many different levels (individual, organisational, institutional, societal etc).*

***Networks** and **child and youth led organisations** are not included in this project as these entities have different needs from (adult) organisation and would demand a different approach to organisational strengthening. A parallel work is being done in developing our approaches for supporting networks and child and youth led organisations.*

GOALS

3. At the end of the project, Save the Children Sweden shall have a common understanding of organisational capacity development of partner organisations and have introduced an appropriate strategy, tools and routines for use in the regional and country offices. Save the Children Sweden shall be able to evaluate impact of its support on, at least, an organisational level.
4. At the end of the project, all programme staff at Save the Children Sweden's regional and country offices will be able (in a participatory process together with the partner organisation) to:
 - (i) analyse and document the partner organisation's basic development needs from a rights based approach;
 - (ii) develop a plan for basic organisational capacity development, indicating internal (Save the Children Sweden) and external (consultants) resources needed;
 - (iii) support the organisation in the implementation of the plan;
 - (iv) monitor and evaluate changes in the organisation's development.

OUTPUTS

To reach the goals, the project will produce the following outputs:

1. An assessment of current approaches to strengthen partner organisations, with recommendations for improvement
2. A revised strategy for organisational capacity development, building on the existing strategy for organisational development
3. Guidelines for organisational capacity development of partner organisations, which will include a mechanism for monitoring and evaluation
4. A curriculum, training material and a training methodology for introducing the new approach to all relevant staff.
5. A mechanism for information sharing between regional programmes.

PROJECT COMPONENTS

A. Project reference group

Purpose: To provide input and support to the implementation of all project components and to ensure that outputs are relevant and useful for Save the Children Sweden programme work, a reference group will be established with staff of both Head Office and regional offices, including the Swedish programme.

In addition, other staff members may be invited to support a specific project component that is related to their area of interest and/or expertise.

Strategy: A list of suggested participants will be prepared based on competency and experience in implementing capacity building programmes in practice. A special effort will be made to include a monitoring and evaluation specialist in the team. An external consultant will be tied to the project and will participate in the meetings. Managers within the international programme may suggest additional representatives.

To facilitate the participation of field based staff in the group most of the communication will be done over e-mail. The group will only meet physically on an occasional basis, and field based staff will not be expected to participate in such meetings.

The first task of the group is to finalize the project plan.

Budget: N/A

Timeline: The group will agree on a meeting plan when established. The group will continue meeting throughout the lifetime of the project.

B. Assessment of experiences from building organisational capacity in partner organisations of Save the Children Sweden

Purpose: In order to learn from experiences, share good practices within the organisation, and improve the programme, Save the Children Sweden need to document and assess its experiences from building organisational capacity building of partner organisations.

The assessment, that will include experiences from all regions, including the Swedish programme, should answer, *inter alia*, the following questions:

- To what extent the various regions have been strengthening their partner organisations.
- In what ways has the capacity building work been implemented - in stand-alone capacity building programmes, as cross-cutting components in all programme work, or as an element of some of the programme work?
- How do we identify the needs to strengthen the partner organisations and what is our experience of using various assessment tools, including the Octagon+?
- What are the methods used for capacity building?
- What efforts have been made to link organisational capacity building and the understanding of child rights and child rights programming?
- What are the roles played by Save the Children Sweden staff with regard to capacity building work?
- Do we have experiences from measuring results at output, outcome or impact levels?

In addition, the assessment should give recommendations for future improvements how Save the Children Sweden shall support its partner organisations .

Strategy: The assessment will be carried out through semi-structured telephone interviews with focal points at all regional and country offices. A questionnaire with open ended questions will be designed and shared with all offices ahead of the interviews, for the focal points to be able to discuss with colleagues beforehand. The questionnaire will be tested in at least one region before being finalised.

The project coordinator will conduct the interviews and compile all the data while the external consultant tied to the project will assist in analysing data and preparing a set of recommendations.

Estimated budget:

Consultant	SEK 45,000 (40h)
Travel:	SEK 10,000 (field test of questionnaire)
Total:	SEK 55,000

Timeline: January-March 2007

C. Revise Save the Children Sweden's strategy

Purpose: A "Strategy for Organisation Development" was developed in 2002, as part of the strategy for Programme Area 10: A civil society for the Rights of the Child. The strategy encompasses a number of long-term and short-term objectives and a five-step plan to implement the organisation development process. It also highlights a number of practical considerations to address when implementing the strategy.

Since 2002, Save the Children Sweden has gained additional knowledge in the field of organisational capacity building from our own internal experiences as well as from external knowledge development. The strategy needs to be revised to attend to this new knowledge and also to include aspects that are not addressed in the current strategy, such as the role of Save the Children Sweden in the process and monitoring and evaluation of interventions.

Also, with *organisational development* generally understood as a very specific technical area of organisational capacity development, the scope of the strategy should be expanded to include other forms of capacity building interventions.

Strategy: The revised strategy will be based on the outcome of the assessment as well as relevant external knowledge development and experiences. Interviews should therefore be held with other organisations before finalising the strategy. A consultant will be contracted to provide input to the work.

The learning from the joint Save the Children Sweden/Swedish Mission Council on organisational development from a rights based approach should be incorporated in the strategy.

Estimated budget: To be confirmed

Timeline: April-June 2007

D. Develop guidelines for organisational capacity development of partner organisations, including a PME mechanism

Purpose: To implement the strategy, practical guidelines on organisational capacity development, including routines, tools and a PME mechanism, are needed to assist regional programme officers in supporting such processes. All Save the Children Sweden programme officers need to be able to mainstream a basic level of organisational support in programme work while only a smaller number of staff members need in-depth knowledge of specific processes, such as organisational development. Of particular importance for Save the Children Sweden is to link organisational capacity building with a rights based approach.

The guidelines will, *inter alia*, include the following components:

- How to identify development needs of an organisation
- How to plan capacity building interventions in a participatory process with the partner organisation, and how to design a monitoring plan
- How to initiate an organisational development process, including how to draft ToR and contract for OD consultancies
- How to measure results of the interventions
- The role of Save the Children Sweden in the organisational capacity development process

Strategy: Based on the strategy, the assessment of Save the Children Sweden's experiences and good practices of other actors, an organisational capacity building expert will be contracted to draft the guidelines. The reference group will provide input to the process.

The guidelines will be field tested in two regions before being finalized. In particular, potential goals and indicators will be tested with partner organisations.

Budget: To be confirmed

Timeline: The reference group will agree on a timeline based on the methodology proposed by the consultant. At the latest the guidelines should be developed by the end of 2008. The key aspect influencing the timeline would be the length of the field test.

E. Training of staff

Purpose: To create a common understanding of the new strategy and guidelines among staff members a training programme will be designed and implemented.

Strategy: Programme staff responsible for programmes to strengthen partner organisations will be invited to a ToT on the strategy and guidelines for support to organisational capacity development. They in turn will be expected to train other staff members on how to mainstream the support to partner organisations in all programme work at regional and country levels.

The first training will be organized by a consultant, with support from Save the Children Sweden staff members. The consultant will develop the curriculum and training materials in close cooperation with the reference group.

Follow up training will be provided responsible staff members within one year of the initial training.

Budget: To be confirmed

Timeline: The TOT should be carried out before the end of 2008.

F. Information sharing

Purpose: For information collection and information sharing one site on the Portal need to be developed with all relevant materials from HO, regional offices and external actors.

Strategy: With input from regional focal points, design an area on the Portal to collect and share information relating to capacity building and OD. In the assessment stage, regional and country offices will be encouraged to share relevant materials and documentation with the HO.

Budget: N/A

Deadline: April 2007

TIME TABLE

Year Project component	2006	2007				2008			
	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1. Establish reference group	x								
2. Assessment		x	x						
3. Revise strategy			x	x					
4. Develop guidelines				x	x	x	x		
5. Training of staff							x	x	x
6. System for information sharing	x	x							

Annex 2

ASSESSMENT OF SCS SUPPORT TO ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT OF PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

QUESTIONNAIRE

These questions relate to Save the Children Sweden's relation and work done with **civil society organisations** that SCS provide financial support to on a longer (at least one year) and more continuous basis.

The following types of organisations are **not** included:

- Government authorities
- Media
- Networks
- Child and youth led organisations
- Other donor organisations

The reason for excluding networks in this study is that networks and organisations are very different entities and methods and tools for partner strengthening would not be the same. Also child and youth led organisations have different needs from adult organisations and would demand a different approach to organisational strengthening. A parallel work is being done in developing our approaches for supporting networks and child and youth led organisations.

*The term **organisational capacity development** will be used for the purpose of this study since the term organisational development is generally understood as a very specific technical area of capacity building. The term capacity building is too broad as it can cover capacity building at many different levels (individual, organisational, institutional, societal etc).*

1. Has your office done anything to strengthen your partner organisations apart from providing funding for activities? Yes/No
2. What do you **consider** as organisational support to partner organisations?
3. What are the methods your office is **using** to strengthen partner organisations?

Consider here a wide range of capacity building interventions, including dialogue, thematic, administrative and methodological trainings, support to strategic planning, organisational development consultancies, leadership development, networking, exchange visits etc.

4. Do you offer the same support to all (or a larger group of) your partners? Yes/No

If yes, what?

If no, comment:

5. Do you offer additional support to some partners? Yes/No

If yes, what?

6. Which approach corresponds best to how you work?

A.

☐ Support to organisational capacity building is planned according to the needs of the partner (irrespective of what these needs might be)

or

☐ Support to organisational capacity building is planned according to skills **we** can provide and/or is in **our** interest to support (such as CRC, CRP, financial management, training related to our priority areas etc.)

Comment:

B.

☐ We are mainly focusing on building the skills and knowledge of individual persons in our partner organisations

or

☐ We have taken an organisational perspective and support the partner organisations in **their** organisational development processes?

Comment:

C.

☐ Efforts to increase understanding of child rights and child rights programming are usually linked to wider efforts to build organisational capacity

or

☐ Efforts to increase understanding of child rights and child rights programming are usually a separate process from other efforts to build organisational capacity

Comment:

7. How are the needs for strengthening in your partners identified?

8. Do you use any tools for the needs analysis? Yes/No

If yes, which:

☐ Octagon+

☐ Own developed tool:

☐ Other existing tool:

☐ A combination of tools:

If you have been using the Octagon+, what are your comments on the tool? Has it been useful for your needs?

If you have been using another tool/s, what are your comments on the tool/s? Has it been useful for your needs?

9. Is the needs analysis documented? Yes/No

If yes, how?

10. Does the needs analysis lead to an agreement for capacity building with the partner which can later be followed up? Yes/No

If yes, how is this agreement documented?

- ☐ Verbal agreement with partner
- ☐ In an action plan for organisational capacity development
- ☐ In the organisation's strategic plan
- ☐ In the coming project document and project agreement
- ☐ In Save the Children Sweden's annual plans

11. In which of the following processes does every **programme officer** have an active role (with or without the support of a consultant):

- ☐ the assessment of organisational needs
- ☐ in reaching an agreement with the partner regarding Save the Children Sweden's support (financial or technical) to the needs identified?
- ☐ the implementation of interventions for organisational support?
- ☐ the continuous dialogue on the organisation's development?
- ☐ the monitoring of the organisation's development?

12. In which of the following processes does the **focal point for organisational capacity development** have an active role (with or without the support of a consultant):

- ☐ the assessment of organisational needs
- ☐ in reaching an agreement with the partner regarding Save the Children Sweden's support (financial or technical) to the needs identified?
- ☐ the implementation of interventions for organisational support?
- ☐ the continuous dialogue on the organisation's development?
- ☐ the monitoring of the organisation's development?

13. Does the focal point have a role to play in the competence development of programme staff regarding organisational capacity development? Yes/No

If yes, how?

14. Are other staff members involved in the work? Yes/No

If yes, how?

15. Are you following up results of your support to strengthening your partner organisations? Yes/No

If yes, how?

At what level?

- ☐ Activity
- ☐ Organisational performance
- ☐ Effects of the organisation's work on the situation of children
- ☐ Aggregated at country level from all SCS support (

16. Do you have a system for documenting the results? Yes/No

If yes, how?

17. Do you have any important lessons from implementing support to strengthen your partner organisations that you could share?

18. Would your office be able to provide examples of how organisational capacity development processes have been supported from a rights based perspective? Yes/No

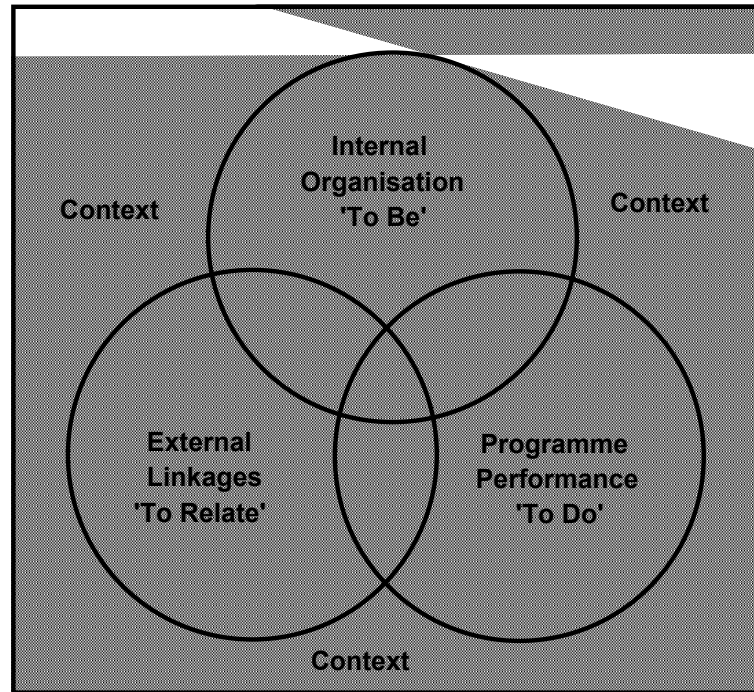
If yes, how?

19. Is your office involved in developing new approaches to organisational capacity development that you would like to inform about? Yes/No

If yes, what?

Annex 3

The 3-Circle Model for Understanding Organisations



Organisations can be represented as three interlocking circles existing within a wider context. The 'To Do' circle represents the programme activities that the organisation carries out and its ability to achieve its goals. The 'To Relate' circle represents the organisation's external linkages with other actors in all three sectors: public, private and civil society. The 'To Be' circle represents the organisation's internal functioning. The circles are represented as overlapping in order to show that changes in one circle are likely to have an effect on other circles. For example, a change in the effectiveness of an organisation's management systems can lead to improvements in the organisation's performance.

It is the inter-relatedness of the three circles that provides the rationale for organisational development and it is the 'To Be' circle that normally provides the focus for organisational development interventions.

Annex 4

List of persons interviewed

Region	Office	Person/s interviewed
LAM	Regional office	Ms. Ulla Armyr Mr. Marco Antonio Sotelo Mr. Eduardo Neira Ms. Denise Stuckenbruck Ms. Sara Andersson Ms. Angels Simon Montserrat Mr. Jorge Oroza Mr. Yehude Simon Ms. Mónica Alcedo Ms. Andrea Portaro Ms. Gaby Reyes Ms. Ana Salvadó, Costa Rica sub-regional office (partly)
Waf	Regional office	Ms. Åsa Rapp Baro
	Côte d'Ivoire office	Written answer. Focal point: Mr. Michel Eponon
SAf	Regional office	Ms. Ulrika Soneson
ECAf	Ethiopia office	Mr. Hans Lind Ms. Alemtsehay Mulat Mr. Teferi Abebe Ms. Amsale Negatu Mr. Etsub Berhanesillasie Mr. Nikodimos Alemayehu
	N Sudan office	Mr. Amin El Fadil Ms. Dahlia Mohammed El Roubi Mr. Osman Adam Osman Mr. Omar Mohammad El Hassan
	S Sudan office	Mr. Kennedy Otieno
MENA	Lebanon office	Mr. Bernhard Hillenkamp
	Jerusalem office (OPT)	Mr. Firas Ghosheh
	Yemen office	Mr. Waleed Elbashir
SCA	Afghanistan office	Mr. Leif Lahne
	Bangladesh office	Mr. Obaidur Rahman
	Pakistan office	Mr. Mehmood Ashgar
SEAP	Regional office	Mr. Henk van Beers
	The Philippines office	Ms. Eva Maria C Cayan
	Vietnam office	Mr. Dau Hoan Do
Europe	Regional office	Ms. Monica Lundgren Ms. Ulrika Persson Ms. Susanne Swärd Ms. Eva Larsson Bellander Ms. Britta Öström (partly)
Sweden	Regional office, Vänersborg	Mr. Tomas Rydsmo

Annex 5

OD Intervention in Ethiopia – Summary Report

1. Team Building tasks accomplished in SCS-Ethiopia country office:

- A. The first order of business in the organizational culture assessment and the team building exercises was familiarizing members of the organization with the various NGO management modalities through participatory group discussions on hypothetical cases developed to be practiced on retreat programs.
- B. The first retreat program has been organized in early September 2004.
- C. First retreat program performance proceedings and concluding remarks report presented towards end of September, 2004,
- D. Presented a draft annual plan of activities to undertake the organizational development assignment among SCS and partner organizations.
- E. A consultant & the Admin & Finance manager participated and contributed in an International RBA-OD workshop in South Africa from end of September to early October of 2004.
- F. Conducted a detailed Organizational Culture Assessment on SCS country office involving participation of the largest proportion of the staff at various levels and presented a draft report. Findings of the assessment have been presented in draft report to a validation workshop organized with the second retreat program. Participants divided into five break-out-groups discussed issues and made significant contributions.
- G. Presented the final draft of SCS Organization Culture Assessment and team building report to the HO for comment.

2. Partner Organizations

- A. Announced SCS's interest/initiative for building the capacity of the Civil Society, to monitor and promote children's rights in particular and contribute to the building of democracy in the country, in general.
- B. Got application from five Partner organizations interested to undergo an OD process.
- C. Conducted selection of OD partners, which will participate in RBA-OD initiative.
- D. Clarified the objectives of RBA-OD initiative of SCS to selected partner organizations.
- E. Familiarized organizations with the various steps involved in the RBA-OD process and conducted a rapid situations assessment on partners to determine the level of organizational readiness to work and adopt RBA-OD.
- F. Presented draft situations assessment report of partners for discussion with SCSE and partners to ensure the level of commitment from both sides to undertake the assignment.
- G. Conducted detailed RB-Organizational capacity assessment on partners (please refer "SCS partners OCA report final").
- H. Recommendations and way forwards were proposed where achievements, challenges and, strategic interventions outlined by each organization.
- I. Based on the recommendations capacity enhancement efforts made such as mentoring process where each organization undertaking its own strategic issues. By the end of year 2005 2 organizations, CDI & SAHRE, have conducted stakeholders SPM workshop to finalize their planning. The remaining 2 i.e Hiwot and ENA-MRCY have finalized their 5 years Strategic Plans by the end of January 2006.

- J. The 5 OD partners have advertised for recruitment of “Child Rights Promotion Officer” that will be seconded by SCS as per the recommendations of the OCA report.
- K. Qualified “Child Rights Promotion Officers” are employed to the partners early 2006.
- L. Cross cutting trainings recommended in the assessment are conducted during 2006. Namely – Rights Based Programme Cycle Management, CPR, CP and Advocacy.
- M. One Executive Director was sent to Israel for a Leadership training, who in turn shared learning to all SCS Partners. Another Director was also sent to South Africa for OD experience sharing visit
- N. OD partners have established an ad-hoc forum for discussing joint issues and joint fund raising.
- O. The employed Officers have developed their individual work plans to address the respective OCA recommendations and are under implementation accordingly.
- P. Four of the OD partners are in preparation to conduct a Child Rights Situation Assessment in their areas of operation.
- Q. In 2007 three Youth lead organizations are supported to develop their 5 years Strategic Plans from a Rights Based perspective