Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

Evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development

The PSO case

Synthesis report on the evaluation

of the PSO programme 2007–2010

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Preface

This evaluation aims to provide insight into the operations of PSO, a Dutch development organization involved in capacity building in developing countries, and the results achieved by its member organizations in the Netherlands and their partners in the South. Research for the evaluation was conducted in a manner that was different from the standard methodological approach, which would have been to take PSO's policy and the implementation of it as a starting point. Instead, it was decided to start from the processes and results achieved by Southern partners, move next to PSO member organizations and ultimately to the PSO secretariat. This change of method was to make sure that the reality experienced by the partner organizations was expressed as well as possible and used as a point of reference for assessing the theories of PSO's policies and their effectiveness.

The evaluation was based on a theoretical framework (developed by Baser and Morgan) that allowed us to identify elements of capacity change and to indicate the extent to which they helped to achieve development objectives. It has been particularly challenging to take elements from this framework and repeatedly put them into operation from the specific viewpoints of the partner organizations. In fact, this whole process has been one of trial and error. It has proved to be far from straightforward to assume an independent position and to take one's own insights, targets and approach as a starting point. This was as difficult for the Southern partners as it was for any other party involved.

This PSO evaluation covers the period from 2007 to 2010 and was one of seven studies carried out in the broader context of an extensive evaluation of the effects of capacity development activities financed through Dutch development organizations. The synthesis report on this overall study is to appear early in 2011.

In the context of the PSO evaluation, an additional institutional assessment was conducted that included PSO member organizations and the PSO-secretariat. This meant that the PSO evaluation now had two functions: to provide information and to give account of the PSO activities that were carried out with public means. The evaluation aims to contribute to future policy development in this highly complex field of capacity development.

The evaluation is interesting in particular because it shows how difficult it is to initiate and maintain capacity development processes; not only at the level of Southern organizations, but also at the level of the PSO member organizations in the Netherlands. Strengthening capacity development through a long chain of related agents has turned out to be rather difficult.

The evaluation tells us how cautious one has to be in making the assumption that outside support can result in significant changes in the short term. On the contrary, creating meaningful organizational and institutional change takes a long time and has many associated risks. It also demands a high level of professionalism from those who want to be of help.

Working on behalf of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB), Piet de Lange and members of the evaluation team, Rafaela Feddes, Hans Slot and Eric Kamphuis, were responsible for this evaluation. The principal researcher was Geert Phlix, a consultant with the Belgian research institute, Ace-Europe. In the country case studies, she was assisted by a team of Belgian and African researchers whose efforts made it possible to conduct the evaluation on time, under sometimes difficult circumstances. The names of all researchers are mentioned in section 1.7 and I express my appreciation for the contributions made by all of them to this evaluation.

The study was supervised by an external reference group consisting of two independent experts, Dr Lau Schulpen from the Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen in the Netherlands and Mr David Sogge, a fellow of the Transnational Institute in Amsterdam. These two independent experts worked alongside PSO and the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Social Development Department (DSO). IOB colleagues, Henri Jorritsma, Rita Tesselaar and Nico van Niekerk acted as internal advisors.

The report could not have been produced without the commitment of the PSO member organizations, the Southern partners, and the staff of the PSO secretariat – all of whom cooperated readily with the evaluation team. Their efforts are highly appreciated. Final responsibility for the content of this report rests solely with the IOB.

Prof. Ruerd Ruben
Director, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department

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Acronyms

AMREF	African Medical and Research Foundation
CADEP	Capacity Assessment and Development Programme
CBO	community-based organization
CC	core capability
CD	capacity development
CDRA	Community Development Resource Association
CLT	collective learning trajectory
CSO	civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DED	Deutsche Entwicklungsdienst (German Development Service)
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management
EFTA	European Free Trade Association
EMG	Environmental Monitoring Group
FXI	Freedom of Expression Institute
GOSS	Government of Southern Sudan
GPDC	Gambella Peace and Development Council
HACCP	Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points
HEKS	Hilfswerk der Evangelischen Kirchen Schweiz (Swiss interchurch development agency)
HRD	human resources development
IEC	information, education and communication
IANRA	International Alliance on Natural Resources in Africa
ICCO	Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation
ID	institutional development
KDDS	Karamoja Diocesan Development Services
LVCT	Liverpool Voluntary Counselling and Testing
LWT	learning–working trajectory
MAK	Meerjaren Afspraken kader
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
MFS	Medefinancieringsstelsel (co-financing system)
MIS	management information system
MKC-RDA	Meserete Kristos Church Relief and Development Association
MM	Mensen met een Missie
MO	member organization
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NACODEV	Nigeria's Association of Community Development Volunteers
Niza	Nederlands instituut voor Zuidelijk Afrika
OCA	organizational capacity assessment
OD	organizational development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PHCC	primary healthcare centre
PME	planning monitoring and evaluation

PO   partner organization
RRP   Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme
RBM   results-based management
SCA   St Martin Catholic Social Apostolate
SCOPE   Sustainable Community Outreach Programmes for Empowerment
SCYMI   Sudan Christian Youth Ministries International
SRF   Sudan Recovery Fund
SSRRC   Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission
SWOT   Strength, Weakness, Opportunity, Threat
Tearfund   The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund
TLP   thematic learning programme
UCMB   Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau
VSO   Voluntary Service Overseas
W&D   Woord en Daad
WFTO   World Fair Trade Organization

Summary

Background

Policy background

PSO was founded in 1985 following the merger of two organizations: Jongeren Vrijwilligers Corps and Vereniging Overleg Particulier Initiatief Tropenartsen. These organizations specialized in seconding experts to developing countries. Today, PSO is a Dutch umbrella organization with 59 member organizations involved in capacity development in developing countries.

PSO's mission is 'to contribute to sustainable structural poverty reduction in the South by strengthening the capacity of local NGOs and civil society organizations'. In order to achieve this, PSO supports its member organizations in their efforts to develop the capacity of their partner organizations.

According to PSO, capacity development is the process through which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies maximize their ability to carry out their core tasks, solve their problems, set out their goals and achieve the results they desire. Capacity development also means understanding that development needs are embedded in a wider context and must be addressed in a sustainable manner. PSO aims to achieve this by enhancing the quality of its members' capacity development activities, strengthening the input of expertise from the South, and encouraging the exchange of knowledge and learning. To achieve these objectives, PSO provides strategic funding for the knowledge development and capacity development programmes of civil society groups and network organizations in the South. Current policy includes a phasing out of the funding provided for programmes and projects that do not have explicit links to learning.

In the current policy period, 2007–2010, PSO's focus on the knowledge exchange and innovation of member organizations and partner organizations has increased. The learning–working trajectories (LWTs) that were established in association with its member organizations are the bedrock of PSO's strategic approach, and influence the way in which funding is passed on to member organizations.

PSO encourages collective learning and the exchange of knowledge between member organizations. In order to facilitate this, it has set up a network of collective learning trajectories (CLTs) and thematic learning programmes (TLPs). To make the exchange of knowledge even more efficient, PSO's knowledge centre, which was established in 2003 to support the knowledge transfer processes, has merged with the programme department.

PSO also offers advice on overseas secondment, runs training programmes, and provides publication assistance.

Background of the evaluation

The objective of this evaluation was to pose three sets of questions, aimed respectively at partner organizations, member organizations and the PSO office, and to draw conclusions from their findings. The first two sets of questions are identical to those posed in the

general terms of reference of the IOB study on Dutch support for capacity development and concern the effectiveness of both partner organizations and member organizations. The third set of questions examines the ways in which the PSO office supports its member organizations.

Here are the questions asked of partner organizations
1. What changes have taken place in the capacity of partner organizations?
2. What effects have changes in the capacity of partner organizations had on the realization of their development objectives?
3. How effective have interventions by PSO's member organizations been in terms of strengthening the capacity of partner organizations?

Here are the questions asked of member organizations:
4. What changes have taken place in member organizations regarding their ability to provide capacity development support?
5. What effects have changes in their ability to provide capacity development support had on the realization of their capacity development objectives?
6. How effective have PSO's interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of its member organizations?

Here are the questions asked of the PSO office:
7. To what extent do member organizations and Southern organizations recognize the PSO office as a source of capacity development expertise and information?

Overall question:
8. What factors explain PSO's level of effectiveness? What lessons can be learned?

Five cases were studied in depth and ten desk studies were also carried out.

Overview of the cases studied		
Country	In-depth cases	Desk studies
Kenya	St Martin SCA – MM	LVCT – Hivos Nacodev – Dorcas
Ethiopia	MKC-RDA – Tear	AMREF – AMREF NL GPDC – IKV Pax Christi
Uganda	KDDS – Woord en Daad	UCMB – Cordaid VSO Uganda –VSO
South Africa	FXI – Niza	Turqle Trading – WFTO Both Ends – EMG
Sudan	CADEP – ICCO	Wau county health systems – HealthNet TPO ZOA Sudan - ZOA

All partner organizations with the exception of the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) are service delivery organizations contributing to poverty reduction by delivering specific services related to health, food security, education, etc., and by empowering their

beneficiaries. None of the partner organizations (again with the exception of FXI) is involved in advocacy or lobbying activities and none of them is a PSO member organization. More detailed information on each case can be found in the separate case study reports.

Each of the cases examined is different, mainly with regard to the focus of the support for capacity development financed by PSO. Three broad categories have been identified: For six of the cases, support for capacity development focuses primarily on organizational development (OD). In these cases, capacity development is regarded as an end in itself. In another six cases, support for capacity development focuses on the implementation of programmes. In these cases, the aim is to improve the implementation of a specific programme. Accordingly, capacity development is regarded as a means to achieving this end.

The remaining four cases focus on the strengthening and funding of capacity development programmes that have been implemented by intermediary organizations whose core business is to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs, community-based organizations (CBOs) and local governments. These organizations are either independent local organizations (such as Turqle Trading in South Africa and UCMB in Uganda) or affiliates or members of the same network/federation as the Dutch NGO (such as is the case with AMREF and VSO).

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The table below gives an overview of the focus of PSO-funded capacity development support.

Focus of capacity development	Cases
Capacity development as an end in itself – focus on OD	St Martin SCA – MM NACODEV – Dorcas MKC-RDA –TEAR GPDC – IKV Pax Christi KDDS – Woord en Daad ICCO – CADEP
Capacity development as a means to an end – focus on programme implementation	LVCT – Hivos EMG – Both Ends KDDS – Woord en Daad FXI – Niza Wau county health department – HealthNet TPO ZOA Capacity development programme
Support for capacity development programmes implemented by intermediary organizations	AMREF – AMREF NL UCMB – Cordaid VSO – VSO NL Turqle Trading – WFTO

The table below gives an overview of each case in terms of its effectiveness, sustainability and relevance.

	Contribution to capacity development	Effectiveness	Sustainability	Relevance
St Martin SCA	(1) Governance structures, policies, operational guidelines, setting up a training and facilitation department, training staff and management.	(1)+	+	+
	(2) Setting up a curio shop.	(2)x	0	0
MKC-RDA	Improved staff policy, improved participative programme work.	x	0	+
KDDS	The application of an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA).	0	0	x
FXI	Important source of core funding in the period 2002–2008, access to expertise on the role of new media, increased networking capacity.	0	0	0
CADEP	(1) SCOPE – strategic planning, providing technical skills to conduct training, increased skills of staff in project management, developed a business plan.	(1)x	0	x
	(2) SCYMI – strategic planning, increased skills of staff in project management, and implemented life-skills training.	(2)x	0	x
NACODEV	Governance structure, policies, leadership, improved technical skills of staff, improved HRD.	+	0	+
GPDC	No contribution.	0	0	0
LVCT	Improved information and counselling services for youngsters addressing issues such as HIV/Aids and sexuality.	+	x	+
EMG	Improved training in lobbying and advocacy; improved knowledge products; improved networking capacity on drylands.	x	x	x

AMREF	(1) Developed a capacity development policy and strategy for the AMREF network.	(1)+	0	+
	(2) Case Ethiopia – good practices documented.	(2)x	0	+
UCMB	Improved training offer.	+	x	+
VSO	Improved the programme work of the country office; OCA done at partner level.	x	0	x
Turqle Trading	Improved trading, marketing, certification and production capacity (partly resulted from the business relationship with WFTO).	x	x	X
Wau County health system	Health infrastructure rehabilitated, community health management committees installed, health promoter and community health workers trained, no impact on strengthening the county health department.	x	0	X
ZOA Sudan	Increased the project management skills of partner organizations.	x	0	X

+ = very good; x = sufficient; o = results not achieved, not sustainable, not relevant and poor efficiency

More detailed information can be found in the respective case descriptions and in the case study reports.

Conclusions regarding how effectively PSO member organizations support their Southern partners

Conclusion 1 – Most of the PSO member organizations' projects and programmes brought about the intended improvements in the capacity levels of their partners. However, the evaluation found that these improvements did little to enhance the success of partner organizations in terms of realizing their objectives and outcomes. The evaluation can conclude from this that more fundamental capacity changes are required.

All the partner organizations that were visited have evolved over time. Changes in their capacity levels were usually caused by increases in funding leading to more activities, additional staff and improved infrastructure and means. These evolutions made it necessary to establish organizational structures and develop operational guidelines as well as to set up planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) systems. However, the capability to *relate to external stakeholders* did not always receive the consideration it needed in the early stages of the partner organizations' development, and this oversight had implications as time went on.

The organizational development of partner organizations affected both the quantity and the quality of their outputs. But the evaluation did not produce evidence beyond the anecdotal that changes in output actually resulted in improved outcomes. This may be explained by:
a. the fact that capacity changes do not result in immediate changes in output and outcome;
b. a lack of outcome data; and
c. the fact that that changes in organizational development are insufficient to bring about the required level of performance.

The cases studied for this evaluation did not produce evidence of any impact on structural poverty alleviation. This is probably because each of the organizations visited provided a service that was not implemented with the intention of changing the underlying causes of the problem it was addressing. Bringing about this type of change would imply fundamental changes in the perspective, culture, behaviour and mind-set of the partner organization.

There was much variation in reaction to the question of the contributions made by PSO member organizations. On the positive side, it emerged that PSO member organizations:
• improved their partner organizations' implementation strategies by providing financial and/or technical assistance; and
• contributed to the establishment and advancement of new civil society organizations (CSOs) and supported weaker organizations, mainly through the development of their systems and procedures.

Both of these contributions resulted in improved services to beneficiaries. However, PSO member organizations did not significantly enhance partners' capabilities *to relate to external stakeholders* or *to adapt and self-renew* – though we must bear in mind that all partner organizations face challenges in these areas. No evidence was found of a strengthening of any partner organization's position within civil society, precisely because the capability *to relate to external stakeholders* had never been the focus of support. Input was limited to linking civil society organizations to partners involved in the programmes of other PSO member organizations.

The strengthening of lobbying and advocacy skills was not looked for in the sample cases, because none of the member organizations or their partners was particularly politically orientated and had no brief to exert influence on the political environment.

Conclusion 2 – The sustainability of improved capacity was often at risk.

In cases where capacity had changed and developed, it was found that it was sometimes difficult to sustain those positive changes. Almost none of the partner organizations had formulated an explicit vision or strategy to guide their own capacity development processes. This was compounded by inherent weaknesses in the capacity development programmes at the member organization level. No explicit values and principles regarding capacity development were found, nor did partner organizations explicitly formulate what they

considered to be the essential components of their capacity or prerequisites to the effective achievement of their general objectives.

Capacity development support was provided on the basis of immediate needs. As a result, a large number of capacity development projects and programmes were based on perceived needs or on recognizable gaps in an organization's capacity, but not on the basis of an organizational capacity development plan. Problems such as the lack of internal organizational learning systems, weak leadership and poor management of change processes had a negative impact on the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development programmes. The management of capacity development programmes was further hindered by the lack of effective monitoring and evaluation, the fact that many capacity development programmes were too ambitious and not fully owned by partner organizations, and by the lack of a sound risk-management strategy.

The case studies confirm that it is difficult to find donors to finance specific capacity development projects and programmes. When donors are found, funding is usually related to programme implementation and is not adequately focused on strengthening endogenous capacity development processes.

Conclusions regarding how effectively the PSO secretariat supports PSO member organizations

Conclusion 1 – PSO member organizations regard capacity development as a priority and individual staff members have improved their skills in order to best achieve it. However these improvements have not yet significantly resulted in professional capacity development support for Southern partners.

Capacity development strategies varied from one member organization to the next, as did the instruments they used to measure and implement the strategies. In most of the cases in this synthesis report, staff had strengthened their management skills in order to prepare, manage and report on capacity development programmes. PSO supported its member organizations by helping them to further develop their partner policies and programmatic operations. Most member organizations have now started to develop an explicit capacity development policy and to invest in learning from experience.

It was found that only a small number of member organizations included gender as a consideration in their capacity development policies.

The evaluation concludes that PSO contributed to change processes in many different ways: through its modified funding approach, its introduction of the human resources development (HRD)–OD–ID approach, discussions about instruments, and its description of quality criteria, etc. PSO also promoted the ongoing development of its member organizations' partner policies and programmatic strategies. Capacity development is now increasingly important to member organizations and this is largely due to additional funding and support from PSO.

Most member organizations were found to be still in the process of developing their capacity development policies. Their support strategies were often not explicit or not well incorporated into their overall strategic plan. The quality of their support strongly depended on the experience and expertise of individual programme officers. However, only a small number of staff members were involved in the discussions with PSO.

Because there were no systems within the member organizations to translate the PSO recommendations into concrete guidelines for staff or to create opportunities to discuss them, little follow up was given to the PSO recommendations. For example, there was no evidence of discussions within PSO member organizations about how to conduct an effective and relevant risk analysis of capacity development programmes. Neither was there any dialogue about how sensitive issues such as leadership should be addressed, or any debate on how to induce second-order changes or introduce instruments and approaches that would facilitate joint learning, etc. The report showed that impediments to the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development are not being adequately addressed by member organizations. Member organizations did not document their practices regularly and even when they do, it is not specified how they learn from these practices. None of the programme officers interviewed was trained or instructed in capacity development.

Conclusion 2 – The effectiveness of PSO programmes is mainly determined by the somewhat limited ability of member organizations to provide the professional capacity development support that partner organizations need in order to achieve their objectives and outcomes. The strategy followed by the PSO office (characterized by facilitation, experiential learning and second-order learning) did not bring about substantial progress in the short term.

The flexibility of funding provided by PSO member organizations and the provision of additional funds for capacity development was greatly appreciated by partner organizations, who argued that this flexibility was the only way to make capacity development possible. Partner organizations also valued having open relationships with member organizations, which allowed programme officers to feel comfortable asking critical questions and challenging their partner organizations – resulting in a broader perspective for everyone. Although it is evident that great respect and trust exists between partners, it remained difficult for member organizations to address sensitive issues such as leadership and gender.

The case studies showed that member organizations rarely adequately addressed issues related to effectiveness and sustainability. This had a number of repercussions:

- Most project descriptions lacked a sound risk analysis and a comprehensive examination of opportunities.
- Many project descriptions included results of needs assessments, but these did not always result in realistic and relevant capacity plans.
- The support provided did not always address the actual capacity challenges of the partner organization in question.

- In many cases, support focused disproportionately on products instead of on the processes needed to produce these products.
- None of the cases produced evidence of thorough monitoring and evaluation of the support provided.

A number of these deficiencies resulted, unintentionally, from PSO's policy and the formats it imposed on project and programme proposals.

At the level of the partner organizations, there were a number factors influencing sustainability that needed to be taken into account:
- the presence or absence of an explicit vision of and strategy for capacity development;
- the standard of leadership of the partner organization;
- the presence or absence of internal learning systems;
- the way change processes were managed; and
- the way capacity development programmes were monitored and evaluated.

These issues were barely discussed by the PSO member organizations and their partners.

Conclusion 3 – Although the PSO office has evolved into a facilitator of learning processes on capacity development, its financing role is still essential for most of its members.

In recent years, the PSO office has turned its attention to learning and the learning environment of its member organizations – although as yet, a clear, vibrant learning culture has not been established in the majority of member organizations. PSO's ambition to encourage experiential learning as the driving force for single-, double- and triple-loop learning processes is complicated by the fact that organizational learning in the development context is difficult and that certain 'anti-learning elements' are embedded in the organizational cultures of many member organizations. Consequently, PSO is still searching for appropriate strategies to improve learning within its member organizations and to develop its instruments. Its LWTs and TLPs are the most recent additions to this overall strategy. One of the main challenges will be to find ways to enhance learning within the large and diverse group of members, the majority of whom, for example, do not participate in the TLPs.

PSO's capability *to adapt and self-renew* is very strong. It constantly improves its strategies in response to the changing demands of its member organizations by introducing initiatives such as:
- LWTs and the thematic learning programme;
- increased attention to learning style and culture in member organizations;
- improved intake interviews for accessing collective learning events; and
- increased involvement of management and senior staff.

The added value that PSO provides to smaller member organizations comes across clearly in the case study reports. They benefit significantly from exchanges with other members, training sessions and other learning events organized by PSO. According to its member and

partner organizations, PSO provided backup for member organizations whose heavy workloads did not allow them to invest in learning or to reflect on capacity development issues. They also helped partner organizations, who find it difficult to locate donors that finance specific capacity development projects or programmes. (When donors do fund capacity development, their financing is usually related to specific programmes and is not adequately focused on strengthening endogenous capacity development processes.) Under the influence of PSO, member organizations have started to make their capacity development policy and strategy explicit, which is a precondition for practice-based learning. They have also begun to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development projects and programmes.

This evaluation found that member organizations considered the quality of their relationship with PSO, which is primarily of financial nature, to be good. They agreed that they saw PSO not only as a donor but also as a stimulator of learning processes. However, member organizations also stated that PSO could be more 'compelling' in its relationships with members. On a negative note, member organizations indicated that in many cases PSO introduced new models and concepts that were not sufficiently tested. Member organizations would prefer more hands-on tools and models because they often lack the time to invest in experimentation. Member organizations were also critical of PSO's administrative demands regarding funded projects and programmes, which created significant frustration and often reduced members' willingness to participate in events or to apply for specific funds.

The PSO office has merged its knowledge centre with the programme department – a move which was seen as an effective step towards improving the coordination of PSO's efforts. This move was welcomed by the member organizations; particularly those with no specific capacity development expertise and who generally turn to PSO for information and support. Traditionally, PSO has not been a major publisher of articles and research papers, nor has it carried out much research of its own. Because of these factors, PSO is not perceived as a 'knowledge centre' in the sense that it does not generate and disseminate knowledge. It is also generally felt that the PSO website, www.pso.nl is not being used to its fullest potential.

However, member organizations agreed that collaboration with Southern umbrella organizations was promising. Members based in the South would, along with their partner organizations, like to see more coordinated actions and learning events taking place in their respective regions and countries to enhance learning on capacity development.

PSO reduced expenditure on long-term placements to 40% of its budget, in accordance with its agreement with the ministry. But evidence from the St Martin and UCMB cases illustrated that long-term technical assistants can produce added value, as long as the assistants are well-embedded in the organization, do not take over management tasks, and address sustainability.

Conclusion 4 – The PSO programme was very ambitious in its objectives, taking into account the amount of time needed to bring about change.

The level of effectiveness of the PSO programme 2007–2010 was strongly influenced by the changes that took place at the PSO secretariat, in the PSO member organizations, in the Southern partner organizations – as well as in the relationships between all these groups.

However, the objectives set out for many of the capacity development programmes implemented by the PSO member organizations were often not realistic in terms of the time that is usually required for change process to take place and the need for second-order changes. In practice, most member organizations contributed effectively to first-order changes. Environments conducive to the stimulation of second-order changes were largely absent at the level of the member organizations and at the level of the partner organizations.

Lessons, points of interest for future policy decisions, and dilemmas

The evaluation generated a number of issues that are presented below as dilemmas for future policy decisions.

Focus on results-based management versus support for endogenous capacity development.

The demand for results-based accountability set by the Dutch co-financing system has unintentionally narrowed the scope of member organizations' capacity development interventions. In order to meet the requirements of results-based management (RBM), many capacity development projects and programmes are limiting their focus to finding ways of improving financial management and accountability capacities. RBM and the co-financing system have not encouraged capacity development approaches that stem from a complex adaptive systems perspective or from incrementalism. It is fundamental to these types of approach that capacity development interventions are not set in advance and that room is left for experimentation and the facilitation of multiple interdependencies. This focus on RBM, which has been included in the co-financing system, is the reason why many PSO member organizations are reluctant to include specific capacity development projects and programmes in their co-financing proposals. It is also the reason why the need to strengthen weaker civil society organizations is often not taken into consideration.

The limited role for PSO member organizations contributing to capacity development versus an ambitious role supporting endogenous capacity development.

Evidence shows that the role of PSO member organizations' support for capacity development is limited because most programmes are donor driven and aim for immediate solutions to perceived needs. Member organizations remain unable to solve issues relating to effectiveness and sustainability because of their reluctance to intervene in internal organizational processes. In light of members' ability to support capacity development and the nature of their relationships with partners (which are characterized by their role as funders), it can be concluded that effective and sustainable support for endogenous capacity development is at risk. Long-term relationships and trust must therefore be established in order to widen opportunities for learning through joint action and to create

space for multiple interactions that will facilitate informal learning. The seeds of this approach have been found in those capacity development programmes that were managed locally by a capacity development officer.

PSO as a training institute versus PSO as a facilitator of organizational learning.
PSO has a wide diversity of member organizations. A substantial number of them and of their individual staff members still lack the basic knowledge and insight needed for building a strong civil society, establishing and fostering relationships with partner organizations, and developing capacity. This limits their ability to, for example, distinguish between effective and ineffective approaches to problem solving, understand the limitations of training as an instrument for capacity development, and recognize the principles of effective coaching. The instruments PSO has developed for imparting basic knowledge are of good quality and highly relevant. However, PSO also believes it has a role in the fostering of organizational learning. According to PSO, the principal change that is taking place during the current financing period is a shift in focus to analysis of the learning style, culture and capacity of member organizations – and the tailoring of PSO's learning instruments to accommodate this shift. With this new perspective, it will be the responsibility of each member organization to develop its own learning plan. Because the organizational learning scheme is in its very early stages, there are few results thus far and it is not yet clear to what extent PSO will actually be able to influence this type of learning culture at organizational level.

Funding of capacity development projects and programmes versus funding of learning for capacity development projects and programmes.
Up to 2007, its members saw PSO as a 'back donor', financing specific capacity development projects and programmes. This role was highly appreciated by both its members and their partners as not many donors are willing to fund specific capacity development projects and programmes. PSO contacts within organizations were perceived by their colleagues as the administrators of capacity development projects and programmes.

Since 2007 and the introduction of the LWTs, the position of PSO contacts within their organizations was strengthened. PSO funding created time and space for learning – though both of these essentials are still limited. Considering the inadequate attention paid to organizational learning as an essential element of capacity development, the risk exists that a decrease in funding dedicated to capacity development will lead to a reduction in the number of capacity development programmes, and a corresponding decline in the motivation to learn.

Member organizations need time to change.
It was only from 2009 on that most of the member organizations started to develop an explicit capacity development policy that formulated their intervention theory, strategies, approaches, instruments, etc. And it was also at about this time that member organizations started to invest in effective ways of learning from their everyday experiences, or practice-based learning. However, it is clear that a vibrant learning culture does not yet exist in most

member organizations. Only a small number have developed a comprehensive plan for organizational learning and knowledge development.

Most member organizations see learning as something that takes place during workshops and training sessions or by accessing knowledge products. It is regarded as an 'add-on' activity that takes staff away from daily business. In all the organizations that were visited, learning was under time pressure and only a small number of organizations were able to make time for learning (and this was often limited to referring to lessons learned in evaluations). A number of organizations have introduced reflection days (once or twice a year) or lunch meetings involving all programme staff. Only ICCO, Cordaid and Hivos specifically appointed staff to coordinate learning within their organizations. Smaller organizations lack the means for this kind of job profile. (Oxfam Novib was not included in the sample.)

There seems to be a lack of comprehension that most learning is informal and takes place at work. Member organizations need to transform their working conditions to create an environment where working and learning are linked. The challenge for PSO is to contribute to this transformation in cases where it is not being initiated from within. Training sessions and formal education are not sufficient to increase knowledge and skills. Changes within individuals and organizations are also linked to identity, motivation, commitment and the opportunities individuals are given within the organization to implement new insights. PSO aims to focus on these factors in its learning events. However, thus far it has not had a significant impact on the learning culture of the organizations.

The challenge for PSO will be to have an actual impact on the learning culture of its member organizations.

1

Introduction

1.1   Background of the evaluation

Capacity development has a prominent place in international development cooperation. However, the substantial support that is provided for it does not often translate into a significant enhancement of capacity. This is particularly the case for capacity that is aimed at reducing poverty. Capacity development also occupies a prominent place in the implementation of Dutch development cooperation. However, after a consultation with policy officers from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dutch NGOs, and the private sector organized by IOB in preparation for the evaluation, it became clear that there is a lack of clarity about what capacity means and how capacity development works.

One single report would not have done justice to the whole range of different support activities and their diverse contexts. Therefore, it was decided to follow a programmatic approach whereby a number of Dutch NGOs and departments of the Ministry were asked to participate in a comprehensive evaluation. Consequently, a series of seven separate evaluations has been conducted by Dutch NGOs and IOB; and the PSO evaluation is one of this number. Half-way through the evaluation process the Ministry asked IOB to broaden the scope of the PSO report into a programme evaluation and to address accountability objectives (see annex 2, addendum to PSO inception report).

1.2   Brief introduction to PSO

PSO is a Dutch umbrella organization made up of 59 member organizations working on capacity development in developing countries. PSO plays an indirect role in the capacity development of civil societies in the South. It is PSO's objective to improve the quality of capacity development in the South, as supported by its member organizations. PSO itself does not provide capacity development support directly to organizations in the South as its mandate is limited to providing support for its own members.

Improving the quality of capacity development in the South is realized through the strategic financing of programmes and projects implemented by member organizations that contribute to learning on the subject of capacity development of civil society and network organizations in the South. These organizations or networks are called partner organizations of the member organizations. Through a comprehensive package of services, PSO aims to contribute to a better quality of support for capacity development of civil society organizations in the South.

The current policy period (2007–2010) is a continuation of the policy period 2003–2006. However some major changes have taken place aimed at improving the quality of capacity development. These changes include:
- a widening of the scope of PSO in response to the emerging initiatives in the Netherlands that are becoming involved in North–South cooperation;
- the introduction of the strategic financing of innovative capacity building projects and programmes;

- the placement of much more emphasis on the learning process of capacity development that is taking place among all stakeholders involved in capacity building processes; and
- a renewed prominence for the role played by learning and the development of instruments to foster this learning – for example, the learning-working trajectory (LWTs), the collective learning trajectory (CLTs) and the thematic learning programmes (TLPs).

PSO's way of working has also changed. The multi-annual agreements have been replaced by LWTs. Under the agreement for this policy period, member organizations explicitly formulate what capacity development means for them, and set out the challenges they face in the field of capacity development. These LWTs help member organizations to stipulate what their challenges in the practice of capacity building in the South are and what they would like to learn during the period of the agreement in order to be better able to face those challenges. As well as providing the regular financing, strategic financing is also made available for projects and programmes that explicitly help both the member organizations and their partners to learn from experience in the field.

1.3   Reasons for and purpose of the evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation is to respond to Ministry, Dutch NGOs and Southern partners' needs for the knowledge and insight that contribute to further policy development. Because the Ministry and the Dutch NGOs and their partners aim to gain a better understanding of how, and under what circumstances, capacity development support can be effective, this evaluation will focus on understanding and identifying the factors that explain the results of external support.

The PSO programme evaluation also has a specific objective – as well as a learning objective – that's related to the accountability of the results achieved by the 2007–2010 programme with regard to the improved quality of the capacity development programmes implemented by the member organizations. PSO has no direct relationship with partner organizations in the South. It contributes to improving the quality of the capacity development programmes by influencing its member organizations and their relationships with their partner organizations. PSO assumes that by improving the ways in which member organizations work in the field of capacity development, it will have contributed to more effective and sustainable interventions by its members.

The evaluation report will:
1. allow the minister to account for policy results;
2. give insights that will help the Ministry to consider an appropriate institutional arrangement for Dutch knowledge centres;
3. give insights that will help PSO to formulate its future policy; and
4. provide inputs into the synthesis report on the evaluation of Dutch support for capacity development.

1.4 Objectives, key issues and evaluation questions

The objective of the evaluation is to answer three sets of questions at the level of the partner organizations, the member organizations and the PSO secretariat, concluding with one overall question concerning the lessons that can be learned. The first two sets of questions are identical to the questions in the general terms of reference of the IOB study on Dutch support for capacity development and concern effectiveness at the level of the partner organizations and member organizations. The third set of questions concerns the contribution of the PSO secretariat to the member organizations.

At the level of partner organizations:
- What changes have taken place in the capacity of partner organizations?
- What effects have changes in the capacity of partner organizations had on the realization of their development objectives (output and outcome)?
- How effective have PSO member organizations' interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of partner organizations?

At the level of member organizations:
- What changes have taken place in the capacity of member organizations to provide capacity development support?
- What effects have changes in the capacity to provide capacity development support for member organizations had on the realization of their capacity development objectives (output and outcome)?
- How effective have PSO's interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of member organizations?

At the level of the PSO secretariat:
- To what extent is the PSO secretariat recognized as a source of expertise and information on capacity development by its member organizations and the Southern organizations with which it collaborates directly?
- What factors explain the level of effectiveness of PSO?

Overall question:
- What lessons can be learned?

Specific questions
The specific questions listed below mostly concern planned results as defined by PSO at outcome level. These questions are additional to the specific questions mentioned in the general terms of reference.

At the level of partner organizations:
- How much of the strategic financing is spent on technical assistance, local support activities and activities supporting the capacity development of member organizations?
- How effective have strategic financing and, where it has been provided, regular financing, been?

- To what extent have partner organizations invested more in sustainable capacity development and improved their approaches based on lessons learned, reflection, and documenting and implementing new insights?
- To what extent have member organizations organized their secondments in a professional manner? (This question does not concern the logistical support provided by PSO's Personnel Affairs Abroad department.)

At the level of member organizations:
- To what extent have member organizations invested more in sustainable capacity development and improved their approaches based on lessons learned, reflection, and documenting and implementing new insights?
- To what extent are the member organizations and social organizations that collaborate with PSO involved in innovative approaches with regard to capacity development (strategies, sectors and themes)? To what extent do these organizations document and disseminate their experiments?
- To what extent do member organizations actively involve migrants in their programmes and projects and reflect on the relationship between capacity development and diversity?
- To what extent do member organizations involve Dutch and Southern youngsters in their programmes and projects with regard to capacity development?

At the level of the PSO secretariat:
- How effective have PSO's collective learning and learning-working trajectories been?
- What are the innovative approaches that were introduced (supported) by the PSO secretariat and how effective are these for developing capacity?
- To what extent have the PSO secretariat and PSO member organizations contributed to the debate on the role of civil society in development and the importance of capacity building for civil society?

The following key issues have been taken into account:
- *Gender*. Much consideration has been given to the extent to which gender has been addressed in capacity development programmes: (1) To what extent has focusing on gender influenced strategies with regard to supporting capacity development? (2) To what extent have changes in capacities related to gender influenced stakeholders' output and outcome? (3) To what extent have changes in output and outcome had equal impact on men and women and/or affected gender relations within the target groups?
- *Power*. Consideration will be given to the power relations between the ministry and PSO; between PSO and its members; between members and their partner organizations; and between the partner organizations and their beneficiaries. These power relations are not neutral and do affect the policy and practices of the different stakeholders.
- *Cross connections between the model of five core capabilities (5CCs) and the existing capacity development framework used by PSO based on the categories HRD, OD and ID.* As PSO is in the process of introducing the 5CC model, this evaluation is an opportunity to assess the usefulness of both frameworks. PSO's meta-evaluations have already demonstrated a certain overlap between the two models and this has been further explored during the evaluation.

1.5 Methodology

Efforts to study the concept of capacity are not often based on the perception of organizations as open systems. The open-systems approach to capacity development is an endogenous, non-linear process that is strongly influenced by a range of internal and external factors. This has major implications for evaluations that aim to outline effective strategies for identifying and addressing capacity challenges. It calls for ways to establish particular changes in an organization's capacity and analyzes the ways in which these changes carry over to, or interact with, changes at output and outcome level. In the light of this, donor support is merely one of several factors. An analysis of location-specific circumstances and internal and external factors therefore forms a substantial part of the evaluation.

For analytical purposes, the broad concept of capacity is subdivided into five core capabilities none of which is, by itself, sufficient to create capacity. All five core capabilities are strongly interrelated. They provide a basis for the assessment of a particular situation at a given moment, after which it can be tracked over time in order to analyze the ways in which it has developed. Figure 1 shows the approach that was used for both tracking and discussing changes in capacity and strategic planning and as a framework for the evaluations.

The framework and the indicators for each core capability needed to be contextualized and related to the perspectives of both the Dutch and Southern partners with regard to capacity development. The indicators have been determined in cooperation with the partner organizations (a bottom-up approach). The Southern perspective was very important in this evaluation. Southern partners were fully involved in the evaluation process from the outset, whether as members of reference groups, as resource persons or in the carrying out of fieldwork. The evaluation underlines the importance of the Southern partners' views of and experiences with capacity development.

International level   National level   Local level
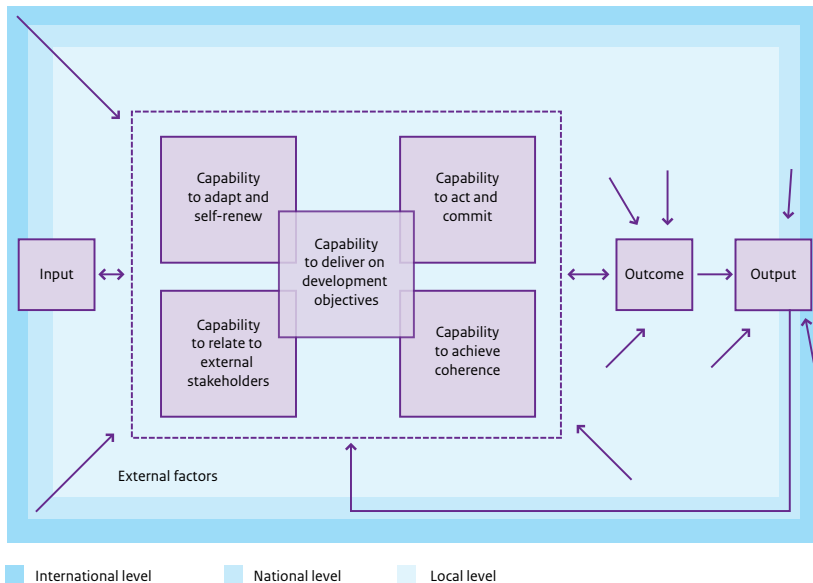
Figure 1. Analytical framework for capacity development. (Adapted from De Lange, Capacity.org 37, 2009).

The evaluation is based on evidence from 15 case studies selected in collaboration with PSO's programme managers. The selected cases needed to be representative in order to be in keeping with PSO's way of working. Though no explicit[1] set of indicators has been developed to determine this way of working, the following elements have been taken into account to ensure the evaluation is representative:[2]

- a good mix of cases involving both 'older' member organizations and 'new' member organizations;
- a mix of project approach and programme approach methodologies;
- a mix of several different types of instruments used for capacity development including technical assistance, short expert missions, and financing local activities;
- the presence of cases related to the LWTs;
- the necessity for each case included to have received regular or strategic financing; and
- the presence of a number of cases that received funding through specific funds such as cross-over funds, youth zone funds, the quality fund and the innovation fund.

(An overview of the cases and their various characteristics can be seen in annex 6). Looking at the sample, the cases that were selected are representative and in accordance with the way in which PSO works. (See the inception report for more information.)

[1]   There is no general overview of the number of projects and programmes funded in relation to the various characteristics of the PSO approach. It was not possible to organize a stratified selection. Programme managers have been the sources of information.

[2]   The selection procedure has been described in the addendum to the PSO inception report of January 2010.

1.6 Focus and limitations

Focus of the evaluation

The concept of organizations as open systems forms the starting point of this evaluation. And the five core capabilities of organizations, described above, provide the focus for the findings of the evaluation. Furthermore, capacity development needs to be seen in the context of an open systems approach because this enables us to consider its processes, relationships and behaviour, and the perspective of emergence from this viewpoint.

Because PSO-funded capacity development projects and programmes were the subject of the evaluation, the focus was on planned and explicit capacity development processes that had a clear set of objectives, expected results and activities.

The units of analysis of all the cases studied have been individual organizations – although this was unintended. Eleven of the 15 cases formed part of a programmatic approach, but the programmes themselves were never the units of analysis because none of the programmes was a collaborative association. Accordingly, it was the individual organizations involved in these programmes that were selected for evaluation. The position and role of the partners in the programmes were assessed but not the actual programmes.

Support for partner organizations that began during the 2003–2006 period, and that has continued to in the present period, has been included in the report in order to trace the extent to which the introduction of new policy instruments have had an impact on partner organizations.

The geographic focus of the evaluation was sub-Saharan Africa, as is the case for the general terms of reference. This can be justified by the fact that 60% of PSO's projects and programmes budget is spent in sub-Saharan Africa – and there are no indications that support provided in other continents is of a very different nature.

Limitations of the evaluation

Unfamiliarity with the rationale of the 5CC model and the background to it obliged team leaders to spend time briefing and guiding the national consultants. Because the national consultants had not participated in the design stage of the evaluation, time was needed for them to become familiar with the setup and approach. Some national consultants experienced the evaluation as externally driven and influenced by the Western way of thinking. They regarded the concept of the model as abstract and too theoretical. This complicated the analysis and the reporting process.

The exploratory nature of the evaluation itself and the approaches and tools that were used meant that the emphasis was on qualitative data. Unfortunately, this resulted in a lack of quantitative data at outcome level for the organizations. The time frame of the evaluation did not allow for the possibility of conducting quantitative surveys. This is a major limitation of the study. A good programme evaluation of capacity changes that could be linked to this study could have delivered more insights into the link between changed capacities and changed outputs and outcomes.

Cost-effectiveness was taken into account, though a thorough analysis of this cost-effectiveness was not possible within the parameters of this evaluation. A comprehensive financial analysis of the data would have been time consuming for two reasons: first, because financial data were spread over a number of different resources including the financial reports of PSO itself as well as the member organizations and partner organizations, and were not always available; second, because financial data were not linked to the instruments used (only the cost of technical assistance was clear), so specific instruments couldn't be linked clearly to the appropriate financial data. The result of this was that a qualitative assessment was carried out on the cost-effectiveness of the various capacity development programmes.

In the course of the 2007–2010 policy period, PSO introduced new instruments to foster learning at the member organization level. However, the results of capacity development are not immediately obvious after the capacity development intervention as it takes time before the results become visible. In that sense, this evaluation was planned too early to really assess the effects of PSO's new way of working; in fact, what comes across most clearly here are the effects of former policy periods. The same applies to the effects at partner level as the trickledown effect of changes made at member organization level are implemented slowly and take time to reach partner organization level.

1.7 Organization

The evaluation was conducted by a group of international consultants in conjunction with national consultants from each country taking part.

Geert Phlix was the overall team leader and coordinator of the evaluation and she participated in the evaluations in Kenya, Ethiopia and Sudan. She was assisted by Huib Huyse, research manager at HIVA/KULeuven and leader of the unit on development cooperation, who led the South African evaluations. Also assisting was Corina Dhaene, co-director and senior consultant of ACE Europe, who led the mission to Uganda.

The in-depth cases were carried out by national consultants:
• In Kenya, by Professor Njuguna Ng'ethe, associate research professor at the Institute for Development Studies in Nairobi and director of the Chronic Poverty Research Centre of the Institute of Development Studies.

- In Ethiopia, by Lebesech Tsega, an independent consultant working with Horn Consult. Mrs Tsega has extensive experience evaluating development cooperation programmes.
- In Uganda, by George Kasumba, a development economist with wide-ranging experience in development work in the public sector. He is a development management consultant with the Assess Africa Development Agency in Uganda.
- In South Africa, by Mark Turpin, a founding partner of and consultant with Kessels and Smit, The Learning Company, a global network that has supported organizational and individual learning processes since its establishment in 2007.
- In Sudan, by Kasmil Masheti, an independent consultant with extensive experience in relief activities and the monitoring and evaluation of programmes executed by civil society in Southern Sudan.

In each country two additional desk studies were carried out by the respective team leaders assisted by a national consultant:
- Kenya – Gathoni Njega is head of the capacity development department at St Martin CSA, Kenya, the NGO that participated in the pilot evaluation mission on Dutch support for capacity development.
- Ethiopia – Lebesech Tsega.
- Uganda – George Kasumba.
- South Africa – Mandy Barnes, senior consultant at Kessels Smit.
- Sudan – Kasmil Masheti.

A reference group was formed consisting of the following members:
- Dr David Sogge – external expert.
- Dr Lau Schulpen – external expert.
- Margo Kooijman – PSO Director.
- Eveline van Manen - DSY/MY (Ministry of Foreign Affairs).
- Piet de Lange – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB).
- Henri Jorritsma – Deputy director of IOB and chair of the meetings.
- Geert Phlix – overall team leader (consultant ACE Europe).

The reference group met twice; first in May 2009 to assess the inception report and then again in October 2010 to assess the final evaluation report.

1.8   The way in which the evaluation was conducted

First, some guiding principles of the evaluation are described; this is followed by an explanation of how the evaluation was conducted.

Exploratory nature
The nature of the evaluation was exploratory and descriptive. In carrying out the evaluation, every attempt was made to avoid a narrow interpretation of the concept of intervention – particularly at the primary data collection stage. The emphasis was always on 'what has

happened' and 'what has emerged' in the evolution of the organization. A time line methodology was used to that end based on an informal 'Wall-of-Wonder' approach, focusing on stories of change. The information collected during the timeline exercise was further analyzed for ways of linking the data to the evaluation questions and the 5CC model.

Local development or calibration of the indicators
In line with the general terms of reference, the identification of indicators and operational criteria was carried out in day-long participatory workshops that involved the staff of the partner organizations.

Conducting the five in-depth case studies
In preparation for the case studies, meetings were organized with the account officers at PSO and the programme officers at the member organizations. Each case study started with a week of exploration, during which the international consultant and the national consultant both visited the partner organization. During the course of this week, the evaluation team was introduced to the organization and the purpose and approach of the evaluation were explained. A start-up workshop was organized to discuss the various indicators that measure capacity, to make a stakeholder analysis in order to identify stakeholders involved in the evaluation, and to define the outcome and boundaries of the organization. The evaluation team, together with the partner organization, drew up plans for the collection of data.

In each case, the national consultants were responsible for the collection of data. No single method was used for data collection; rather several collection techniques were used in tandem, including bilateral interviews, group interviews, focus-group discussions and participatory self-assessment workshops. During the first workshop, a chronology of the organization was drawn up and stories of the different milestones in its life were attached to it to make a complete history of the organization. In two cases, this timeline exercise was repeated with the beneficiaries as well. In order to obtain coherence and a certain degree of uniformity between the various case studies, a comprehensive methodological guideline was developed, which was thoroughly discussed by the team leaders and the national consultants. In a second workshop, a self-assessment exercise was organized. This gave a scoring system to the indicators identified in the first workshop in relation to the different phases of the organizational evolution that were identified in the timeline exercise.

Triangulation of the data was carried out, comparing the outcome of the participatory workshops with information gleaned from the individual interviews and focus-group discussions as well as from the discussions with external stakeholders. It was also cross-referenced with secondary data gathered from documents. During the data analysis phase, information from the PSO annual reports was compared with results from the primary data collection.

At the end of the data collection phase, the international team leader visited the partner organization for the second time. At this point, they linked the data to the 5CC model, conducted additional interviews when needed, and discussed the lessons that were learned.

A meeting of all those involved was organized in each case, to discuss and validate the data that were collected and analyzed.

Conducting the desk studies
Ten additional cases were assessed based on a study of documents and a three-day evaluation visit. This three-day visit was, in almost all cases organized as follows:
Day 1 – An introduction to the organization and a series of interviews with directors and staff responsible for the management of the programmes and the partner relationships. The focus here was on assessing the partner relationship using the indicators to gauge the effectiveness and professionalism of the Dutch support for capacity development.
Day 2 – A day-long workshop with relevant staff. In the morning, the timeline exercise was conducted and in the afternoon, the self-assessment exercise took place.
Day 3 – Interviews with external stakeholders and some focus group discussions with beneficiaries in order to gather information on the evolutions in outputs and outcomes and to validate information gathered during the first two days. This was conducted by a team of two consultants, the international team leader and the national consultant. (This approach was adapted in two cases that had been benefiting from only a small amount of PSO financial support. Here, the participatory workshops were replaced with interviews.)

Data collection in the Netherlands
Visits were paid to the Dutch offices of the 15 member organizations that were involved in the case studies. There, the following techniques were used to gather data:
- interviews with the PSO contact person;
- interviews with the programme officers;
- group discussions – in situations where group discussions were not possible, they were replaced with interviews; and
- interviews with larger groups of programme officers on policy development with regard to the partners policy and capacity development.

The large group discussions were based on a timeline exercise that identified the milestones in the member organization's policy evolution and looked at internal and external factors that influenced these milestones. Specific focus was placed on the contribution of PSO and on the learning culture of the organization. Reports of these visits were sent to the respective member organizations for validation and feedback. Additionally, an electronic questionnaire was sent to all PSO member organizations.

At the PSO secretariat level, several bilateral and group interviews were organized with PSO staff including the director, the programme department and the knowledge centre. The overall team leader participated in the innovation award event and attended one of the CLTs where she interviewed several of the participants. Some external stakeholders were also interviewed, including officers at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and colleagues of PSO at the South Africa based Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) and Easun in Tanzania – two like-minded organizations with whom PSO collaborates.

1.9   Outline of this report

Chapter 2 present the findings of the five in-depth case studies and the ten quick scans. The chapter starts with a brief introduction to each case and this is followed by an analysis of the four evaluation questions. More detailed information on these cases can be found in the separate case study reports, which make up the majority of the chapter.

Chapter 3 focuses on the PSO member organizations and describes the changes that have taken place at that level. It also examines the degree to which PSO has effected these changes.

Chapter 4 is about PSO's policy reconstruction and includes an analysis linking the changes that were observed at the partner and member organization levels to the policy and strategy of PSO.

Chapter 5 describes the lessons learned during the course of the evaluation.

This outline is consistent with the initial decision of the evaluation to start from evidence-based case studies in the South instead of starting from the point of view of a reconstruction of the policies of PSO and its member organizations.

2

The case studies

2.1 Introduction

Five cases were studied in accordance with the general terms of reference. A summary of each of these cases can be seen in Table 1. An additional ten cases were studied based on document analysis and short visits to the partner organizations concerned – these are referred to as the quick scans. There is an introduction to these cases later in this chapter.

Table 1. Overview of cases studied		
Country	In depth cases	Quick scans
Kenya	St Martin SCA – MM	LVCT – Hivos Nacodev – Dorcas
Ethiopia	MKC-RDA – Tear	Amref – Amref NL GPDC – IKV Pax Christi
Uganda	KDDS – Woord en Daad	UCMB – Cordaid VSO Uganda – VSO
South Africa	Niza - FXI	Turqle Trading – FTO Both Ends – EMG
Sudan	CADEP – ICCO	Wau county health systems – HealthNet TPO ZOA Sudan – ZOA

All the partner organizations studied are individual organizations (with the exception of the Wau county health system). Support for capacity development takes place within the framework of a partner relationship and the role of programme funder underpins the relationship in most cases (Fowler, 2000). There are three exceptions to this model:
• Niza has started to become part of an international network with its partners;
• Pax Christi has no strong financial relationships with its partners and tries to establish mutual and balanced partner relationships; and
• the CADEP programme is a capacity development programme that targets both new and emerging civil society organizations (CSOs) as well as more established civil society organizations in Southern Sudan. Not all of the participating organizations have a partnership relationship with ICCO.

All of the partner organizations, with the exception of the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI), are service delivery organizations that contribute to poverty reduction by delivering specific services, generally related to health, food security and education. They also contribute to poverty through the empowerment of their beneficiaries. None of them, again with the exception of FXI, is involved in advocacy or lobbying activities and none of them is a PSO member organization.

More detailed information can be found in the separate case study reports.

2.2   Case study I: Kenya – St Martin CSA – partner of Mensen met een Missie

The object of this evaluation is a single organization, St Martin Catholic Social Apostolate (CSA), a religious grassroots organization that was started in 1999. St Martin's aim is 'to build a strong capacity in communities of all faiths that actively implements the Gospel of Service, by empowering and caring for vulnerable groups of people'. St Martin's activities fall into five individual programmes, each of which addresses a particular societal problem and targets a specific group. The five programmes are on:
- people with disabilities;
- active non-violence and human rights;
- street children and children in need;
- HIV/Aids, alcohol and drug abuse; and
- savings and microcredit.

The main outputs of St Martin are (a) the building of awareness within the communities, via volunteers, to take care of the disadvantaged in their community, and (b) the provision of specific services such as paralegal advice, support for income-generating groups, voluntary counselling and testing, and homes for disabled children and for street children. The outputs are aimed at achieving an informed local community and are expected to lead to a number of outcomes such as attitude and behavioural changes at individual, household and community levels.

St Martin's views on capacity development were not spelt out comprehensively in a manner that led to clearly expressed planning. However, St Martin has invested considerably in its own internal capacity development, mainly through staff training and by systematically reflecting on the programmes they are involved in. St Martin seeks to develop organizational capacity mainly through technical assistance from abroad and it views training and spiritual formation as key to organizational capacity development. They achieve this through organizing short courses themselves and by subsidizing staff who wish to embark on further education courses.

What changes have taken place in St Martin's capacity?

All five core capabilities have developed within the organization. During the early stages of organizational growth, a good deal of consideration was given to the development of a vision, mission, strategy and support infrastructure, organizational structure and systems, and organizational culture. All of these enabled St Martin to develop programmes that are highly relevant to the needs of the poor and the excluded in the communities in and around Nyahururu. The importance of spiritual development and the commitment of staff appear to be crucial for the development of the *capability to act and commit* as well as the *capability to deliver on development objectives*.

St Martin has always fostered the *capability to relate to external stakeholders*. The organization has a large number of diverse collaborators; has a good relationship with government – as can be witnessed by the government's willingness to allow St Martin to sit in on all local state development institutions; receives regular and good financial and other support from donors; enjoys immense community confidence and support – as evidenced by the large number of volunteers who work with it, and has established multiple forums for interaction both internally and outside the organization.

There is strong evidence that St Martin has a strong *capability to adapt and self-renew*. The organization firmly believes in the importance of continuous learning and further education for its staff. A training and facilitation department has specific responsibility for carrying out internal strategy and programme reviews that involve staff, volunteers, beneficiaries and external stakeholders such as the state institutions they collaborate with. St Martin is acutely aware of the country's national agendas, for example on HIV/Aids, and is able to react appropriately.

St Martin aims to realize the *capability to achieve coherence* in the way in which it implements its activities and in its management style. This is accomplished through the considered way new-staff induction and job coaching are treated within the organization and by the existence of multiple platforms for inter-programme and intra-programme consultations. Through staff training, in particular their spiritual formation, St Martin's leadership has succeeded in creating a shared vision of and a coherent approach to service delivery.

As with any organization, there is always room for improvement. A number of shortcomings in the development of its capabilities hindered critical reflection on the strategies that were implemented and on the outcomes they achieved. Principally, these were the lack of a well-developed evaluation system with data collection on the beneficiary level – the outcome data – and the non-existence of external evaluations.

The early stages of the organization's development were a direct result of technical assistance from outside the country. In particular, the long-term technical assistant provided by Mensen met een Missie (MM) has contributed a great deal to the development of management systems, organizational structures, manuals, procedures, etc. The overall increase in external funding was crucial for fostering the *capability to deliver on development objectives*. Changes in government policies on drug abuse, HIV/Aids and street children also affected the organization's capacity. St Martin has had to find ways of collaborating with many stakeholders, especially stakeholders from state institutions such as the judiciary, police, prisons, and the probation department. Next to these external factors, five internal factors have been relevant in the capability changes at St Martin:
1. the very positive and inspiring leadership of the director and the two vice-directors, all of whom enjoy the confidence of their staff;
2. St Martin's ability to attract Kenya's supply of qualified personnel has increased organizational stability;
3. the training of staff both in-house and externally;

4. the existence of internal structures and platforms that facilitate communication, reflection and training; and

5. the recruitment and management of community volunteers that have immensely improved the *capability to relate to external stakeholders* and the *capability to deliver on development objectives*.

What effects have changes in the capacity of St Martin had on the realization of its development objectives?

Overall, the five programmes have grown in both size and in the diversity of their outputs – which is a good indicator of overall organizational development. Because St Martin's strategy is based on the work of the volunteers and the training that's required in order for this work to take place, an increase in training within each programme could make a noticeable difference over time. More training has been given, new themes have been addressed, and new target groups have been reached. These initiatives have not been exclusively for the volunteers, but also for various stakeholders such as government officers.

Training has evolved to become more practical and more relevant. New activities have appeared within each programme. For example, in the street children programme, a change has been made from placing street children in non-formal education to sending them to public schools; in the programme for people with disabilities, disabled children are being involved in farming projects; and as part of the active non-violence and human rights programme, paralegal units have been established.

Some of the outputs were the direct results of technical assistance from outside the country. Long-term technical assistance contributed greatly to the creation of a training and facilitation development department, which included a 'train the trainer' programme and the development of training manuals. The overall increase in external funding has helped to broaden programme diversity and enhance the quantitative output of each programme and its support departments. Nearly all the programmes and departments have managed to meet the majority of their planned targets. From within Kenya, technical assistance has also helped to diversify output, mainly in the training of paralegals.

All St Martin's programmes and departments have one common expected outcome – that the beneficiaries would make use of the services and facilities.

Because there is a dearth of reliable outcome data, the evaluation could not find evidence of a link between changed output and changed outcome at St Martin.

How effective have external interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of St Martin?

MM provided St Martin with financial support for the active non-violence programme that covered the cost of activities and salaries. Specific support for capacity development was realized through the provision of a long-term technical assistant. The technical assistants from PSO and MM were the most important external factors that influenced the evolution of the five core capabilities. In particular, the advisor for institution and capacity building

had a direct influence on the changes with regard to the five core capabilities. Additionally, two junior technical assistants were sent to support the establishment of a curio shop. Unfortunately, this project was not successful.

Table 2. Overview of the budget for the period 2001–2009 (€)					
Year	Active non-violence programme	Cost of technical assistance			St Martin's overall budget for the last five years In euro and (KES)
		Senior	Junior	Junior	
2001	/		/	/	
2002	/		/	/	
2003	12,700		/	/	
2004	11,800			/	
2005	11,800			/	270,164 (30,078,946)
2006	11,800	249,359	85,472		381,608 (42,479,548)
2007	16,800	/	/		513,180 (57,793,664)
2008	18,000+ 4.160 (Geneva)	/	/		492,980 (54,872,237)
2009	21,200	/	/	86,299	791,924 (88,146,935)
Total	108,260	249,359	85,472	86,299	

Additional financial support of €12,000 from MM's own budget is not included.

The data from St Martin is in Kenya shillings (KES). Exchange rate: 1 KES = €0.00898 (7 December 2009).

Between 2003 and 2005, the ANV project was financed by MM's own budget. From 2006 onwards, it was co-financed.

Although MM is a rather small donor for St Martin (its funding has fallen from a 30% share in 2005 to just 5% in 2009), it remains a donor with whom St Martin has a very close relationship. MM is the only organization that supports the St Martin's capacity development. The only other donors that fund capacity development are the diocese of Padua and Youth and Mission. However, these organizations send people abroad within the framework of international solidarity, mainly to have an African experience and to facilitate cross-cultural learning.

Table 3. Overview of the input-output-outcome of PSO-funded programme	
MM's input regarding capacity development	Long-term assistant. One advisor for the purpose of institution and capacity building (April 2001–March 2003; April 2003–March 2006 and April 2006–July 2006). Two junior placements to assist in the establishment and functioning of the curio shop (September 2004–November 2006 and October 2006–January 2009).
Output of the PSO-financed capacity development programmes	Institution and capacity building programme. HRD: staff trained (various topics related to the programmes), spiritual formation. OD: development of organizational structures, operational guidelines and policies (on HRD, training, volunteers, etc.), set-up of the training and facilitation department. Curio shop. HRD: staff trained in management skills and technical skills (leather workshop). OD: structuring the workshops (leather and wood carving), development of management tools and establishment of internal processes (administration, budgeting, stock system and sales records).
Effect on St Martin's output	(1) The advisor on institution and capacity building influenced changes with regard to the five core capabilities. All the programmes were developed with the backing of St Martin (strategic choices, methodological approaches focus on the management of volunteers, 'train the trainer' modules, etc.). The organization currently collaborates with 1,300 volunteers who are trained and supported to implement the various programmes. The organization became well established and capable of attracting external funding. With the increase in funding, the output also increased. Because of the regular revision of programmes and strategies, new themes and new target groups were addressed. (2) The curio-shop – two operational workshops make hand-crafted products to be sold in the curio shop. Access to some commercial markets within Kenya. (Facilitated access to markets in the Netherlands was not sustainable.) The curio shop is not yet profitable. The income generated by the artisans is limited and no income is generated for St Martin.
Effect on St Martin's outcome	An informed local community to take care of the disadvantaged people within the communities. Only anecdotal information on outcome changes is available.

Effectiveness

The objectives set out in the application forms for the long-term assistants were largely realized, with exception of the curio shop. The HRD was seen as a crucial element in the advancement of the five core capabilities. Staff members received considerable training and acquired skills, knowledge and attitudes that have a positive influence on fostering the

capability to act and commit and the *capability to deliver on development objectives*. The technical assistants contributed to the development of organizational structures, guidelines and policies that have been essential for promoting the *capability to act and commit* and the *capability to deliver on development objectives*. Staff acquired the skills and knowledge necessary to further build up the organizational structures. Systems were put in place to revisit the strategies regularly, and this was done in a very participative way. The importance given to the culture of the organization as well as the identity, spirit and values encouraged by its charismatic founders, have gone a long way towards influencing the *capability to achieve coherence*.

Because of the constant effort that has gone into HRD and the establishment of a training and facilitation department as part of the OD, St Martin has a strong learning culture that strengthens its *capability to adapt and self-renew*. MM did not contribute to the strengthening of a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that included 'objective and reliable' data collection at outcome level, nor did it contribute to the development of a gender policy for the organization. The technical assistance had less influence on the *capability to relate to external stakeholders* because it was most influential during the formation phase when the organization was very inward looking. The reasons for not achieving some of the expected results are linked to the organization's very ambitious capacity development plan, to internal factors such as staff turnover and to unforeseen activities that were taken up by the technical assistant.

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Sustainability
The sustainability of the results achieved by the capacity building process has been safe-guarded. Systems were put in place that allow the development and revision of policies and strategies to be a continuous process. All management tasks were handed over to the local staff in an orderly way. Policies, procedures and guidelines were carefully documented.

However, the sustainability of the curio shop is at risk. This is partly because it was conceived as an experiment to see if commercial activities would be relevant to an organization such as St Martin and whether they could generate any income. It was developed without an appropriate follow-up strategy. The project is still not very well embedded in the structures of St Martin and therefore did not receive priority at management level.

Relevance
Despite the lack of a well-developed project description, MM's support has been perceived by St Martin as being relevant. The input of long-term technical assistants addressed the needs of St Martin and its vision of capacity development. The technical assistants appear to have been well suited to their roles and their input was assessed as adequate and effective. In particular, the personality, experience and commitment of the first technical assistant was crucial in the realization of St Martin's objectives. Last but not least, MM's leadership, which guided and managed the capacity development processes of the organization, was greatly valued.

The support for the establishment of the curio shop was hindered by the lack of a good risk analysis, a sound assessment of the challenges and weak monitoring of the project. Roles and responsibilities with regard to the management of the technical assistants were clearly described in the application forms; however, it seems that this division of roles and responsibilities was not properly assessed and monitored. This appeared not to have been a problem for the supervision of the first technical assistant, who was part of the management team, but supervision of the juniors was problematic. Gender issues have not been part of the capacity development programmes and St Martin has no explicit gender policy. The organization can be considered as gender sensitive, although this is limited to certain programmes.

MM has no separate or explicit policy on support for capacity development. However support for capacity development has always been at the core of its strategy, particularly in its focus on training and the transfer of knowledge by sending people abroad to strengthen organizations. MM used to have a separate personnel department, but since 2006, the organization has been going through an internal restructuring process, merging the project-financing and personnel departments into one department. When PSO started putting more emphasis on the quality of support for capacity development (from 2003 onwards), quality issues also became part of the dialogue between PSO and MM. Up to mid-2007, the use of long-term assistance was one of the most important points of discussion between PSO and MM, and since that time, the discussion has focused more on the effectiveness of capacity development interventions, through the development of LWTs.

Lessons learned

Support for capacity development by long-term technical assistants can be very effective as long as the technical assistants have a suitable personality profile, relevant expertise, the appropriate experience and commitment, and are well embedded within the organization. When capacity needs are not closely linked to the organization's outcome statement but are *ad hoc* and project based, support for capacity development might not address that organization's real capacity challenges. St Martin faced many challenges such as strengthening the planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) system, strengthening the training and facilitation department, strengthening the institutional development of the organization, and discussing the new roles St Martin needs to take up in Kenyan society. Some of these issues were taken up explicitly only recently by St Martin and by MM.

A good PME system is needed to monitor support for capacity development. This should include a clear description of and respect for roles and responsibilities with regard to the supervision of the technical assistants.

Care needs to be taken at the planning stage to ensure that the positive results of capacity development support are sustainable.

2.3   Case study II: Ethiopia – MKC-RDA – partner of Tear

The object of this evaluation, MKC-RDA (Meserete Kristos Church Relief and Development Association), is a single organization that implements a range of capacity development programmes and projects in the various communities in Ethiopia. Over the years, MKC-RDA has evolved from being a few personnel and scattered projects into a larger organization with permanent staff and integrated developmental interventions. It aims to address the varied and complex problems of its target communities. A strategic plan was developed in 2005 to define the vision, mission and strategic goals that would guide its operations in the subsequent years.

The development objectives of MKC-RDA are to improve food security at household level and bring about sustainable livelihoods. As indicated in the first strategic plan, the food security projects – which include Food and Cash for Work, Seed Loan and Grants, and Chicken Loan – all focus on the Meta Robi and Boricha regions and have rehabilitation and disaster mitigation components. As well as these relief activities, a range of assorted projects has been implemented in various parts of the country. These projects are concerned with areas such as health, education, child development and sponsorship, infrastructure, etc. The Child Sponsorship Project has now expanded into many areas of the country.

The outcome statement of the Meta Robi integrated programme, which was financed by Tear in the Netherlands, is to improve the food security of the target communities. The types of activity undertaken by this programme include:
- running action oriented workshops and field demonstrations;
- organizing water-users associations and giving skills training;
- conducting veterinary skills training and demonstrations;
- giving training on personal hygiene and sanitation;
- facilitating functional literacy activities;
- working in close partnership with Meta Robi woreda (administrative district) offices; and
- actively encouraging the participation of the target group in the programme.

Capacity is defined by MKC-RDA as 'the ability of people and organizations and society as a whole to perform tasks and produce outputs, define and solve problems, make informed choices, order their priorities and plan their future'. The three-year, PSO-funded capacity building project was therefore intended to enable MKC-RDA 'to involve the target communities in a holistic transformation by the end of 2010.'

What changes have taken place in MKC-RDA's capacity?
The different core capabilities of the organization have been developed to varying degrees over the years.

Capability to act and commit

The 2005 strategic plan established the proposed direction of the organization. It stressed the need for strong leadership that coordinated and managed the organization and the programmes. Its vision and mission were coherently articulated along with its Christian values and principles.

At present, the organizational structure is under review in order to better coordinate the integration of the interventions that the previous strategies could not address. It is assumed that the new organizational structure will enable the key departments to function better because it sets out clearly defined tasks that can be performed with a collaborative spirit. This is expected to reduce the routine engagements of the executive director and free him of the need to micro-manage the organization. (This organizational structure is still in its early stages though and is not yet fully functional.)

Capability to deliver on development objectives

A number of changes have taken place in the area of human resources development (HRD). These have included improvements in the skills levels of staff members that will enable them to implement participatory and holistic food security programmes. Systems and procedures such as performance evaluation sessions have been put in place and M&E has become part of the internal capacity building process. An M&E toolkit, a standard report writing framework, and communication and information sharing mechanisms have all been implemented and personnel have been taught how to use them. Performance evaluations have been introduced in order for supervisors to make objective decisions. Different forms of training have been proposed as part of the internal capacity development strategy. All of the above are important for the delivery of MKC-RDA's development objectives. However, shortages of human resources in terms of numbers and skills levels is an ongoing challenge, as is the problem of staff transience. The inability to implement the proposed short- and long-term training programmes has evidently created resentment. This resentment has been exacerbated by the lack of a motivational system alongside a workload that is often too heavy. Several manuals and procedures that have been developed are not fully operational yet.

Capability to relate to external stakeholders

MKC-RDA has very good relationships with the various stakeholders. It is evident that both the target communities and the local government offices see MKC-RDA as a credible organization as a result of its contribution to community awareness, self-reliance, basic education and the empowerment of women.

Capability to adapt and self-renew

The emergency intervention and the shift from scattered and sector-focused activities to an integrated and programmatic approach indicate that MKC-RDA's capability to adapt and self-renew is well-developed. This capability is further highlighted in the organization's determination to adopt a more systematic way of operating.

The leadership crisis in the 2006–2009 programme period had a significant impact on the various capabilities of the organization. The current management acknowledges the challenges of the past and indicates that it is trying to take measures on issues related to HRD, management information systems, M&E, stimulating a positive working culture, learning and sharing based on existing opportunities, etc. Internal teamwork, though improved, is still weak as is internal communication and the sharing of information.

The capability to achieve coherence
This capability is a challenge. Management is not able to balance diversity within the organization. Though MKC-RDA is implementing some integrated development programmes, the organization continues to be involved in implementing scattered projects all over the country. The management faces the huge task of providing inspiration and developing the type of leadership that is less involved in technical matters and which focuses instead on policy and strategic issues. Frustration over the lack of clarity of management mandates is expressed regularly within the organization.

In general, in spite of some indicators of the different capabilities, the shift to effective programmatic implementation was held back by the lack of an adequate strategy, the lack of an enabling and functional organizational structure, inadequate leadership, transient staff, poor team spirit, the fragmentation of efforts, centralized decision making, a considerable gap between the expectations of the donors and the stakeholders, inferior-quality and tardy reports, and other capacity problems. This demands that the organization restart the capacity building programme in a systematic way.

Several external factors have had a negative influence on the capacity of the organization. Four main factors have been identified: government policies, ethnicity, the presence of a large number of external donors and climate change.
1. Some of the government's policies and guidelines are positive and enable the effective operation of MKC-RDA. The general and sector-specific policies are important for poverty alleviation interventions; however, NGO legislation restricts the space for involvement in lobbying and advocacy activities. This restriction means that MKC-RDA will face a challenge if it goes ahead with the advocacy and lobbying strategy indicated in its strategic plan on human rights and women's constitutional rights. It will have to adjust its interventions and strategies to keep them within the law.
2. Ethiopia is a country with diverse ethnic and religious communities and groups that have co-existed for centuries, even when governments and political systems have changed. While this culture of co-existence is still the norm, ethnic and religious tensions indicate negative signals and threats to the culture of peaceful co-existence. Although MKC-RDA has achieved good results in its peace and conflict resolution interventions in various areas, some local authorities have stopped the interventions because of the NGO proclamation that prohibits advocacy and lobbying on, amongst other issues, human rights, governance and accountability.
3. The number of local and international non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) is increasing. These NGDOs actively seek out experienced and competent staff and some of them attract experienced personnel away from organizations such as

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MKC-RDA. This is serious challenge to MKC-RDA, which has ongoing difficulties keeping its experienced staff.

4. Ethiopia has experienced recurrent droughts in the past, and floods and earthquakes have also had significant disastrous effects. These disasters are likely to be even more frequent in the future given global climate change and communities' vulnerability to drought and its associated crop failure as well as environmental degradation, etc. Such calamities take up a significant proportion of the time of the programme support advisor and the time staff members spend on emergency activities. Resources intended for development programmes are frequently diverted to address emergency needs.

Weak leadership and a strong dependency on external donors held the organization back in its attempts to find an appropriate way of responding to all the factors described in the above.

What effects have changes in the capacity of MKC-RDA had on the realization of its development objectives?

Even though no outcome data are available on the integrated food security programmes in Meta Robi and Borincha, MKC-RDA has had a significant effect on the overall situation of its target communities. This has been especially so in terms of changes to the lives of the direct beneficiaries. The community members now have access to various services including potable water, education and agricultural training. They also have the backing of better skills, knowledge about how best to use their improved services, and recourse to problem identification, analysis and solutions. Among the notable changes in communities is the level of self-confidence seen in both men's and women's groups about their own capacities. Despite the lack of a gender policy and clear implementation guidelines, gender issues *have* been addressed in the Meta Robi programme, mainly by focusing on the empowerment of women.

Programme and project implementation resources such as HDR, financial systems and procedures and the management structure are critical for the implementation of the integrated food security programmes. Staffing, at all levels, is critically important for the whole process of planning and implementation. The existence of committed staff is an important factor in the realization of the organization's development objectives. To this effect, MKC-RDA has invested in various types of staff. However, this investment could not pay off as expected because significant numbers of trained personnel left the organization. The capacity to recruit highly qualified staff has been obstructed by the lack of adequate financial resources, the flux and uncertainty of the staff in the past that still influences the perceptions of old and new staff members today.

Although good leadership is critical for the smooth running of the organization, it is evident that its ineffectiveness during the 2007–2008 crises created a capacity gap. The new director has not yet been able to solve the management challenges.

How effective have external interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of MKC-RDA?

MKC-RDA has been in a partnership with The Evangelical Alliance Relief Fund in the Netherlands (Tear) since 2003. Through its relationship with Tearfund UK, Tear identified MKC-RDA as a partner in the Cash for Work programme (2003–2005), which was set up in response to the food crisis in 2003. When MKC-RDA moved towards an implementation of integrated rural development programmes, Tear continued to support its programmes.

Table 4. Overview of the budget for the period 2005–2009 (€)			
Year	Tear supported food security programme Meta Robi	PSO support (excluding overhead costs that remain in the Netherlands)	Overall budget MKC-RDA
		Capacity building program	Technical assistants via PSO Cross Over fund	
2005	105,000	13,633	/	Not available
2006	75,000	24,100	/	Not available
2007	100,000	23,305	/	Not available
2008	50,000	21,215	35,000	Not available
2009	50,000	14,910	65,000	Not available
Total	380,000	97,163	100,000	

In 2005, Tear financed (with PSO funds) a seven-month-long programme with the aim of developing the capacity of the staff to develop in a participatory way. In the same year a three-year integrated development proposal on food security. They were briefed to do this as part of the improved programmatic approach. This project was successful. Additionally, a specific three-year capacity building programme was financed with PSO funds between 2006 and 2009 to enhance the organization's capacity to implement this rurally-based, food security programme. Between 2007 and 2009, Tear financed a food security programme called the Meta Robi integrated rural development programme. This was extended for a further six months into 2010.

Within the framework of the three-year capacity development programme, another PSO contract was made to send a technical assistant for two years under the PSO Cross Over fund. This took place from July 2008 to July 2010. As well as the direct financial support given to MKC-RDA, Tear also financed joint programmes in collaboration with Tearfund UK that were directed to all partners of Tear in the Netherlands and Tearfund UK in Ethiopia. These programmes are aimed at building the capacities of several partners. Tear contributes to the following programmes with PSO funds:

1. Disaster mitigation programme – this involved six partners and took place between 2004 and 2006 with a PSO-funded technical assistant.
2. Disaster risk reduction programme – this involved four partners and took place between 2008 and 2010. It was funded by PSO and jointly implemented with Tearfund UK.
3. HIV/Aids programme – this involved six partners and took place between 2007 and 2009, with an extension to March 2010. It was funded by the PSO innovation fund and implemented jointly with Tearfund UK.

MKC-RDA was a beneficiary of all these programmes. It participated in training programmes and received advice and support from the consultants and the Tearfund-appointed technical assistants.

Tear is an important donor for the integrated food security programmes implemented by MKC-RDA. Because MKC-RDA evolved from a relief-oriented group into an organization that implements integrated programmes, the capacity to implement and manage such programmes needed to be developed. To that end, the three-year capacity building programme was developed.

Aside from implementing integrated food security programmes in three intervention zones, MKC-RDA is above all a project-based organization with a large child sponsorship programme. More than 13 donors support MKC-RDA, mostly on a project basis. Tear, Tearfund UK, and since 2010, Woord en Daad, invest in the organization's capacity development.

Table 5. Overview of the input-output-outcome PSO-funded programme	
Input – Tear support for capacity development	Three-year capacity development programme, jointly supported by the technical assistant sent under the PSO Cross Over programme: - financing local capacity development activities: (i) local consultants that facilitate needs assessments, training needs, conduct training, arrange exchange visits within the country, develop formats for results-based management, M&E and a management information system (ii) costs related to the development of manuals and publications, the procurement of laptops, photocopy machine, lcd projector, the installation of an intranet, the purchase of the server and telecommunication costs, membership fees to local networks (iii) salary costs of the management information system (MIS) officer; and - long-term placement of a technical assistant under the PSO Cross Over programme.
Output of the PSO-financed capacity development programmes	In HRD to improve the knowledge and skills of MKC-RDA staff allowing them to facilitate the processes of transformation among communities: • increased skills to develop project proposals and strategic plans in a participatory way; • improved monitoring and reporting skills; • improved facilitation of training and supporting self-help groups; and • the introduction of a new adult literacy approach, integrating literacy with livelihood activities. In OD of management systems and in the putting in place of procedures to improve MKC-RDA effectiveness and efficiency: • several manuals were developed in the areas of operational guidelines, HRD, and M&E; • M&E toolkit was developed, not operational yet; • several policies, such as gender policies and policies on HIV/Aids, were developed but have not been put into practice yet. A policy on salaries was improved and put into practice; • staff performance evaluation guidelines were developed, but are not operational yet; • MIS officer was put in place; • inter- and intra-section and department reflection and learning module was developed, but has not been put into practice yet; • intranet and computerized system were introduced, although connectivity was hampered by environmental barriers; and • improved financial reports and accounting procedures were implemented. In ID improved internal and external networks and relations were developed: • a new organizational structure was drawn up, but has not yet been approved by the board); • improved internal communications were implemented; • public relations (PR) material was developed; and • partner networks of Tear, Tearfund UK and Woord en Daad were participated in.

Effect on output of MKC-RDA	As described above, MKC-RDA is still facing several capacity challenges, primarily at the organizational level. The main results of the capacity development programme can be seen at the programme implementation level. This is because of the training and support of the staff at project level and the commitment of this staff. Output and outcome will probably be enhanced when the organizational challenges are resolved. Improved rural integrated programme in Meta-Robi resulting in improved access of the community members to different services such as potable water, education, agricultural training and better skills, etc. The 2009 programme evaluation describes following output of the rural integrated programme: • the establishment of self-help groups and functional adult literacy groups; • the increased capacity of community members to analyze the causes of their problems and to develop action plans; and • improved literacy levels.
Effect on outcome of MKC-RDA	There is only anecdotal evidence of improvements in the lives of men and women in the communities in Meta Robi. Focus groups organized during this evaluation revealed the following changes in the lives of the beneficiaries in Meta Robi: • increased agricultural production (achieved by reducing chemical fertilizers) and the start of income-generating activities resulting in cash for school fees; • improved sanitation such as access to latrines, resulting in the reduction of waterborne diseases; • improved self-confidence of women and the recognition of women by community members; and • changed attitudes among women and men (e.g. less drinking and less violence).

Effectiveness

The continued external interventions in general, and Tear's support in particular, are perceived as critical for strengthening the capacity of the organization. However we need to take into account that none of the five core capabilities is stable yet because of the ineffective management and leadership that has prevailed since 2008. Implementation of the capacity development programme was held back by the departure of the capacity building officer and the fact that the operations department was overloaded with work that did not prioritize the capacity development programme. The arrival of the technical assistant accelerated the capacity development process.

Overall, the capacity development programme contributed to the process of organizational development, though not all of its objectives were realized. This can be explained by the decision to focus on products to the detriment of focusing on processes. For example, different operational manuals and policies, such as gender policy and HIV/Aids policies, were developed but often not in a participatory way. This means that the concrete changes made as a result of these manuals and guidelines are yet to be seen.

Several training sessions were organized, but according to the programme staff, in Meta Robi, the training provided lasted just two or three days, which was not sufficient to develop capacity or to build up the confidence required to implement assigned activities. In some cases, training was not organized at the right time. Moreover, the programme staff felt that the coaching and monitoring support provided by head office was inadequate because a high number of qualified staff have left the organization. The operations department was, according to the PSO project description, responsible for the follow-up of the training programmes, including the transfer of knowledge into practice; but because the organization is still in a 'crisis' situation, this follow-up was rather limited.

Sustainability

Some of the results of the capacity development programme are in the process of taking root. The development and revision of manuals, procedures and strategies, as well as the improvement of the mechanisms for learning and reflection in a continuous process, have become central to MKC-RDA's activities. Moreover, MKC-RDA is in the process of decentralizing decision making to programme areas as part of the revision of its organizational structure. This trend will promote the programme areas and enhance their effective and timely decision making and communication with relevant local stakeholders. The key senior positions, HRD, M&E, MIS, rural infrastructure and HIV/Aids, now have leaders. However, the intermediate positions of these departments have yet to be filled.

Sustainability is challenged by following factors:
- The organizational structure needs to be finalized to ensure clarity of responsibilities, coordination of the different programmes and certainty that the overall planning, programming and implementation will take place in a coherent manner. Power domains are still unclear and the boundaries of the board of trustees and the management team are not clear yet to everyone.
- Participatory leadership and management are vital to ensure the inputs of all the experts and to rehabilitate their confidence in MKC-RDA. The current state of affairs in MKC-RDA is still fluid.
- The exodus of experienced staff has still not been contained. MKC-RDA is not yet capable of attracting highly qualified and experienced staff for its various programmes and activities.
- It is vital that the relevant staff increase their involvement and participation to take over the roles and tasks of the technical assistant. While the services of the technical assistant are appreciated, and are producing the results required by both MKC-RDA and Tearfund, these results are not yet being fully taken on board by the relevant staff.
- Organizational development strategies and processes, such as participatory management, organizational culture and learning and sharing, need to get as much attention as structures and systems. Bringing about sustainable changes in the organization's capacity requires the readiness, sense of responsibility, openness, teamwork and mutual support of all concerned.

Relevance

MKC-RDA's capacity development programme was drawn up after organizational capacity gaps had been identified. A comprehensive capacity development needs assessment was undertaken with the participation of head office, project staff, and community and local government structures in order to prepare a capacity development project that could be submitted to donors. The project description is of good quality and describes extensively the internal capacity situation of that time. However, it is too ambitious, focuses overly on gaps and does not sufficiently analyze the risks and assumptions that might influence the capacity development programme.

Lessons learned

Leadership is vital in capacity development processes – A comprehensive capacity development programme was developed, based on a sound needs assessment. It is coherent and consistent with the organization's strategic plan. The output of the capacity development programme however only contributed to a limited extent to increased capacity because of the leadership and management crisis that started in 2007 and is still going on. It seems crucial in any organization for leadership to guide capacity development when implementing developed products, policies and guidelines. In an Ethiopian context, where there is a tradition of centralized leadership, this is even more of a challenge.

Focus on products to the detriment of processes – The capacity development programme had a strong focus on training and the development of procedures, toolkits and guidelines. Less emphasis was given to the implementation process. This was not taken into account during the planning stage and has hindered the effectiveness of the capacity development programme.

- *Assuming responsibilities and ownership of the capacity development* – The present capacity development arrangement has clearly demarcated the specific roles and responsibilities of the two partners, MKC-RDA and Tear. The responsibilities to manage and operate the capacity development process according to agreed principles remains with MKC-RDA. This enhances ownership of the process and products. This is significant not only to ensure ownership of the process, but it also enables the assimilation of the outputs into the thinking and practice of the organization. However the capacity development process has been frustrated by the fact that MKC-RDA could not completely take up its responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the process.

- *Need for effective monitoring of capacity development programmes* – It is clear that no effective monitoring mechanisms have been installed to guide the capacity development process. According to the PSO format, clear objectives, results and indicators were identified. However, this programme seems to be very ambitious. Follow up of the indicators is limited. The information in the PSO annual reports is vague and does not cover the real situation. No follow-up of risks was carried out. Tear, and therefore PSO, were very flexible and took implementation problems into account, but did not thoroughly question the appropriateness of the capacity development programme during implementation. A technical assistant was sent to reboot the capacity development programme without questioning the root causes of its slow implementation.

- *Profile of the technical assistant* – The placement of migrant technical assistants who are familiar with the context, the power dynamics, and the socioeconomic and cultural issues has multiple advantages. They can easily get along with people at different levels and from various backgrounds and interact and communicate well with local communities. These are good practices that enable technical assistants who are already familiar with the cultural, psychological and communication barriers to engage immediately in the core business. Apart from these advantages, the added value of technical assistants depends very much on their personality, expertise and experience. However, in this case, the technical assistant was not readily accepted by all staff, mainly because he was often linked to the current director, with whom he had a direct working relationship. Consequently, the technical assistant was placed in a difficult position with limited room to manoeuvre in order to enhance the participation of staff at head office.
- *Assimilation of the capacity development* – In the case of MKC-RDA, it is evident that the technical assistant worked hard on his own with intermittent communication with the staff. It is known that the integration and sustainability of learned skills, processes and systems provided by technical assistants can take place only with the strong involvement of the targets of capacity development support. How the technical assistant was embedded within the organization is not clear. He seems to have run the organization's capacity development department. There was little sustainable support for the change process initiated by the technical assistant. This issue should have been taken into consideration at the planning stage.

2.4   Case Study III: Uganda – KDDS – partner of Woord en Daad

This case is about a single organization called Karamoja Diocesan Development Services (KDDS). KDDS is a development organization set up in 1981 by the two Anglican dioceses in the Karamoja region. Its aim is 'to build the capacities of communities and church workers to actively participate in spearheading their own development for poverty reduction and peaceful co-existence through an integrated approach'. Like St Martin in Kenya, KDDS achieves this mission through developing the communities in order to empower them to solve their own development problems. KDDS runs activities in the sectors of health, food security, literacy, water and sanitation, human rights and advocacy for peace building, and gender equality. KDDS also delivers socio-economic development services. The organization has a total of 62 staff members and is carrying out programmes in seven districts through its zonal offices.

Capacity development at the level of local communities is at the core of its strategy, specifically focusing on the empowerment of the communities. However, capacity development is equally important in order for KDDS to become a strong organization that is able to sustainably foster the necessary changes in community capacity and development. KDDS' perceptions of capacity development as well as its interventions are constantly evolving. There is evidence of an emerging progressive and dynamic capacity development

process in the organization. This is underscored by a fairly strong internal interest and commitment from the organization's leadership and its technical team to bring about a sustainable level of organizational and operational capacity. This interest and commitment manifests itself in a series of initiatives and actions aimed at stimulating its own capacity and supporting capacity development in the communities it works with. Such initiatives include training and the skills development of staff and leadership in key areas of their roles, undertaking organizational reviews and assessments, and targeting institutional functionality. However a comprehensive capacity development plan has not yet been developed.

What changes have taken place in KDDS's capacity?

The case study report found that all five core capabilities (5CCs) were present in KDDS and that they have changed and evolved over time. These changes have been linked to the organization's evolution since its inception in the early 1980s.

The existence of sufficiently strong structures and operational mechanisms, the ability to attract qualified staff, the presence of physical and financial resources, the existence since 2008 of a strategic plan, and the presence of clear policies have all enhanced KDDS' *capability to act and commit* as well as its *capability to deliver on development objectives.* However, the effectiveness of the organizations' leadership and management structures are under pressure. Governance structures, roles and responsibilities are not always clear throughout the organization. KDDS has a weak M&E strategy and its staff shortages interfere with the way in which programmes are implemented. After the restructuring, which was facilitated by an external donor, the system of paid community development agents was replaced by a system based on voluntary staff. This proved ineffective.

KDDS' *capability to relate to external stakeholders* was assessed to be high. The organization has always been involved in a number of partnerships with local and international organizations and with district and local governments. When the organization started its decentralization and integration process in 2000, its capacity to collaborate increased substantially because its presence in the region became more visible. However, KDDS is not regarded as an organization that collaborates actively with other NGOs. Its *capability to relate to external stakeholders* is frustrated by high staff turnover in some programmes – its health programme, for example – and this affects the establishment of relationships.

Capability to adapt and self-renew – It was acknowledged that KDDS has always been keen to remain a part of development in the Karamoja region. Though it has not yet established an appropriate MIS that can be exploited to maximize effective learning, the organization is diligent about organizing meetings and conferences for learning and sharing experiences between the different zones it operates in. Management has always welcomed mid-term reviews, organizational capacity assessments and restructuring processes, largely influenced by the external donors. Results have always been taken into account and adequate steps have always been taken to implement the main recommendations.

KDDS has a good *capability to achieve coherence* and manages to offer a sustained service line to the entire region, covering all the districts in the region. In order to strengthen this capability, it will be necessary to streamline the organization's operational procedures, such as systematic budgeting, as well as its M&E procedures. Equally, KDDS needs to streamline the operational linkages between its governance structures as well as between the secretariat and the zones.

Many internal factors had an influence on the organization's evolution. These included the availability of skilled and motivated staff, internal organizational reforms, Christian organizational values and principles, the presence of a strategic plan and the availability of physical infrastructure and logistics. Changes in these factors had both positive and negative influences on KDDS' capacity, depending on the direction of change. The organization's Christian orientation has enhanced community acceptability for its programmes and has been instrumental in mobilizing resources from Christian donors. The decentralization and integration reforms have enhanced programme outreach, team work and intra-organizational learning. However, restructuring has reduced the numbers of vital staff required for effective programme implementation.

A number of external factors have influenced KDDS' progress. These have included financial and technical support from donors, peer influence from like-minded organizations in the country and in the region, networking with other actors, the security situation in the region, changes in climate conditions, the contribution of local communities and political will. The influence of these factors has been both positive and negative. Financial and technical support enabled the effective implementation of KDDS' programmes. This external support has had significant influence on a number of organizational reforms and on the mode of programme implementation. Funding has provided operational capacity to the organization. When relative peace was restored in the region, the number of NGOs increased. However, this pulled qualified staff away from KDDS. Insecurity has also had a direct influence on the organization's operations in the field, causing a delay in programme implementation and an increase in implementation costs. Adverse climatic conditions have limited the impact of the organization's support for farmers' groups. On a more positive note though, there is a strong national recognition of the role of CSOs in rendering basic services in the Karamoja region. Both the Government of Uganda and international development agencies regard NGOs as key development partners for this region. This, coupled with a relatively unrestricted legal framework for non-state actors in Uganda, promises KDDS a strong future.

What effects have changes in the capacity of KDDS had on the realization of development objectives?

There was a direct relationship between capacity changes in KDDS and changes in its outputs. For example, its growing institutional capacity has been largely responsible for the diversified activities which the organization has been able to undertake over time. Similarly, changes in staffing levels (both in numbers and in the mix of skills) have had a direct influence on the volume and quality of outputs produced by the organization – but the effects have been both positive and negative.

There is no clear picture with regard to the effects of capacity changes on the organization's outcomes. No outcome data were available for the different periods of organizational growth – yet a number of community outcomes could be identified as being direct results of the changed output. For example, it was evident that the visibility of KDDS and its programmes increased people's awareness of HIV/Aids. This is a direct consequence of the community education and sensitization programmes along with the clinical and outreach services. The evaluation found numerous other examples like this in other KDDS activities. However, in other outcome areas, the results were not so positive. The results of the evaluation showed that, in many respects, the capacity development interventions offered to KDDS were basic and not sufficient to produce the necessary outcomes. In a number of cases, capacity interventions did not result in improved performance of the management and leadership structures or in technical functionality. So it was evident that a lot more action was required in order to reach the desired outcome levels in these cases.

Two factors explained these insufficiencies. First, some of the capacity development interventions that were offered were, by themselves, qualitatively and quantitatively inadequate to bring about the desired changes. This was the case with the training offered to members of the Zonal Development Committees (ZDCs). As the study found out, besides being too few, it was evident that ZDC training interventions needed to be supported with supplementary actions to mentor members of these structures in the various aspects of their roles. Financial limitations to the implementation and realization the various capacity interventions offered to KDDS' actors was the second major factor explaining the insufficiency of the capacity development initiatives. A lack of human resources and finance limited the extent to which the capacity development interventions could be put into operation.

How effective have external interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of KDDS?

The donor community has been a significant player in the KDDS' capacity development process. The evaluation found that many of the capacity innovations undertaken by the organization were initiated or encouraged by its donor partners – either deliberately to strengthen the organization's OD, or as part of their capacity development programmes. In 2009, KDDS had 18 donors, of which four were large donors. Since 2005, four donors (Tearfund NL, Tearfund UK, Woord en Daad [W&D], and Daikonia) have explicitly supported capacity development projects. [3]

W&D has been one of the most significant donor partners supporting the organization's capacity development in the past four years. Up to 2009, capacity development was mainly instrumental and closely linked to programme implementation. But in 2009, using PSO funds, W&D facilitated an organizational capacity assessment (OCA). This assessment should be placed within the framework of W&D's current programmatic approach, which

[3] There were no systematic records on donors that have supported capacity development in KDDS over time. Statistics from the finance office could provide information only for the years 2008 and 2009, and this information reflected the support of just a few donors.

includes the establishment of regional alliances. The capacity assessment enables W&D's partners to take part in these alliances – which is part of W&D's LWT.

Table 6. Overview of the budget for 2009 in Ugandan shillings USh and (EUR)			
Year	W&D's programme for KDDS	PSO support (excl. overhead costs that remain in the Netherlands) – capacity development programme (OCA and participation in partner conference)	KDDS overall budget
2009	Two zones total budget: 532,718,000 USh (193,271 EUR) KDDS capacity development project: 23,227,859 USh[4] (8,427 EUR)	10,000 (EUR)	2,078,575,000 USh (754,111 EUR)
Total	555,945,859 USh (201,698 EUR)[5]	(10,000 EUR)	2,078,575,000 USh (754,111 EUR)

W&D interventions on capacity development for KDDS can be looked at from two perspectives: capacity development in relation to programme execution and capacity development in relation to organizational and institutional development. W&D's role in KDDS's capacity development has been rendered through:
Facilitating capacity development by funding different organizational innovations;
Supporting capacity evaluation and assessment, which has been appreciated for opening up ideas and options for improvements in the organization;
Advising and encouraging the organization to undertake organizational innovations and improvements in its operational procedures and processes;
Offering technical support that has ignited different operational capacities;
Organizing and facilitating the sharing of experiences, information exchange and peer learning – all of which are initiatives that have been appreciated by the organization for cross-fertilization of ideas, knowledge and practices; and
Facilitating the training of staff and leaders in various fields.

These roles were greatly appreciated by KDDS staff and leadership. The activities were financed with W&D funds through the Dutch co-financing system. The OCA and the participation at the W&D partner conference was financed by PSO as part of W&D's LWT.

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[4] This project (October-December 2009) was related to the training of KDDS staff in participatory integrated community development (PICD). The training covered both participatory impact monitoring and community driven development. The training was provided by STIPA (Support for Tropical Initiatives in Poverty Alleviation in Kenya).

[5] Exchange rate on 26 May 2010 (1 euro = 2,756.325 USh).

Table 7. Overview of the input-output-outcome of the PSO-funded programme	
W&D's input for capacity development	Financing an Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA) – facilitated by MDF, a consultancy company from the Netherlands which was engaged by W&D to facilitate OCA with several of its partners. Financing participation at the W&D partner conference in Ethiopia.
Output of the PSO-financed capacity development programmes	Results of the OCA. Although various OCAs, also funded and facilitated by other donors, have been implemented within KDDS, the organization has so far failed to use the results of these assessments to come up with a comprehensive capacity development plan.
Effect on output of KDDS	Not relevant yet. See the effects of other capacity development activities as described in the above.
Effect on outcome of KDDS	Not relevant yet.

Effectiveness

W&D's use of the OCA as a methodology to define and encourage capacity development actions within its partner organizations was supported by the LWT. The LWT approach has been instrumental in shaping W&D's approach to capacity assessment and to the design of capacity intervention. There were significant efforts to formulate capacity development indicators for all OD/ID capacity development interventions supported by W&D in KDDS. And although these indicators have not been linked to a comprehensive capacity development plan, the funding for these interventions was clearly linked to capacity gaps identified by the organization. W&D is appreciated for being flexible in its dealings with KDDS by allowing the organization to face its own challenges and use home-grown solutions to address these challenges.

With regard to the capacity development interventions financed solely by W&D, the effectiveness of these interventions was limited and did not bring about the necessary capacity improvements. Two shortcomings were raised by KDDS in this respect. First, that W&D's support to KDDS was not based on a systematic analysis of what it took for the organization to commit and act as a sustainable CSO. Even the OCA exercise did not do this to any great extent because it focused more on 'what is there and what is not there' in KDDS rather than on 'what should be there to allow affective operation'. The second shortcoming was that W&D's capacity development interventions were not very supportive in enabling KDDS to address the capacity gaps identified in the various capacity assessments. W&D was criticized for 'standing on the sideline'. So, it was concluded that W&D's support for capacity development has not yet been fully exploited by KDDS: KDDS has yet to elaborate on its comprehensive capacity development plan and there is evidence that the organization is having some difficulty producing it.

In this case, W&D's effort is not seen as generating significant knowledge about how Dutch support can encourage indigenous processes within civil society organizations in the South. Also, although the theory of change was introduced during the OCA exercise in 2009, it is not fully comprehended at all levels. And KDDS has made no serious effort to develop its own theory of change regarding capacity development.

Sustainability

A number of conditions have been identified as crucial for sustaining the effects of W&D's capacity development interventions on KDDS:

1. sustained funding is required to perpetuate the capacity development initiatives that have been started as well as to put the results of these interventions into operation;
2. KDDS needs constant guidance and support during the implementation of the capacity development interventions included in the evaluations. Staff and management need to be supported in order to have a more focused insight into how to achieve a more effective organization and how to develop a better coordinated view of capacity development; and
3. effective cooperation and collaboration between different donor partners was not only found to be essential for sustaining capacity development initiatives, but also relevant in helping KDDS to adopt a consistent path for capacity development. It was evident from this case that the piecemeal approach to capacity analysis and capacity development (whereby each donor supported different activities at different times in an uncoordinated way), caused duplication and was, at times, detrimental to the organization's capacity growth. An example of this was the recommendation to drop community development agents, which was selectively applied in some zones with significant negative impacts on their operational capacity.

Relevance

The field mission suggests that the OCA was not entirely relevant from the point of view of KDDS and its current needs. It was agreed by all partners during previous conferences that the idea of strategic alliance building proposed by W&D should be based on a kind of assessment and it was suggested by the partners that W&D would develop an instrument for doing this. The instrument was developed and adapted for the types of partners working with W&D. Thus, from the point of view of W&D the execution of an OCA was a result of a consultation process with partners. Although, in the end, the process was owned by KDDS, it was duplicating the work already done by others. It is clear that KDDS needs more support in developing a capacity development plan rather than doing another analysis.

The training offered by W&D to KDDS was also seen as relevant and timely. In many cases this training fed the real needs of the organization. Examples of this are the capacity development training that helped the organization to manage the change to a decentralized programme, and the training in new accounting packages that followed the introduction of the KDDS' new accounting system.

Lessons learned

A number of issues regarding support for capacity development in Southern civil society organizations have been generated by this case study:

- A mix of OD/ID and programme-based capacity development objectives is crucial in crafting a complete package for capacity development in Southern NGOs such as KDDS. Programme-based capacity development is a vital link because it translates OD/ID capacity into concrete results on the ground.

- A coordinated capacity development strategy and plan are key prerequisites in order for the link between OD/ID and programme-based capacity development interventions to be effective. The absence of a comprehensive capacity development plan encourages ad hoc approaches, which make the interventions less effective.

- Internal analysis of capacity development needs is another vital condition for making capacity development interventions relevant. Time is required in order for the whole process to be internalized by others in the partner organizations. The starting point in capacity analysis should not be a checklist of capacities that are present in or missing from the organization. Rather, it should be a risk analysis of the entire results chain in order to create an effective link between the capacity development initiative and the organization that is supposed to use it, the process that is deployed to deliver it, and the validity and sustainability of the results that are to be achieved by it.

- External factors and actors are significant in stimulating capacity changes in Southern organizations. However, unless there is sufficient internal capacity and experience in dealing with multiple external development partners who are promoting capacity development, the actions of external partners may result in haphazard and incoherent capacity development actions. There is a need for a strong collaboration between donors supporting capacity development in the same organization. Dealing with different donors separately leaves the beneficiary partner organization vulnerable and susceptible to uncoordinated influences that make capacity development less effective.

- Training is necessary but it is not sufficient on its own to promote organizational capacity. Training offers knowledge but in order to be useful, this knowledge needs to be shared and transmitted to others in the organization. Also, other factors that will help staff to translate the knowledge from theory to practice must be present. So in order to be complete, training should be accompanied by other initiatives such as working on people's attitudes to allow them accept new ways of doing things, or helping them to feel ready and committed to take up their roles.

- South-to-South sharing of experience is a relevant strategy in capacity development because it generates new ideas and encourages organizational reforms through peer influence. However, this can only be effective if the organizations are ready and well prepared to use the new knowledge they have gained.

2.5 Case study IV: South Africa – Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI) – partner of NIZA

The object of this evaluation is a single organization, the Freedom of Expression Institute (FXI). FXI's vision is a society where everyone enjoys freedom of expression and the right to access and disseminate information and knowledge. Its mission is to fight for freedom of expression and eliminate inequalities in accessing and disseminating information and knowledge in South Africa and beyond.

FXI implements three programmes: Anti-censorship, Access to Information, and Media and ICT. The types of activities implemented by the institute are:
- awareness building and the sensitization of the general public about issues relating to freedom of expression;
- the defence and support of victims of censorship, including the provision of free legal services for poor and needy victims of censorship;
- monitoring the effects of censorship;
- promoting access to information and knowledge and monitoring legislation to make this possible; and
- safeguarding the freedom of independence of all media including the right of the media to editorial independence, encouraging the strict separation of advertising and editorial functions, and upholding the right of journalists not to have to disclose confidential sources of information.

The organization was established in 1993 and is a small organization with five staff members.

The FXI has no articulated vision and strategy on internal capacity development. However, the capacity development of communities is part of its mandate. FXI ensures that individuals and organizations have the capacity to resist freedom of expression violations themselves, rather than needing FXI to intervene on their behalf. Capacity development appears to have been viewed by FXI as concerned mainly with wider institutional and sectoral development. This view may be to the possible neglect of FXI's human and organizational development.

What changes have taken place in FXI's capacity?
FXI's core capabilities have changed during the three phases of its history. The first phase (1994–2000), is described as a period of start-up and progressive activism. The second phase (2000–2005) is described as a period of high productivity and focus on social justice. The third phase (2006–2010) is one of turbulence, crisis and survival, which have been attributed to shifts in donor funding patterns, loss of key personnel and a consequent process of destabilization.

Capability to act and commit

The organization has clear objectives and plans, including a comprehensive five-year strategic plan, vision and mission statement. It also has good communications capabilities and access to knowledge resources. For a long time, up to 2009, FXI was managed by a strong and dedicated leadership. However, a culture of over-reliance on the former director developed. He was a high-profile, well-networked and extremely competent individual, and when he left the organization in 2009, this culture of dependency could easily have resulted in the closure of the organization. Fortunately, a programme officer was available to step in as acting director. The *capability to act and commit* is being jeopardized by the effects of this leadership change and by a decline in external core funding.

Capability to deliver on development objectives

This capability has been significantly weakened by declining financial resources, and the consequent loss of human resources capacity. The effects of this were felt deeply by the current staff. It appears that, while the FXI has been stabilized, and can be said to have 'survived' a crisis period, there are still challenges in attracting new funding, and rebuilding a staff that's large enough and strong enough to be able to work effectively in all the programme areas, and in a way that's consistent with the strategic plan. There appears to be a risk that weakened capacity and a broad mandate could result in strategic errors, jeopardizing a hard-won organizational reputation. Although the organization has survived a difficult time, it can be said to be operating 'at risk', with a strong organizational reputation that could easily be lost and continuing threats to media freedom that put continuing pressure on the small core staff.

Capability to relate to external stakeholders

In general, this is an area in which FXI has consistently developed its capacity through all three phases of its history. FXI retains a strong network of supporting individuals and organizations that have been instrumental in enhancing its overall effectiveness. FXI staff members feel that they have good relationships at community level and also in the media, legal circles and with other NGOs. This capability appears not to have diminished to any real degree throughout the current crisis period – indeed it may have been this capability, and the associated high levels of goodwill, that has helped to sustain the organization through difficult times. For example, FXI is able to call on the *pro bono* time of reputable lawyers who are prepared to take cases on its behalf.

Capability to adapt and self-renew

With this capability, a mixed picture of FXI emerges. The 'hands-off' approach of the board, and the over-reliance on the previous director, especially in phase two of its history, probably contributed to the crisis and turbulence experienced in the third phase. During the second phase, the board was probably not fulfilling its fiduciary and legal responsibilities properly, so when the funding changes happened, there was little capacity or support for the director to make the changes that were needed to ensure stability. There was a lack of organizational resilience at that point. It is felt that this situation has now been turned around and that the board is very involved in and engaged with the organization, which bodes well for the future.

Capability to achieve coherence

FXI has retained a strong capability to achieve coherence and consistency throughout the three phases of its existence. In part, this is seen to be as a result of a strong continuing focus on supporting and defending constitutional rights, which has underpinned the work of FXI since it was founded. This is a consistent thread that runs through the history of the organization, which came into being as a result of the work of media organizations under apartheid. These organizations were at the forefront of the campaign for the right to freedom of expression and campaigned for this right to be enshrined in a new democratic dispensation after 1994. This eventually found articulation in the new Constitution of South Africa.

Strong, open and transparent leadership, even during times of crisis, has enabled everyone in FXI to pull together. A new, closer and more transparent relationship between the acting director and the board has resulted in the acting director feeling that she has the support to turn the organization around. There is perhaps a warning sign that appears in the third phase: the current strategic plan is probably far too ambitious for FXI to achieve given its current staff complement.

The internal and external factors mentioned below have been identified as having had an influence on the organization's capacity. The internal factors include, on the positive side:
- a well-established culture of planning and strategizing;
- a continuing pattern of engagement with a broad range of stakeholders from both the political and media establishments and from communities, grassroots organizations and social movements;
- a sophisticated understanding of the political and social context in which it operates; and
- an unwavering commitment to core constitutional principles and a successful track record in defending these principles.

On the more negative side perhaps, the internal factors that influenced FXI's capacity were an over-reliance on a single dynamic director and a relatively hands-off board. A further internal danger is FXI's tendency to spread itself too widely.

The most significant external factor that has impacted on FXI's ability to deliver on its objectives is the changing donor climate – specifically, the shift away from core funding to project-based funding. This has meant that FXI has had to operate with a much smaller number of staff since 2008. Even so, and perhaps surprisingly, FXI has managed to maintain its reasonably high levels of output and has not suffered any significant loss of reputation. The organization has been able to continue operating with the goodwill and support of key individuals and organizations that have identified with it over the years. Another external factor that has had an impact on the delivery of objectives is the ongoing threat to media freedom in South Africa. This results in persistently high demands on FXI's time and capacity.

Generally, the laws of South Africa provide an enabling environment for the work of CSOs. There are many opportunities for NGOs to structure and organize themselves in ways that

facilitate their effective operation – for example, as non-profit trusts, as 'associations not for gain', or as section 21 (not-for-profit) companies. FXI is reviewing the various options to see which is the most appropriate structure for itself. (It is currently an 'association not for gain'.)

Despite this apparently enabling environment, it is true that, politically, NGOs are often seen as having an agenda that is critical of government. And sometimes, not always, the ANC government can be somewhat sensitive to criticism. In the area of freedom of expression, there are well-articulated and well-founded concerns from many quarters that the government is determined to increasingly restrict media freedom. This puts organizations such as FXI under a lot of pressure. But having said that, NGO activists, journalists and others are able to operate in a relatively free space compared with other parts of Africa where journalists and government critics are routinely harassed or sent to prison.

What effects have changes in the capacity of FXI had on the realization of its development objectives?

In the course of FXI's third phase, when it was dealing with its internal crisis, some important projects had to be put on hold because of staff shortages. At one stage, FXI was in a vicious spiral where capacity was disappearing continuously, there was less and less time to get work done, and virtually no time to attract new funding. The decreasing capacity also meant that no new lines of funding could be accessed. The fact that FXI has managed to continue to deliver on its key development objectives is due to the resilience of the skeleton staff that ran FXI during the crisis and the ongoing support of FXI's 'extended family' – the informal network of friendly lawyers, academics, journalists and contacts in the NGOs. One area in which FXI has not been able to maintain its high level of output is in the Access to Information Programme, which has received less attention over the past year.

The work of FXI has contributed significantly to ensuring that freedom of expression remains on the political agenda in South Africa. As noted in Hivos's 2009 evaluation of FXI: 'one of the greater impacts that FXI has made is in making the right to freedom of expression accessible to the broader South African community… to such an extent that a degree of activism has developed around the right to freedom of expression'.

The Hivos evaluation noted difficulties in assessing progress towards predetermined outcomes across FXI's various programme areas. In the case of the Anti-Censorship Programme, there was an absence of 'corresponding indicators or documented evidence that could be used to assess progress', whereas in the Access to Information Programme, it was noted that, while the programme appeared to have undertaken most of its planned activities 'it is still difficult to determine the impact of these activities due to loosely defined objectives, activities, indicators, and projected outcomes'. With regard to the Media and ICT Programme, the Hivos evaluation notes that, while activities are reported on in great detail, 'there is no indication if the programme structure has any impact on projected outcomes' and 'there is no evidence that suggests that FXI has been able to adequately assess the programme's achievements and its subsequent impact'.

How effective have external interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of FXI?

Over the past decade, Niza has been one of FXI's main funding partners. Since 2000, Niza's entire South African programme has been financed by PSO funds. This programme supported the implementation of FXI's programmes, particularly those related to the training of journalists, the strengthening of media organizations and networking.

Table 8. Overview of the budget for the period 2000–2010 (in euros, EUR and South African rand, ZAR)			
Year	Actual realization of Niza (PSO) funds for FXI	Overall budget of FXI	Niza funding as % of overall budget
2000			
2001			
2002			
2003			
2004	193,677 EUR 1,844,967 R		
2005	82,785 EUR 788,609 R		
2006	88,919 EUR 847,042 R		
2007	102,030 EUR 971,944 R	387,354 EUR 3,689,937 R	26%
2008	231,739 EUR 2,207,548 R	354,671 EUR 3,378,598 R	65%
2009	24,571 EUR 234,069 R	318,405 EUR 3,033,135 R	8%

NB. FXI overall budget figures for earlier than 2007 were not available from the accountant as a result of missing records (possibly misplaced in the move to new premises), nor were they available from the FXI auditors. Data were only available in one currency, without reference to the respective exchange rates. For purposes of comparison, the exchange rate of 1 EUR to 9.53 Rand have been used.

As well as Niza's contribution, FXI has also received funding in recent years from Hivos (core funding), the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Atlantic Philanthropies and the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation. With the exception of Hivos, these donors have largely supported programmes, rather than funding capacity development, although funds from the Rosa Luxembourg Foundation also contributed to the establishment of the Freedom of Expression Network (FXN), which was aimed at developing capacity in communities.

Table 9. Overview of the input-output-outcome PSO-funded programme	
Niza's input for capacity development	Media support programme (2000–2004 and 2004–2008): • financing local capacity development activities (mainly related to institutional development and networking); • financing programme implementation; and • short-term expert missions. Support from Niza enabled a number of very useful expert missions and exchanges in Southern Africa and beyond that allowed FXI to look at other organizations and facilitated their participation in international networks. Also, short-term expert missions enabled FXI to draw on international expertise. Support for the International Alliance on Natural Resources in Africa (IANRA) – since 2009. This has had no direct influence yet on FXI. IANRA support is seen as very valuable for FXI, although FXI has not participated to a significant degree in the IANRA network to date.
Output of the PSO-financed capacity development programmes	Media support programmes – Related to programme implementation: • for training journalists; • for strengthening media organizations; and • for the creation of the Freedom of Expression Network (FXN). Media support programmes – Related to institutional development: • International networking: FXI participates in the International Freedom of Expression exchange (IFEX) and the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA), and abroad, it participates in various campaigns including Index on Censorship, Article 19, etc. There is little to report in terms of OD within FXI itself. capacity development support has been mainly applied at a sectoral or institutional level, rather than to HRD or internal OD processes. The sustainability plans, which are part of FXI's capacity development plan, had little, if any, internal impact as they focus mainly on the development of the FXN. IANRA – FXI is not yet actively involved.
Effect on FXI's output	Since 2000, Niza has financed FXI's programmes and activities and made local and international expertise available. The capacity development supported by Niza enabled FXI to implement its journalist training programme and its programme to strengthen media organizations. Apart from the creation of the FXN, no fundamental changes in approach were noticed. The Hivos evaluation noted difficulties in assessing progress towards planned outputs and outcomes across FXI's various programme areas.
Effect on FXI's outcome	The work of FXI has contributed significantly to ensuring that freedom of expression remains on the political agenda in South Africa (Hivos evaluation of FXI, 2009).

Effectiveness

Between 2000 and 2004, Niza supported FXI under the PSO-funded Media Support Programme, which involves up to 40 partners. The programme focused on FXI's programmes for the training of journalists, the strengthening of viable media organizations and the strengthening of the media sector as a whole through consolidating good practices. The Hivos evaluation noted that it was difficult to assess how well FXI's output compared to its stated objectives. Within the Media Support Programme, a great deal of thought was given to regional and international networking. This helped to facilitate FXI's international networking. FXI expressed the view that Niza support 'only came into its own' with the funding support for the Media and ICT programme – designed as a capacity development programme – which led to the establishment of the Freedom of Expression Network (FXN). FXI believed that this was more successful and 'more coherent' than other capacity development support.

Based on the success of the first phase of the media support programme, which ran from 2000 to 2004, a second phase was implemented from 2004 to 2008. Niza also decided to strengthen the programmatic focus of its capacity development activities with the large group of partners in the media programme and increased the ID component and introduced a new 'sectoral development' component for capacity development internationally. During that period, FXI was so overwhelmed by its daily work and by meeting the needs of the many groups and individuals, that staff development and management issues tended to be placed on the back burner.

Because it was within the scope of the Media Support Programme to strengthen HRD, OD and ID, it was decided to focus on the development of proper policy interventions in the Media and ICT Programme. In particular, an opportunity to lobby and advocate at national, regional and international level was envisaged, as was FXI's ambition to strengthen organizational performance by developing and implementing a sustainability plan, mainly focusing on financial sustainability. The results of these objectives are not fully clear. FXI has not achieved financial sustainability yet and no information is available on an enhanced ability to lobby and advocate. Some evidence of effectiveness can be found in the continued efforts to strengthen the networks FXI is working through, such as FXN.

Sustainability

It is difficult to talk about sustainability of the capacity levels in the context of FXI's crisis situation over the last few years. With the departure of the majority of key staff members between 2007 and 2009, coupled with the dramatic reduction of funding and the changing nature of some of the remaining funding from programme- to project-based, FXI almost came to a standstill in the middle of 2009. From a historical perspective, the evaluation team concluded that FXI had been struggling for some years to move beyond the pioneering phase. The organization had been influential, respected and productive for many years, but the success of the organization rested on the shoulders of one or two individuals. Over a period of about ten years, Niza invested almost €600,000 in FXI and its activities. It invested significantly in capacity development activities at various levels, but this did not prevent FXI from running into a deep crisis.

Relevance

Niza's support for the Media Programme financed the implementation of all of FXI's programmes and secured financial stability over a long period – and from that point of view, it was perceived as relevant. However, the capacity development programme did not strengthen the financial sustainability of the organization in the long run. When Niza decided to change its approach in 2007 (there's more information about this in the case study report), focus for capacity development shifted to setting up and strengthening the International Alliance on Natural Resources in Africa (IANRA) network. Although FXI had not worked directly in the area of natural resources before, it was included in the newly established IANRA network. Cooperation with IANRA is a new area for FXI. At the time of the evaluation, both Niza and FXI acknowledged the need to define the role of FXI more clearly in strategic and operational terms.

Lessons learned

An interesting issue that arises from this case study is how we should go about developing sustainable capacity in a well-networked organization that exists in a relatively unstable context and environment. In the case of FXI, which depends on external short-term financing, the shifting patterns and overall decline in donor funding have inadvertently led to a financial crisis in the organization, with the result that significant human capacity has been lost and the survival of the organization put at risk.

FXI had received significant financial support for capacity development. While it appears that this support was well applied and used, the decline in core funding meant that the investment in developing capacity could not be sustained. A lesson could be that investment in capacity development needs to be accompanied by a careful investigation of how such capacity will be sustained, and how the core activities of the organization can be supported, either by the same donor or in other ways or from other sources. If this is not done, there is a risk that the capacity development support may have only a short-term impact. In terms of ID, Niza's capacity development support can be said to have contributed to the empowerment of a network of individuals and community organizations in different provinces of the country to take responsibility for organizing themselves independently around freedom of expression issues. In terms of HRD and OD processes within FXI, the capacity development programme has probably been less successful. Plans were put in place in 2005, particularly a 'sustainability plan', to enable the organization to survive and thrive. However, there is little to suggest that it was implemented as a whole. Some steps were taken, but key issues particularly relating to donor funding arrangements were not addressed successfully. It appears that FXI itself was probably over-focused on building external capacity, undoubtedly as a result of its activist orientation – perhaps to the neglect of strengthening its own internal capacity and processes.

Finally, FXI could have been helped enormously if the right expertise had been available to guide the organization through the difficult and painful process of moving beyond the pioneering phase. From a capacity development perspective, since many NGOs fall foul of this phenomenon, it would be a worthwhile investment to build the necessary capacity

development expertise within the development community to guide Southern NGOs through this kind of process. It is an area that has not been explored much up to now.

2.6 Case study V: Southern Sudan – CADEP programme implemented by ICCO

The PSO case evaluated in Southern Sudan concerns the Capacity Assessment and Development Programme (CADEP). This programme is being jointly funded by PSO and ICCO for the period 2009–2012 and implemented by the ICCO office in Southern Sudan. The current programme is a continuation of the CADEP programme that started in 2005 and was funded by ICCO.

CADEP works with new and emerging CSOs that have no grant experience; and it works with more mature CSOs that have a longer history, established offices, organized staffing and track records. For the purposes of this evaluation, two CSOs (a new one and a more established one) were selected by CADEP to be involved in the assessment of the support for capacity development through CADEP. The CSOs involved are the relatively well-established Sustainable Community Outreach Programmes for Empowerment (SCOPE), which has been involved with CADEP since 2006; and Sudan Christian Youth Ministries International (SCYMI), a new and emerging CSO that has participated in CADEP projects since 2008.

A further four CADEP partners were interviewed as part of the assessment. There are eight active partners currently working with CADEP. As well as strengthening the capacities of individual CSOs, CADEP also aims to contribute to enhanced collaboration between capacity development service providers.

SCOPE was founded in Kenya in 1999. The organization upholds Christian values and has a Christian ethos. It was registered in 2004 as a national NGO under the Southern Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission's NGOs Act (1999) introduced by the Government of Southern Sudan (GOSS). SCOPE, with the support of USAID/Pact-Kenya funds, joined other national NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) to disseminate information contained in the peace protocols in Yei River County. This civic education exercise was motivated by the need to create awareness among the grassroots and it marked the entry point for SCOPE into the rural communities in this county. SCOPE's vision is of transformed, empowered and self-reliant communities living in harmony. To achieve this holistically, the organization diversified into a number of areas of economic and social reconstruction, and widened its area of coverage. Activities in economic empowerment, training and education were targeted at poor and vulnerable communities living in Yei, Juba and Morobo Counties.

SCYMI was founded by the current executive director. The idea started from a self-help group he had organized for poor Sudanese students living in Kenya. The original strategy was to help these young people, who had undergone two decades of civil war in their homeland, to integrate into the Kenyan social and education systems. This self-help group

developed into a Sudanese indigenous, non-political, NGO called SCYMI, which was registered in Kenya in 2006. The organization aims to change the lives of the Sudanese diaspora and to provide support for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in Southern Sudan. SCYMI is a Christian youth organization, founded to conduct activities in the fields of peace building (through conflict resolution forums and conflict analysis workshops), life skills training, psychosocial assistance and trauma healing, child protection and the empowerment of Southern Sudanese people to bring about societal development.

CADEP's approach is to 'learn by doing'. This is based on the assumption that by going through a complete project cycle, new CSOs acquire the skills to plan, implement, monitor and evaluate their pilot projects in their working area. Throughout the pilot projects, coaching and mentoring are offered by CADEP advisors. In the case of SCYMI, the pilot projects were funded by CADEP. In the case of SCOPE, learning by doing was made possible because of their involvement in the Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme (RRP) and the Sudan Recovery Fund (SRF) coalition. This is a coalition of NGOs and CSOs led by ICCO. Common training sessions are organized for all partners involved in the CADEP programmes, based on identified common needs. Training is often organized in collaboration with other international NGOs involved in the capacity development of civil society in Southern Sudan. Local capacity development consultants are contracted to carry out the training.

Both of these CSOs are operating in a society that is still very reliant on external support and has an inexperienced government that is not yet stable enough to fully support the development process. These factors mean that the organizations are incapacitated in many ways. They show willingness to learn and to pass on the skills and knowledge they acquire to their communities in order to encourage development. Both organizations also view capacity development as a process through which individuals and organizational capacities are consolidated into strong community institutions that can actively participate in meaningful development that will transform lives.

What changes have taken place in CADEP's capacity?

For SCOPE, there has been an improvement in capacity across all five core capabilities. Most of the capabilities were weak at the beginning but have grown over time. The organization has developed a strategic plan, specifying core values that guide implementation and a number of manuals have been developed. Through the adequate mobilization of staff and financial resources, the organization has shown, since 2008, that it is capable of implementing its strategic plan. Therefore the *capability to act and commit* has been realized. However, this capability has been weakened by the centralized decision-making process and the strong influence of the executive director, who is based in Kenya. This often hampers its decision making at programme level.

In 2006, SCOPE was represented by one volunteer, had no office, no means of transport and no communications technology. This has improved considerably over the past few years and the organization now has a total of 29 qualified staff, owns a well-equipped office as well as

three cars/vans and four motorbikes, and has access to the internet. These improvements have strengthened its *capability to deliver on development objectives*. The organization has managed to collaborate and retain alliances with relevant stakeholders such as the Episcopal Church of the Sudan, the Mugwo Community Development Forum, and the Mugwo Youth Association. It has also entered into coalitions for the implementation of projects under RRP/ SRF, thereby improving its *capability to relate to external stakeholders*. Its alliances with communities, however, are weakened by the fact that they are not fully and explicitly involved in planning or management. SCOPE still has control over the vocational training centres, which were supposed to have been handed over to the board of directors representing the community.

SCOPE has established a monitoring system; but it doesn't go beyond the output level. Activity progress is documented in monthly reports. Projects have been evaluated by independent evaluators and the accounts have been audited. The organization has been able to assess its own capacity weaknesses and has sought to improve its shortcomings by looking for capacity development partners such as ICCO/CADEP, the Swiss interchurch development agency (HEKS), and the German Church Development Service (EED). This demonstrates a willingness to learn and to make use of opportunities when they're available and demonstrate SCOPE's advancement in the *capability to adapt and self renew*.

The organization has evolved from an emergency phase to a development phase and has demonstrated the *capability to achieve coherence* in its approach to development across the two phases. The drafting of a strategic plan strengthened this capability by defining its vision and its mission, and adhering to them. All the projects implemented by SCOPE are in line with its strategic objectives. The desire to help communities to start income-generating activities and to establish small and medium enterprises is also consistent with the vision and mission, but the strategy is not appropriate.

SCYMI's *capability to act and commit* is still new and evolving. Though the organization has a draft three-year strategic plan from 2009 to 2011, it had not been finalized at the time this evaluation was being carried out. In its draft form, it sets out strategic objectives and projected results to be achieved over a three-year period. This strategic plan looks too ambitious however when SCYMI's limited resources and capacities are taken into account. Most of the activities implemented have been on a pilot basis.

SCYMI is still in its pioneer phase, having transformed from one man with a briefcase into an organization with two offices in two counties. The organization has four staff, a group of volunteers and a network of partner CSOs and capacity development providers. The increase in staff and knowledge, along with its two modestly equipped offices show that the organization's *capability to deliver on development objectives* has improved from a starting point of almost zero.

Good progress has been made on efforts made to mobilize resources, although the strategy needs to be enhanced. The organization is credited for knowing how to mobilize institutions, not only to participate in its events, but also to provide both material and

financial support. It held a road safety campaign in 2010 where ten institutions played various roles. SCYMI is aware that the impact is bigger when it collaborates with others. This strengthens its *capability to act and commit*. And the effectiveness of its mobilization activities demonstrates improvements in its *capability to relate to external stakeholders*. SCYMI is currently a host member of a coalition of ten CSOs.

SCYMI has drafted its three-year strategic plan with a clear vision and mission. This shows its *capability to achieve coherence* – but the strategic plan is ambitious and is not used to guide implementation. Decisions are generally made by the executive director and this decision-making process needs to be improved. Much still needs to be done on *the capability to adapt and self-renew*, but efforts here are already underway. The organization has yet to properly develop systems such as M&E, or create reliable databases and learn from a background of increased levels of activity.

The following internal and external factors have been identified as having had an influence on the capacity of the organizations.

The internal factors include:
- the policy frameworks that set out the overall guidelines under which capacity development is carried out;

- the quality of staff, which has had both positive and negative influences (for example, SCOPE's financial officer left without a handover session and deleted important files);
- the role of leadership and management, which in the case of both organizations, is centralized in one person, with a weak board of directors; and
- infrastructure – SCOPE and SCYMI both acknowledge that having an office marked the beginning of stronger relationships with donors and beneficiaries.

Many external factors have had a negative influence on the ability of both organizations to deliver on their objectives. These include:
- The lack of a strong policy framework. GOSS has yet to develop a regulatory framework for CSOs governing how they can relate with government, INGOs and donors.
- Donor regulations and requirements are sometimes way beyond what CSOs can meet.
- Political instability and uncertainty have limited donor commitment and their willingness to support projects beyond certain points in time. For example, donors often want to wait for the results of the Southern Sudan independence referendum in January 2011.
- Ongoing conflicts in Darfur and the presence of militia groups such as The Lord's Resistance Army hamper programme implementation on a regular basis.
- National events disrupt the smooth flow of activities especially when these events, such as elections and voter registration, take a long time. Previous conflicts influenced capacity development for CSOs in several ways:
  a. Most CSOs were founded, and initially registered, outside Sudan – thus affecting their connection with the grassroots. This has made it difficult to develop the *capability to relate to external stakeholders*. Political and social legitimacy in the eyes of local stakeholders is weakened because there is often an assumption that the CSO is foreign.

b. Conflict created an environment for CSOs and their international partners to concentrate on emergency service delivery. This did not prepare them for the transition into the development phase. This has affected the *capability to adapt and self-renew* and the *capability to achieve coherence*.

c. Long-term relief has created a culture of dependency in communities. This can reduce their interest in activities that have no immediate benefit. Communities tend to be opportunistic, preferring stronger organizations delivering tangible benefits to CSOs that, like SCYMI, engage in lobbying and advocacy.

- The low level of adult literacy and some social cultural practices also have a negative impact on community participation in programme activities.

What effects have changes in the capacity of CADEP had on the realization of its development objectives?

SCOPE has become stable and more effective in the management of its activities over time. The organization has been able to attract more funding and increased its development activities considerably, casting a positive influence on the quantitative level of output. However, there are no sufficient efforts made to translate output into outcome – particularly with regard to the vocational training. No links have been established with the business environment to allow the skills and knowledge that were acquired during training to be put to some meaningful use.

Increased technical knowledge and skills among staff have resulted in the significant transfer of technical skills and knowledge to trainees. Some associations, such as the Yei United Youth Association, have been formed by SCOPE's beneficiaries, with the objective of raising income. Some individuals trained by SCOPE have joined existing associations such as Widows Orphans and People Living with HIV/Aids and the Mothers' Union, and are making efforts to train others. These individuals and groups are making efforts to produce goods and offer services commercially, but are challenged by the lack of start-up capital, limited markets and the high cost of raw materials.

SCYMI – As a result of changing capacity, particularly attributable to enhanced knowledge in project planning and management, SCYMI has been able to successfully conduct pilot projects. Among the most successful of these are life skills training programmes in schools, which have helped to reduce the level of confrontation and negative peer-pressure among students in those schools. The organization has also been able to mobilize young people to rally against social injustices that affect them, and to lobby for the ratification of bills that protect children's rights. Through the success of some of these activities, the organization has been able to establish its identity among relevant stakeholders, and can now relate easily. The organization is viewed by relevant stakeholders as one that is slowly transforming into a more stable and reliable agent of development.

How effective have external interventions been in terms of strengthening the capacity of CADEP?

The CADEP programme is implemented from the ICCO Juba office by the CADEP programme advisor. The CADEP budget for the total programme period (2009–2012) is €705,567, including the cost of the programme advisor. The programme targets 17 partner organizations, of which eight have been actively involved in the programme to date. Of the total budget €616,521 has been requested from PSO. The remainder consists of ICCO's own contribution. Other agencies such as EED, HEKS, Mercy Corps, the German Development Service (DED), and Trócaire, contribute on a cost-sharing basis by organizing joint training. PSO approved the programme for two years (2009–2010). In 2009 CADEP spent €88,923 of which PSO contributed €39,971. (No salary cost for the CADEP advisor has been calculated for 2009 as a result of staff changes and time delays replacing staff.) The budget is used for organizing training, meetings and field visits, for the placement of professionals in partner organizations, and for scholarships to enable the staff of partner organizations to improve their qualifications. Apart from financial contributions to pilot projects (see the case of SCYMI), no funds from CADEP have been transferred to the partner organizations.

Table 10. Overview of the budget of the partners for the period 2006–2010					
SCOPE (total budget by donors in EUR)					
Donor	**2006**	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
ICCO	-	-	20,000	30,000	-
HEKS	-	-	61,743	7,271	-
SRF	-	-	-	399,440*	85,840
UNIFEM	-	-	27,968	-	22,374
RRP	86,773	105,079	104,743	103,346	-
Sub-total	**86,773**	**105,079**	**214,454**	**540,058**	**108,214**
CADEP	Not added to the partner's budget				
Grand total	**86,773**	**105,079**	**214,454**	**540,058**	**108,214**

* Programmes such as SRF pumped a lot of money into SCOPE, running the risk of overfunding the organization. However, a large part of the budget was used for the construction of a training centre.

SCYMI (Total budget by donors in EUR)			
Donor	**2008**	**2009**	**2010**
ICCO	-	-	-
DED	2,400	7,404	8,000
KCB	800	-	1,600
Rhino Star	3,259	2,512	7,703
Own fundraising USA with FIMI	-	-	12,000*
Sub-total	**6,459**	**9,919**	**29,303**
CADEP	36,000	18,400	13,120
Grand Total	**42,459**	**28,319**	**42,423**

* Funds to pay student fees

The main instruments used by CADEP are training, coaching, and the organization of workshops. Learning by doing is made possible through participation in larger programmes, such as the RRP and SRF programmes, in the case of SCOPE, or through the financing of pilot projects, in the case of SCYMI.

Table 11. Overview of participation of SCOPE and SCYMI in CADEP (since 2006)		
Instruments	**SCOPE**	**SCYMI**
Training	Do no harm Peace building and conflict resolution PME Project management Financial management	Financial management Project planning and management
Coaching		Six months coaching as part of life skills interventions
Workshops	Peace and conflict resolution Strategic planning Business plan development (training centre)	Strategic planning
Learning by doing	Through SRF/RRP programme implementation	Baseline survey Street children campaign Conflict analysis

Table 12. Overview of the input-output-outcome PSO-funded programme	
CADEP's input	See table above Training, coaching, workshops, financing pilot projects
Output of the PSO-financed capacity development programmes	**SCOPE** HRD – staff trained (project management, financial management, community participation, peace and conflict transformation, technical skills related to the technical courses of the training centre). OD – development of draft strategic plan, development of business plan for training centre. ID – linking SCOPE to other CSOs during joint training and inclusion SCOPE in RRP coalition. **SCYMI** HRD – staff trained (project management, conflict analysis, financial management), staff able to implement life skills training activities. OD – baseline study resulted in a draft strategic plan. ID – linking SCYMI to other CSOs during joint training.

Effect on output of the CADEP partners	**SCOPE** – organization of several new technical skills training courses in the training centre and within the communities; awareness-raising on gender-related violence and HIV/Aids. **SCYMI** – implementation of some pilot projects: march with participation of 1500 street children (2008), life skills training in schools reaching out to 1100 students, teachers and class prefects (2009); awareness-raising activities at the international Aids day with the participation of 300 young people, road safety campaign (2010).
Effect on outcome of CADEP partners	**SCOPE** – 121 graduates to date and 83 community members in training, however graduate students do not succeed in raising a profitable income. Fifteen young trainees formed a CBO and continue to train other community members in art and design. **SCYMI** – no information available.

Effectiveness

The participation of SCOPE and SCYMI resulted in an increased capacity to implement their programmes, even when it consisted of only small pilot projects. A number of CSOs have become stable and more effective in the way they manage their activities compared with what they were like at the beginning of programmes.

Training was the major input in the programme; however, its impact was limited. Training is given well, but there's a question over the follow-up of the initial training sessions. Most of the training was not considered as a part of a process. Sessions were mostly one-offs given by different consultants without briefs and without contact with one another. CSOs classified as new and emerging are trained alongside more established CSOs.

Learning by doing seems to be a very effective way to develop capacity because the funds are available for it. Partners get money to implement and develop a track record and gain legitimacy. It is however not sustainable to run pilot projects for CSOs to learn by doing unless the funding for them is earmarked. Learning by doing has been supported on some occasions by the coaching of the CADEP programme advisor. The effectiveness of this kind of coaching is limited because of the number of CSOs involved in the programme, the distances between them and the limited time that can be spent at each organization. The ICCO programme officers at the Juba office have been involved in capacity development only to a limited extent, focusing on the administrative and financial requirements regarding the implementation of a specific project. For example, SCOPE's strategy for achieving desired outcomes has not been discussed.

Efficiency has been scored highly in terms of time, cost and quality. CADEP and collaborating INGOs and agencies have used a consolidated approach to offering capacity development services. Several partners have been able to take training together, thus minimizing the amount of time and the cost that would have gone into training the organizations individually. The fact that services have been co-funded in some cases has resulted in the provision of good quality training. This has enabled the sourcing of the best

trainers and the preparation of good training material. The joint approach also reduced the chances of overlapping services.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the achieved results is at risk in both organizations. Leadership is concentrated in one person and no senior-level leadership or management has been built up so far – putting the sustainability of the organization as a whole at risk. As yet, no proper mechanisms exist to prevent staff who have benefited from training from leaving the organization to go to well-established organizations and INGOs for reasons such as better pay. The strategic plans in both cases are too ambitious and do not match available resources. Because of this, they are really only administrative documents that can be used to attract donor funding instead of plans that give direction to further programme development.

According to the interviewees, strategic planning will continue, however it will be important that the CSOs relate the plans to their activities and increase the participation of their constituents. Sustainable funding is a challenge. Donors tend to use local organizations for their own programme implementation, running the risk of over-funding them and challenging their sustainability. CSOs will need to be more creative and experimental with what they think may work well towards achieving desired results. External support should focus on building on these home-grown systems by forming coalitions among local partners and allowing them to develop without too much interference from external actors.

Relevance

A capacity development programme is very relevant in the context of Southern Sudan, taking into account the weakness of the civil society. All inputs of the CADEP programme have been deemed relevant by the participating CSOs. Joint training sessions have been organized based on identified common needs. Some of the partner organizations have benefited from coaching, and considered it to be on-the-job training. This coaching was linked to the implementation of a particular programme or project and has been assessed as very relevant by the organizations at stake. It is not clear to what extent this input was donor driven or demand driven.

The evaluation team questioned the need for a separate capacity development programme that is not integrated into the general ICCO programme and does not address the capacity needs of CSOs that do not participate in the ICCO programmes or coalitions. Currently discussions are taking place at the ICCO country office on how to better integrate capacity development into ICCO programmes. Not linking capacity development to concrete programme implementation would turn CADEP into a training institute, of which the results are yet to be seen.

Lessons learned

- Strategic planning has been strengthened through participation in training and workshops. Not enough attention was given to involving all stakeholders or to an analysis of the available resources and capacities of the organizations. Strategic plans should be realistic and capable of being used as instruments to guide implementation. Training on its own is not sufficient.

- Training must be a process and not a one-off event. If this is not carefully managed, the capacity development provider is likely to be used as a training centre where people enrol for what they think they need.

- Learning by doing must be accompanied by a process that leads to earmarked support for particular capacity development initiatives. The evaluators suggest that capacity development must be linked to programme implementation. One can question the ambition of CADEP to remain a separate capacity development programme that also offers support for the capacity development of organizations not involved in ICCO programmes. First of all, CSOs in Southern Sudan need funding to implement projects. The lack of this is likely to lead to wastage of resources by offering capacity development services to organizations that do not translate the knowledge and skills into practice. Second, offering capacity development to CSOs involved in programme implementation funded by other donors can be interesting but will turn CADEP into a training institute with all the limitations regarding follow up. Good follow up involves more than just skills transfer. Often sensitive issues are at stake. These can only be discussed within a partnership based on trust and respect. It is questionable whether favourable conditions can be created by a 'training institute' that is not involved in a partnership.

- In post-conflict states, there should be careful selection of CSOs that have the potential to effectively deliver output and outcome. CSOs mushroom and deliver output but this output will not always bring changes at outcome level.

- Multi-stakeholder approaches, particularly when they involve local authorities, should be integrated into capacity development in order to achieve meaningful results that minimize gaps and bottlenecks during implementation.

- Capacity development for communities and CSOs in a fragile and raw situation like Southern Sudan needs time and patience because there are a lot of internal and external factors influencing growth both negatively and positively. There are uncertainties in Southern Sudan, such as the 2011 referendum on separation, un-marked borders, eroded socio-cultural and traditional community fabric, and people still coming to terms with peace. All of these affect long-term thinking and it is likely that the process of developing capacities slows down.

- HRD as a component of capacity development without proper bonding to govern participation of the capacitated staff in the development activities of the CSO may be costly and prove to be an exercise in futility for the capacity development providers. Qualified staff members often leave for stronger organizations that pay better. CADEP did not focus on creating conditions to sustain capacity within CSOs. It is also important to train more than one person in any organization whenever possible and to encourage the transfer of the knowledge acquired to the rest of the staff through briefings and reports.

2.7 Overview of the ten desk studies

A brief presentation of the desk studies follows. More detailed information can be found in the separate case study reports.

2.7.1 Liverpool VCT, care and treatment organization – partner of Hivos (Kenya)

LVCT, a service-delivery organization established in 2001, is considered to be an important actor in the HIV/Aids sector in Kenya. LVCT is a large and strong organization that's involved in service delivery and evidence-based advocacy founded on scientific research. LVCT itself has helped to establish over 250 of the 1000 VCT sites in Kenya and the organization currently provides care and treatment for 13,000 patients. LVCT has also trained over 70% of the 3600 VCT counsellors in Kenya and endeavours to promote community ownership and the decentralization of services.

LVCT has been a partner of Hivos since 2007 and participated in the STAR programme for strategic ICT application in the African region. This was implemented by Hivos in a public-private partnership with KPN, a Dutch provider of telecommunications. The programme aimed to increase the capacity of the participating CSOs by using ICT strategically. Eight partners in four countries were directly involved in the implementation of concrete ICT projects. In total, 39 Hivos partners had the opportunity of benefitting from participation in the workshops for linking and learning. The programme was coordinated by a regional programme coordinator. Within the programme, collective activities such as joint technical training were organized and complemented by the setting-up of concrete ICT projects within the participating organizations.

Staff of LVCT participated in training on tele-counselling in South Africa, in training on information, education and communication (IEC) material, and training on the use of the digital communications toolkit developed for the programme. The specific ICT project involving LVCT aimed at strengthening the communications strategy of the youth department that was offering tele-counselling through a toll-free telephone help line. With the introduction of an SMS bulktool, it became possible to access the helpline from mobile phones – which made it attractive to young people – and to send and respond to SMS messages in bulk. KPN volunteers trained LVCT staff to use this SMS bulktool. Recently, LVCT also benefitted greatly from the preparation of the second phase of the programme, participating at a four-day-long strategic reflection workshop facilitated by KPN volunteers. The workshop assessed LVCT's current communications strategy and looked at ways of developing a capacity development programme to implement the new communications.

The capacity development programme was effective in that the helpline and the SMS bulk tool are operational and the number of people accessing the tele-counselling service has increased. Contributing factors were the in-house training and support given by the KPN volunteers and the appropriateness of the ICT application for the services of the youth department. Sustainability is at risk in terms of having to continue to meet the ongoing

costs for hardware, software and the server – all of which are needed to keep the ICT material up to date.

2.7.2 Nacodev – partner of Dorcas, Kenya

NACODEV (Nigeria's Association of Community Development Volunteers) is the development wing of the Ngangani Redeemed Gospel Church in the Eastern province of Kenya. It is a new and small organization, started on the initiative of the founding priest in 1998. NACODEV has evolved from top-down food relief programmes to implementing bottom-up holistic food security programmes. NACODEV, a partner of Dorcas since it first started, participated in the Dorcas capacity development programme that started in 2005 and that is currently in his second phase. This programme runs in nine countries, involving nine programme partners and 17 network partners that benefit indirectly from the programme through exchanges and linking and learning initiatives. The programme implements capacity development activities related to the three dimensions, HRD, OD and ID, and applies several instruments, such as training, coaching, exchange visits, facilitation, advisory services and pilot implementation projects. The programme is coordinated by the East Africa regional coordinator, who is the head of the capacity development programmes at Dorcas. Every Dorcas country office is involved in the implementation of the capacity development programme.

Up to 2005, the organization had been strengthened mainly through training. In 2005 a capacity needs assessment was facilitated by Dorcas, and based on the results, a capacity development plan was developed. Several training sessions were organized at programme level, including grant making, fundraising, project cycle management, governance, ICT and computer skills, report writing, M&E, needs assessments and skills in social work and HIV/Aids. NACODEV has always managed to send two or three staff members to represent it during these training sessions and in some cases, community members of the project management committees have also been sent. As well as participating in training organized at programme level, NACODEV received funds to participate in training organized by other institutions. Dorcas staff provided monthly coaching in project management, finance, governance structures and report writing. They also provided advice on the involvement of beneficiaries and advice on the development of a financial manual, the development of contracts for staff, the development of a strategic plan, and the development of human resources and organizational policies. Staff of NACODEV also participated in exchange visits to Tanzania and within Kenya.

The contribution this programme has made to NACODEV's capacity is evident. Staff have gained relevant technical and management skills that enable them to implement and manage relevant food security programmes. The organization is now legally registered and seen as a reliable development partner by local and regional authorities and research institutes that seek collaboration with NACODEV. The organization is also able to do its own fundraising. It shows strengths in all five core capabilities. The capacity of the organization has been influenced by a strong and inspiring leader and the support of the Dorcas programme coordinator during the capacity development programme.

2.7.3   Gambella Peace and Development Council – partner of IKV Pax Christi

GPDC, established in 2003, is an inter-ethnic and inter-denominational council representing the people of Gambella. The vision of GPDC is that the Gambella region will eventually be able to sustain a peaceful coexistence between all its people irrespective of ethnicity, race or gender. Its mission is to operate as a peace agent and to contribute to the establishment of mechanisms that will prevent the escalation of conflict. The main activities of GPDC are: conducting conflict assessments, offering conflict mediation and facilitating the reconciliation between conflicting parties, and organizing peace dialogues. When it first started, daily management was in the hands of two executive directors that were representatives of two different clans and a project officer. An advisory board consisting of representatives of the different churches used to meet every month to take policy and strategic decisions. At the time of the evaluation, GPDC had very limited capacity. The board was no longer functioning and for a temporary period it had only one acting director supported by a staff officer.

GPDC has been supported by IKV-Pax Christi since it began. It was clear that the capacity of the organization was weak in all its dimensions. In 2006 a technical assistant was funded by PSO to support the organizational and institutional development of the organization. The technical assistant helped and advised the executive directors in all their activities. Support for capacity development was primarily for on-the-job learning. This resulted in an operational advisory board and improved internal organizational capacity for GPDC. GPDC was accepted as an inter-faith local NGO and it has been successfully lobbying the regional government to let it access conflict-prone and conflict-affected areas to conduct assessments.

However, the advisory board lacked the capacity to become involved in real policy discussions on the prevailing conflicts. Conflict in the region is complex and multi-layered and it seemed extremely difficult to openly discuss conflict issues in the advisory board. The capacity for a collective analysis of the conflict was, and still is, lacking. And when it comes to conflicts involving the government – many Anyawaa-related conflicts fall into this category – people become extremely careful. The technical assistant doubted whether or not the local church leaders saw any benefit in analyzing the conflict. There seemed to be a wide perception that ignoring conflict could prevent it. From that perspective, producing and publishing a comprehensive analytical report on the conflict, external capacity seemed essential. IKV-Pax Christi never managed to raise the capacity of either the staff or the board to produce such analytical reports. Those that were available had been developed by external technical assistants.

In 2007, IKV-Pax Christi started an ambitious joint sustainable peace and development programme in the Eastern Upper Nile and Gambella region, involving, among others, GPDC. Within the framework of this programme, a specific PSO capacity development project was implemented to continue developing the capacity of GPDC. A Kenyan NGO was conducting short expert missions to continue on-the-job learning and two technical assistants were working at GPDC to implement some of the programme activities.

Since its inception, GPDC had suffered from leadership crises. When the last director left the organization in 2008, the organization was, and still is, left without any guidance, abandoned even by its advisory board. At the moment, GPDC has no capacity to contribute to peace and security in the Gambella region. Several factors explain the poor results of the support for capacity development: the organization's weak risk and opportunity analysis and the context within which the organization is operating, the lack of a monitoring system, inappropriate capacity building instruments, inappropriate organizational capacity assessment, the difficult context within which it works and the leadership crises within the organization.

2.7.4 AMREF – the Netherlands, Kenya and Ethiopia

The African Medical and Research Foundation, (AMREF), was founded in 1957 as an international African health development organization. Since 2000, AMREF has moved from being an organization that just provides services into an organization that develops capacities and carries out operational research and advocacy. For the current strategic period, AMREF has identified three programme themes:
- partnering with communities for better health;
- developing capacity for strengthened communities and health system responsiveness; and
- health systems research for policy and practice (strategy 2007–2017).

The projects are implemented through country programmes in Ethiopia, Kenya, South Africa, Southern Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. AMREF also provides training and consultancy support to an additional 35 countries. Nine national AMREF offices in the North support the AMREF country programmes through fundraising. AMREF Netherland also contributes to the capacity development strategy of AMREF International. AMREF's headquarters are in Nairobi and at the AMREF international training centre, where the directorates for the three programme areas are based.

The directorate for capacity development was created in 2007, acknowledging that developing capacity involves more than just training. The priority areas addressed by the capacity development programmes are: improving health management information systems, improving the skills of health-care workers and improving organizational development in health-related CSOs. Instruments used include; training, the establishment of appropriate health infrastructures, the facilitation of networks, coaching and mentoring, advisory services, exchange visits, joint implementation of policies (for example, it developed a health policy in close collaboration with the Ministry of Health), and the documentation of good practices.

AMREF Netherlands joined PSO in 2007 and started to prepare an LWT. At the same time, AMREF international was working on the establishment of a capacity development directorate and had started to develop a policy on capacity development. The LWT was seen as an opportunity to support the development of this capacity development policy. The LWT was developed in close collaboration with the director of the directorate for capacity development at AMREF HQ in Nairobi. Through the first explorative LWT, AMREF gained insight into the theory and practice of AMREF International's capacity development

interventions. In that role, it added value to AMREF NL in terms of supporting capacity development. The current LWT addresses internal capacity development issues and seeks a methodology for implementing a systematic approach to capacity development through the development and use of standardized tools and systems.

The LWT has been successful so far. All activities were implemented resulting in an increased awareness within AMREF of how to make the capacity development programme more systematic and professional. AMREF decided to appoint focal points capacity development in all country offices. A strategy was developed for the period 2010–2015 with input from the different AMREF offices and the partners AMREF is working with. Several tools have been developed to support country offices in assessing the capacity of partner NGOs, CBOs, government and communities and to monitor and evaluate training programmes.

Case Ethiopia – the PSO-funded project in Ethiopia was one of the activities foreseen in the LWT. AMREF Ethiopia wanted to document its Malaria project in the Afar region and use the evidence for further advocacy. They requested support from AMREF NL. This project was seen as a pilot study to analyze how AMREF NL could, in the future, support the capacity development of the AMREF offices. Because of this, it was financed as part of the exploratory LWT. The result of the project was a publication. The experience gained through this project encouraged the Ethiopian office to further document on good practices. They had learned that it was possible to document a project and present the results in a fixed number of pages. Twenty other projects were documented in the same way. The publication has served above all as a marketing and communications tool, although it is not clear to what extent this material can be used for advocacy purposes or to exchange knowledge between AMREF offices. AMREF NL also learned lessons from this pilot project. The publication had been developed by AMREF NL with limited involvement by the Ethiopian country offices because of lack of time. The material was based on documents sent by the Ethiopian office with no field visit carried out. Therefore the emphasis was focused on the product itself and little attention was paid to the process.

2.7.5   UCMB – partner of Cordaid, Uganda

UCMB is the technical arm of the Episcopal Conference Health Commission which coordinates the health services network of the Roman Catholic Church and deals with all health matters including policies and practice in the units owned by the Catholic Church. These include 29 hospitals, 11 of which have nurse-training schools, and 235 lower-level health units, employing 6000 health workers. Staff at UCMB consists of one executive secretary with five support staff and eight advisors for the areas of data management, human resources, financial management, OD, health training institutes and pastoral care services.

The PSO-funded programme, called the Health Sector Capacity Building Plan II (2005–2008), involved three partners in Uganda. The general objective of this PSO programme was 'to support the health services by enhancing the quality of preventive and curative services and by increasing the accessibility of the services in order to improve the health status of the population'. The input planned and executed was mainly technical assistance and financial

support at the level of UCMB. In practice, an external technical assistant also dealt directly with end beneficiaries. Input directed immediately to the end beneficiaries consisted of a scholarship fund, which accounted for 30% of the total budget, tailor-made courses, and advisory visits directed to diocesan health coordinators, who acted as a go-between for UCMB to reach out to the health units in the diocese.

The results at the level of UCMB are the following:
HRD – A strengthening of the management skills and capacity of junior staff in the areas of financial management and facilitation and coaching strategies. This was achieved through technical assistance and training at, for example, Uganda Martyrs University. UCMB has a highly professional team which increased its credibility, which is now under pressure as a result of the decline of external funds.
OD – An increase in dynamic and transparent management including the improvement of management reports, better health management, M&E, and information systems, cost-centred accounting systems, a new theme 'quality and safety', integration of HIV/Aids projects, enhanced capacity to provide advice and to produce training manuals, guidelines, analyses of data, lobby dossiers, research reports and policy documents. Improved quality and sustainability in line with its mission statement can be seen at the level of UCMB, but this is much less evident at the level of the RCC network.

ID – Supporting and cooperative relationships between the three partner organizations have been maintained. UCMB is recognized by other stakeholders and by government as an important stakeholder in the health sector because of its participation in national committees on evaluation and its reform and design of policies in the health sector in Uganda. Efforts to lobby local and central government however show little result.

At the level of the RCC network, the following results can be seen:
HRD – Strengthened management and technical skills. UCMB programmes have provided more trained staff. A total of 803 scholarships were awarded between 2000 and 2010. The investment in training has a positive effect on retaining health workers, according to research carried out by Uganda Martyrs University. Staff retention was rated above 90% (based on figures from 2007).
OD – An improvement in health-management information systems by introducing procedures and guidelines for improved governance; effective management policies in the areas of employment, information systems and finance; a computerized financial system (which turned out to be not very effective); exchanges with peers and the strengthening of analytical capacities through technical workshops, and swift exchanges of health data through the new computer infrastructure. There was a noticeable progress in health service delivery, despite the worsening environment. Ofcourse, improvements are still possible and monitoring remains important. UCMB's introduction of the accreditation mechanism for the RCC network greatly enhanced the understanding of the importance of adhering to quality criteria. Together with the performance indicators (access, efficiency, equity and quality), the accreditation system provides the instruments to record and monitor the performance both at the level of individual health units and aggregated per level of health unit and/or per Diocese.
ID – supporting relations with local government districts has not been very effective to date.

Many factors influenced the effectiveness and the sustainability of the capacity development programme. On the positive side these actors concern the way in which UCMB has integrated technical assistants into its team, focused leadership, and the fact that the PSO-funded programme was fully owned by UCMB and was fully consistent with its mandate. Factors hampering effectiveness were the slow transfer of competencies through technical assistance. Technical assistants built the capacity of the local UCMB staff but they also took on regular tasks within UCMB as part of the team. Consequently, the workload for the local staff increased considerably when the technical assistants left.

The ceasing of the PSO funds put UCMB capacity under pressure in its running of the scholarship programme. This affected its credibility with its beneficiaries. A number of other factors also caused it to struggle:
- its lack of influence over diocese facilities, functions, governance and management;
- the unfavourable environment characterized by less available funding, more mushrooming public units and less cooperation between public sector and the PNFP sector;
- the lack of openness on the part of the districts; and
- Ugandan health policies being at a standstill.

Additionally, donors requested UCMB to focus on a disease-centred approach rather than on a systemic approach. This pressure has become so strong that a good proportion of the time of UCMB's top executives is spent in defending the strategic systemic approach.

2.7.6 VSO the Netherlands and VSO Uganda

VSO Uganda (VSOU) is a programme office of VSO International. It works in 18 districts in the Southwestern, Central and Midwestern regions of Uganda. Volunteer placement is essential in the general VSO approach. In 2008–2009, VSOU worked with 73 volunteers. At the same time, it worked with 61 partners – 48% of whom were in the participation and governance sector, 22% in the disability sector and the remaining 30% in the health sector.

Since 2004, the programme office has focused on three areas: participation and governance, health, and disability. The programmes are realized through local government partners NGOs, CBOs, private sector organizations, etc. VSOU strives to sign multi-annual memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with its partners in which volunteer placements can bring added value to the organization.

The capacity development programme 'Strategic Technical Assistance in Programmes' (or STAP Phase II) concerns the placement of a South-to-South volunteer for one year in VSOU's programme office in Kampala. This assignment was part of a larger project by VSO Netherlands, entailing different assignments in various countries. The objectives of the placement were to support the capacity development processes at VSO partner organizations as set out in the VSO Programme Area Plans and to contribute to the personal and professional development of young people with development backgrounds to help them to become development experts.

The following input was provided through the STAP expert/volunteer at the level of VSOU:
(I) Support to the VSO programme managers on OD and OCA tools and processes by involving them in the processes with partners and introducing them to specific tools and the application of these tools in practice and templates. This involved learning through being involved and participating in meetings. (II) The coordination of the group of volunteers interested in issues linked to OD. This group was already in existence and was coordinated by the STAP II expert.

The STAP expert also delivered the following services to the partners: awareness-raising meetings with partners on organizational assessments; workshops for capacity assessment; work sessions with partners to discuss a framework for partnership, and a specific service on board development.

The main results of the capacity development programme are the following:
VSOU programme managers and programme officers have a better understanding of OD issues and a better understanding of partners and issues of capacity development. The STAP II scheme has contributed to the capacity of VSOU to deliver results. It created space within the team to dedicate targeted attention to the very important issue of OD.
A better interaction with partners emerged. Because time was spent on this, partners and VSO Uganda came closer to each other.
The development 26 partnership frameworks, 23 MOUs, of which 11 have been signed to date. These specify the roles and responsibilities of partners. These MOUs simplify the development and review of partnerships and the identification of effective volunteer placements.
The first steps were taken in initiating real capacity development processes at the level of partner organizations. This started with the OC assessments.

On the positive side, the main factors that influenced the effectiveness and sustainability of the capacity development programme were:
• Staff meetings and interactions with the STAP volunteer improved the capacity of VSOU to deliver results in supporting OD processes at the level of partners.
• The STAP placement was much more flexible in comparison with the traditional scheme of volunteer placement. The STAP volunteer directly supported partnership development, which is part of the VSOU policy, and allowed VSOU to provide a professional service to different partners at the same time.

It should be noted however that there is not yet a policy on learning for staff, programme managers and officers. This puts constraints on the capacity to implement a programmatic approach including capacity development interventions with local partners. The VSOU staff concludes that the shift from a volunteer to a programme organization is not yet fully operational.

2.7.7   EMG – partner of Both Ends, South Africa

Environmental Monitoring Group (EMG) is a non-profit NGO based in Cape Town, South Africa. It employs 11 people and its work focuses on three broad programme areas: environmental governance, water justice and rural resource management. EMG's main approaches include engaging in research activities, facilitating multi-stakeholder processes, facilitating spaces for mutual learning and dialogue, and raising awareness within communities about complex development problems.

Initially, its work targeted mainly local and national decision makers but this shifted in the 1990s towards a more facilitative role within a multi-stakeholder process with communities, CSOs, and local and national policy makers. Between 1999 and 2000, EMG started focusing on the impact of international conventions on national and local policies. It played an important role within South Africa in raising the environmental debate and bringing together various actors, including the South African Civil Society Water Caucus, the WFTO, the World Commission on Dams, etc., for a number of big international events..

The partnership between Both Ends (BE) and EMG is relatively new. Between 1998 and 2006, the two organizations cooperated loosely, carrying out some joint lobbying, research and collaboration on the writing of working papers. In 2006/2007, Both Ends brought in funds under the joint EU- and PSO-financed programme on institutional and HR capacity development by CSOs working on drylands and land degradation. This programme became known as Drynet. EMG participated as one of seven network partners who coordinated the training, networking, lobbying, and advocacy activities for national CSOs. The Drynet network was created with the objective of enhancing CSO capacity for effective CSO alliances in order to: influence policies and increase the number of CSO projects and initiatives that tie into national policy and donor policies and interventions with regard to drylands. Almost 95% of the funding came from the EU, the rest from PSO.

The PSO component of Drynet was aimed at developing the capacity of national CSOs in 20 countries through a 'train the trainer' approach. Training seminars were organized in the first instance for the seven network partners. They, in turn, organized seminars for national CSOs. In addition to its participation in the general activities of the network, EMG focused specifically on organizing and hosting training on lobbying and advocacy. It ran training seminars on applying lobbying skills and on climate change adaptation. The Drynet programme set-up was very ambitious in terms of timing and scale. Although an end-of-programme evaluation concluded in 2009 that there had been some remarkable achievements, there was not enough investment in the capacity development of the actual network structures. With funding drying up after only three years, it is unlikely that the network will continue to exist in a substantial form. From a capacity development perspective, the partnership between BE and EMG was helpful to the Drynet project in that it facilitated HRD and ID activities aimed at specific skills, such as lobbying and advocacy. There was no support for organizational development activities of the individual network partners.

There are few indications that Both Ends (through Drynet) had a significant impact on the capacity development of EMG itself. EMG benefited to some extent in terms of its own capacity development by engaging with BE by having access to its international network, the small research grants which Both Ends introduced, the cooperation on joint activities, the opportunity to reflect about strategies, and the experience of managing an EU-funded programme. The Drynet intranet for knowledge sharing and the international research consultant did not contribute to capacity development.

2.7.8 Turqle trading – partner of Fair Trade South Africa

Turqle Trading (Turqle) was created in 1997 and is one of the long-standing partners of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO). It is active in the food sector of the fair trade market as a closed corporation with both economic and social objectives. Turqle has five employees and works with 12 producers, who in turn employ a total of about 500 people. The producers are most often family-run businesses, with white ownership and management and coloured and black farm and factory workers. Turqle is the intermediary between WFTO and the producers. It supports the producers to develop products and identify new markets and buyers. It also facilitates certification processes, supports capacity development for both business and social objectives, and handles all sorts of logistics.

The social and developmental aspects of the business are facilitated mainly through the Fair Trade Trust – which is funded through WFTO sales and through PSO funding. The Fair Trade Trust provides funds for professional development courses for workers on the farms and in the factories, and for the management level of the producers.

Turqle has grown rapidly over the years and is an important partner for WFTO in terms of sales and for the PR and networking of WFTO. Turqle is a self-funding company, largely through its commercial relationship with FTO However, it receives additional business development support from WFTO, which translates into financial support for the Fair Trade Trust. It also receives various types of support for marketing, branding, access to European markets, market trends, networking, and support for audit and quality control such as EFTA and HACCP certification. Turqle can be considered to be a self-critical and confident organization that reflects about its own capacity needs, and which does not engage in capacity development activities that it does not consider to be useful.

Turqle received funding from WFTO through the PSO programme, Omhoog in KLIMMMOP for the three-year period, 2004–2007. The main focus of the Omhoog in KLIMMMOP programme was the development and testing of the KLIMMMOP framework for the assessment of capacity development needs – which looked mainly at capacities related to business – and the identification of specific actions to address these needs. The KLIMMMOP framework plays a limited role in the partnership in terms of facilitating the dialogue on capacity development. Its role is primarily for reporting.

Capacity development activities that had an impact on Turqle related to the activities on the branding of products, product development, frameworks for audits, certification, and support for the Fair Trade Trust. Important, but more implicit, capacity development

activities that took place within the commercial relationship were the joint commercial campaigns, access to the WFTO networks, and access to the supermarket network in the Netherlands.

The capacity development support has been quite sustainable, but is challenged by the following factors:
• the overload of methodological frameworks introduced by FTO;
• the extensive use of consultants at some stages;
• WFTO's decreasing human capacity which came about when it was facing financial problems in the Netherlands in 2006 and 2007; and
• the ongoing tension between developing internal capacity for the organization's economic objectives as opposed to its social objectives – with the former receiving more attention than the latter.

2.7.9 Wau County Health System – partner of HealthNet TPO, Southern Sudan

The Wau County Health Systems Support Project was co-financed by PSO for the period 2005–2008. Its aim was to build up the health system in Bahr-el-Ghazal, one of Southern Sudan's western states. This case is about strengthening a system articulated in an agreement between HealthNet TPO and the Ministry of Health at state level. This project was developed to take over from Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) – Belgium, which had been focusing on first-level, humanitarian action health services in the area for the previous ten years. During the planning phase of this project, it was foreseen that the logical partner for HealthNet TPO would be the Wau county health department. However, during project implementation, Jur River County (covering the intervention zone of HealthNet TPO) was created splitting off from Wau County and a County Health Department was established at the end of 2008. This marked the beginning of a real handover process for the management of public health facilities by HealthNet TPO and the Jur River County Health Department.

The main purpose of the project was to increase the utilization of quality health services, including prevention and promotion with a particular focus on the health of mothers and children. The project aimed to contribute to the improved management capacity of the Sudanese authorities, to the delivery of a quality service at the Public Health Care Centre (PHCC) in Mapel and at the seven public health-care units in the country, and to community development in general by increasing capacity to address priority health issues.

Health ministry staffs at all levels of the health system in Jur river, as well as patients and the community in general all perceived HealthNet TPO's involvement in strengthening the health system as clear and very important. However, it was generally maintained that there was a need to improve coordination between HealthNet TPO and the County Health Department.

All stakeholders appreciated HealthNet TPO's contribution to the rehabilitation and construction of infrastructure. They acknowledged the logistical support provided by the ambulance in enhancing the referral system and making the outreach services easier to access. HealthNet TPO has a 'top-up' arrangement to provide drugs to the health facilities in

the county. It was acknowledged that this drugs supply was very critical for the sustenance of the curative services because the GOSS drug supply chain does not appear to be very efficient. However, HealthNet TPO in Mapel expressed some concerns over the efficiency of its own supply chain citing delays related to import procedures. HealthNet TPO has made a considerable contribution to human resources development through various training programmes for community health workers, its training in psychosocial interventions, and its training of community leaders in gender-related violence and traditional practices. HealthNet TPO facilitated the setup of health management committees, to encourage community involvement in the management of the health system within the county.

There were a number of issues that the evaluation team thought were unclear. The team questioned HealthNet TPO's roles in strengthening the county health department and managing Mapel PHCC. Management of the Mapel PHCC was handed over in 2007. However, the HR policy, for instance, has not been strengthened. Weaknesses were identified in areas such as the issuance of staff contracts with clear job descriptions. Some staff did not receive salaries at all. Certain responsibilities were handed over without proper induction processes or hand-over sessions. The management of drugs and other supplies at the PHCC needs to be strengthened. We noted that mosquito nets were missing in the maternity wards and mothers with new-born babies were not being given mosquito nets on discharge, despite stocks being available in HealthNet TPO stores.

The support provided by HealthNet TPO is mainly gap filling to supplement the role of the County Health Department. There is no clear division of roles between HealthNet TPO and the County Health Department, nor are procedures clearly defined. HealthNet TPO's focus was more on implementation than on strengthening through training, support to management committees, follow-up health promoters, etc. because the County Health Department was inactive until late 2008, the strengthening of this institute started only recently. HealthNet TPO's approach to capacity development seems to be the same as its approach to training and logistical support. The evaluation team felt that capacity development for the county health system would work more efficiently and be more cost-effective if HealthNet TPO were to engage more in secondments; attaching technical advisors to the Jur River county to accompany and coach them. The fact that HealthNet TPO exists in Mapel with its own infrastructure and staff, may complicate the process of taking over all responsibilities to manage the health system by the Jur River health department.

2.7.10 ZOA capacity development programme in Sudan

ZOA Refugee Care has been implementing an integrated rehabilitation and recovery programme in Southern Sudan since 1998. Increasingly, these projects are carried out in partnership with SCOs. ZOA implements its programmes through its own operations, through partner organizations and in collaboration with partner organizations. In 2009, ZOA developed a policy on 'partnering and organization capacity enhancement'. This set out a strategy for and an approach to capacity development. The implementation of this, and other ZOA strategies, is strengthened by the PSO LWTs. ZOA feels the need to invest more in capacity development as the responsibility for the implementation of its projects gradually shifts away from ZOA to its partners.

In Southern Sudan, ZOA has implemented a two-year programme on Capacity Building Civil Society Organizations (2009–2010). This was co-financed by PSO, which partly funded the salaries of the programme advisor, the M&E advisor and the data assistants – all attached to the Programme Advisor Department of the ZOA country office in Southern Sudan. This department supported the ZOA programme officers in the field who are responsible for supervising the implementation of the ZOA programme in a particular region. This implementation included capacity development activities financed under the ZOA programme budget.

Eight partners were involved in the capacity development programme. Its objective was to contribute to making NGOs stronger, which, it was hoped, would ultimately lead to the sustained delivery of social services to the target populations. ZOA ran this in partnership with GOSS and in collaboration with other stakeholders' interventions. ZOA included stronger and emerging Sudanese NGOs in its capacity development programme and it worked in close collaboration with local authorities. The intention of the programme was that 25% to 50% of ZOA's activities would be identified, planned, monitored and implemented in partnership with Sudanese NGOs, by time the programme ended in 2010.

The activities consisted of joint training programmes on the subjects of HR management, strategic planning, writing project proposals, project management, M&E, and financial management. It also included familiarization visits and coaching. Coaching was linked to concrete project implementation and was the responsibility of the ZOA programme officers in collaboration with staff from the department of the programme advisor in the ZOA country office. A monitoring tool was developed to assess and follow up the capacity of the partner organizations.

The results of the programme were mainly to be seen at project management level and relate to the improved implementation of the ZOA rehabilitation programme. (The sectors of education, food security and health were phased out). According to the annual reports and the evaluation visit to some of the partners involved, the projected results were largely realized. However, follow up of the familiarization visits and training remains a challenge and more intensive coaching is necessary. The programme approach seems more effective when stronger NGOs are involved as compared to the strengthening of emerging NGOs and local authorities. For the latter, a more appropriate approach needs to be developed.

2.8 Analysis

2.8.1 The nature of the different cases

During the analysis of the data, it was found that there were differences in the nature of the cases, mainly in terms of their focus on PSO-financed support for capacity development. This had important consequences for the type of capacity development support that was given and, as a consequence, on how this support was assessed. Three case categories were identified during the analysis:

- For a group of six cases the focus of support for capacity development was, mainly, on the OD of the partner organizations – seeing capacity development as an end in itself.
- A second group of six cases focused on the implementation of programmes. These took an instrumental approach aimed at improving the implementation of a specific programme – seeing capacity development as a means to an end.
- The focus of the remaining four cases related to the strengthening and funding of capacity development programmes that were implemented by organizations in the South whose core business it is to strengthen the capacity of local NGOs, CBOs and local governments.

These intermediary organizations can be either independent local organizations such as Turqle Trading in South Africa and UCMB in Uganda, or affiliates to or members of the same network/federation as the Dutch NGO, such as was the case with AMREF and VSO.

Table 13. Overview of the focus of PSO-funded capacity development support	
Focus of capacity development	**Cases studied**
Capacity building as an end in itself – focus on OD	St Martin SCA – MM NACODEV – Dorcas MKC-RDA –TEAR GPDC – IKV Pax Christi KDDS – Woord en Daad CADEP - ICCO
Capacity building as a means to an end – focus on programme implementation	LVCT – Hivos EMG – Both Ends KDDS – Woord en Daad FXI –NIZA Wau County Health System – HNTPO ZOA CD programme Southern Sudan – ZOA
Support for capacity development approaches implemented by intermediary organizations	Amref – Amref NL UCMB – Cordaid VSO – VSO NL Turqle Trading – FTO

External support for capacity development seems principally linked to improving programme implementation – the so called instrumental approach. (This was also the dominant objective in the programmes implemented by intermediary organizations). Six cases addressed capacity development as an end in itself, an approach that PSO has encouraged since 2003, mainly through the introduction of the three dimensions of capacity development: HRD, OD and ID. The fact that funds were available for separate capacity development projects and programmes that were often not directly linked to the programmes that were being funded made it possible for PSO's member organizations to enter into dialogues with their partners to discuss OD and ID. All interviewees repeated on several occasions that only a few donors finance this type of capacity development.

2.8.2 Changes that have taken place in the capacity of the Southern organizations

In their attempts to remain relevant in the contribution to poverty reduction, all the organizations visited evolved over time and several phases of organizational growth were identified.[6] Evolutions in capacity were usually linked to increases in funding, which led to increases in activities, staff, infrastructure and means. As a consequence, organizational structures needed to be established and operational guidelines and PME systems developed. With some exceptions, the *capability to relate to external stakeholders*, often did not receive the prominence it needed during organizations' early stages. However, it did become more important as organizations grew and matured. Evolutions on the five core capabilities were identified in all cases (see sections 2.2–2.6).

The most important internal factors that were identified as contributing to increased capacity in the various cases were:
- positive and inspiring leadership;
- the availability of funds, appropriate infrastructure and means;
- the availability of qualified and committed staff;
- the presence of sound organizational structures or internal reorganization processes; and
- a focus on staff training.

The capacity of the partner organizations was also influenced by several *external factors*. These included:
- financial and technical support from external donors;
- peer influence from similar-minded organizations in the country or region;
- partnerships and networks with other actors;
- security situations in the region;
- changes in climatic conditions;
- policies and decisions taken at government level, which could have facilitated or hampered civil society's room for manoeuvre; and
- the contribution made by local communities.

The influence that these factors had on the evolution of partner organizations' capacity has been both positive and negative. The extent to which the external factors influenced capacity was very closely related to the *capability to act and commit*, the *capability to adapt and self-renew* and the *capability to achieve coherence*.

It was noticed that most of the partner organizations visited had no explicit vision or strategy to guide their own capacity development processes (the partners St Martin and LVCT in Kenya did not have an explicit vision on capacity development, but they did have a strategy and a separate capacity development department that was responsible for internal capacity development). No explicit values and principles regarding capacity development were found, nor did partner organizations formulate explicitly what they considered to be

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[6]   CDRA – phases of organizational growth (such as the pioneer phase, the administrative phase, and the integration phase, etc).

essential to achieving their general objectives. Capacity development support responded to a perceived need with regard to programme implementation.

Conclusions

Endogenous capacity development occurs in organizations that are encouraged by many internal and external factors and that have leadership and resources as key driving forces on the one hand and the political environment and donor support on the other. How the core capabilities manifest themselves in organizations depends on the phase of organizational development. These capacity change processes are not based on an articulated understanding about how to guide organizational change. A consequence of this is that many capacity development projects and programmes are related to perceived needs or obvious capacity gaps relating to programme implementation, but not usually to an organizational capacity development plan.

2.8.3 Effects of changes in the capacity of Southern organizations on the realization of their development objectives

Inputs – To achieve their various outputs, organizations need a range of inputs, which have been categorized as follows: leadership and management, finance, human resources, knowledge and expertise, facilities and logistics and social environment inputs.

- Leadership and management are crucial factors that influence an organization's ability to perform. The weaker cases that were evaluated all suffered from unsound leadership and management. The contribution of PSO member organizations was to create or strengthen governance structures, including the functioning of the board in some cases, and to facilitate leadership training. However, member organizations seemed hesitant to address real leadership issues.
- Changes in human resources are influenced by the availability of funds, the availability of qualified staff in the region and whether it is possible for an organization to hold on to that staff. Losing staff is a major threat for all organizations not able to pay sufficiently high salaries. The strong cases in the evaluation managed to attract sufficient and well-qualified staff and to motivate them using various incentives such as increasing salary, offering training, improving the culture of the organization, etc. These organizations have succeeded in increasing staff numbers and maintaining them. Weaker cases were not able to keep sufficient qualified staff.
- Knowledge, skills and expertise are other inputs closely related to human resources. All three supported innovation and the development of technology in their partners' programmes. Knowledge, skills and expertise were all supplied by the PSO member organizations in a number of ways including:
  - long-term technical assistants (St Martin, MKC–RDA, GPDC, UCMB);
  - short-term consultancies that supported the organization from time to time (all cases);
  - study tours (NACODEV, MKC–RDA, GPDC, KDDS);
  - exchange visits between different organizations (all cases); and
  - collaboration with other strategic partners.
- Staff knowledge and skills were certainly enhanced, however not all acquired skills could be put into practice in every instance. Also, not all trained staff could be maintained in every case and not all strategies for acquiring new skills were completely effective (see

below.) These factors explain the variations in the results of the capacity development cases assessed.
- Facilities and logistics, including such things as office space and facilities, transport facilities and operational tools and equipment have all improved in almost all cases assessed as a result of increased funding. Other facilities such as drugs for health units, IEC materials for the mobilization and sensitization of communities, agricultural products and tools for farming, etc. were regularly made available through programme funding by PSO member organizations or other donors. Facilities and logistics are important inputs, as has been proved in the weaker cases such as MKC-RDA, GPDC, KDDS, where infrastructure and logistics were insufficient.

It is obvious from the cases that were evaluated that a good track record, sound governance structures and sufficient staff were important factors in enabling organizations to attract external funding, both from within the country and from abroad.

The introduction of new technologies and strategies changed approaches to capacity development – and led to changes in the quality of outputs. The same external factors that influenced capacity changes, such as the political and climate environment, security situations and the availability of external funding, directly influenced organizational productivity. Changes to governance structure and leadership influenced organizations' ability to mobilize development resources, which had a direct influence on their output. Changes to organizational structure, learning systems and leadership influenced their capacity to respond to changes in the political environment, and this too influenced output.

Outputs – Partner organizations' programmes grew both in number and in the diversity of their outputs. Here, a link between changed capacity and changed output was observed. Changes in staffing levels, in both numbers and skills mix, along with changes in funding had a direct influence on the volume and quality of outputs produced by the organization. But this influence has been both positive and negative.

Outcome – The partner organizations have hardly any data available at outcome level and absolutely no baseline data. A consequence of this is that there is no solid basis to state whether present outcomes are an improvement on the past. The only evidence here is anecdotal, and to a large extent, judgment has been based on proxy indicators emerging from organizations' outputs that point to relevant, effective and sustainable changes in the lives of the beneficiaries.

Some cases showed an improvement in the involvement of beneficiaries in the programmes. This was visible through:
- increased awareness of food security issues – in the case of NACODEV, MKC-RDA and KDDS;
- increased awareness of HIV/Aids – in the case of KDDS and St Martin;

- increased access to services offered by the partner organizations – in the case of some of St Martin's programmes, NACODEV, KDDS and LVCT; and
- increased income – in the case of MKC–RDA and NACODEV.

Several examples of these improvements can be found in the case study reports. However in other cases, the relationship between output and outcome was not so positive. The evaluation found that in these cases, changes in capacity were not enough to produce the necessary outcomes. In these cases, what was deficient was either the performance of the management and leadership structures (in the case of KDDS and MKC–RDA) or the organization's technical functionality (as was the situation with St Martin, KDDS, MKC–RDA, NACODEV and some partners of CADEP). It was therefore evident that a lot more was required in order to reach the desired outcomes.

It is clear that almost no partner organization was capable of adapting its strategy based on the results of qualitative programme evaluations, and hence incapable of changing its strategy in order to achieve better outcomes. An exception to this, to a certain extent, was LVCT in Kenya.

Conclusions

When the capacity of the partner organization changed, it had an effect on output – either in terms of the quantity of output or its quality. The evaluation did not prove beyond anecdotal evidence that changes in outputs result in improved outcomes. This can be explained by three factors: the fact that changes in capacity do not immediately result in changes in output and outcome; the dearth of outcome data that can be used to improve an organization's strategies, and the fact that the capacity changes were sometimes too basic to achieve the desired results.

2.8.4 Effectiveness of the support for capacity development of Southern organizations offered by the PSO member organizations

This section assesses the effectiveness and sustainability of the capacity development programmes offered by the PSO member organizations. We also assess the professionalism of this support based on the evaluation of several indicators. (For more details about the indicators, see the PSO inception report of January 2010 together with the individual case study reports.)

Effectiveness of the support for capacity development

In all three categories of cases assessed, the PSO member organizations contributed mainly to the development of the *capability to act and commit* and the *capability to deliver on development objectives*:

a. In the cases where the focus was on the OD of partner organizations (where capacity development was an end in itself), the contribution was mainly to the *capability to act and commit* and the *capability to deliver on development objectives*:
- evidence of the development of useful policies and strategies was found in the cases of St Martin, NACODEV, MKC–RDA and CADEP;
- evidence of leadership training was found in the cases of NACODEV and MKC–RDA; and

- Evidence of contributions to improve staff motivation was found in the cases of St Martin, NACODEV, MKC–RDA and KDDS.

In the cases where the capacity development projects were successful, useful policies and strategies, effective leadership and good staff motivation worked together to enhance the *capability to act and commit*. The *capability to deliver on development objectives* was strengthened mainly through the availability of core funding and programme funding. This was so in all the cases evaluated. The development or improvement of organizational structures was seen in the cases of St Martin, NACODEV, MKC–RDA and GPDC. The development of manuals and M&E systems was seen in the cases of St Martin, NACODEV, MKC–RDA and KDDS. And improvements in the skills required to develop and manage participatory projects and programmes were observed in St Martin, NACODEV, MKC–RDA, KDDS and CADEP.

b. In the cases where capacity development was seen as a means to an end and the focus was on programme implementation, there was an across-the-board contribution to an improved quality of programme as well as a higher level of programme effectiveness. Examples of this can be seen in the cases of the LVCT-toll-free helpline for HIV/Aids and sexuality related issues, and in the EMG project for improved training for CBOs.

c. In the cases where support for capacity development approaches was implemented by intermediary organizations, the focus was principally on the *capability to deliver on development objectives*. This is because these development objectives are about the capacity development of local stakeholders. In two cases, AMREF and UCMB, a considerable improvement was noted in policies and strategies. In two further cases, VSO and Turqle Trading, this improvement was not clear. The VSO case is still about improving the programmatic approach of the VSO country office and not yet about achieving a relevant contribution to increasing the capacity of local partners. Turqle Trading implements qualitative programmes (though with some challenges), but no changes have been noticed in its approach or in the quality of its approach. Contributions to capacity development must be seen in of the context of financing Turqle Trading's programmes and the economic relationship established between it and FTO Netherlands.

In the cases where there was a successful contribution to the *capability to relate to external stakeholders*, it was generally as a result of forging links and participating in networks and alliances – mostly with the partners of the PSO member organization. The PSO member organizations helped their partner organizations to establish contact with other organizations by organizing partner conferences and study visits. They linked partners to existing networks and set up learning events to which all partners were invited. This was frequently brought about as part of the PSO-funded programme and involved several partners in various countries. It also came about as part of the improved programmatic approach and partner policies adopted by most of the PSO member organizations. However, this seems to be a donor-driven approach, focusing on the programmes of the PSO member organization.

The PSO member organizations evaluated focused on thematic coherence within their programmes and partners were selected within that thematic framework. In the sample cases, few programmes were identified as aiming at achieving thematic and geographic coherence on the local level by adopting a multi-stakeholder approach or strengthening a particular sector. This explains the limited contribution made to the *capability to relate to external stakeholders*.

The evaluation did not notice any contributions to the *capability to adapt and self-renew* or to *the capability to achieve coherence*. Regarding the *capability to adapt and self-renew*, one could consider the development of M&E systems as an important contribution to enhancing this capability. However, this was usually limited to training on M&E and the development of reporting formats. Thought was not given to either implementation in practice or to the management and monitoring of data for further planning. Hence these initiatives did not really enhance the *capability to adapt and self-renew*.

A lack of attention to gender mainstreaming was noticeable in all the cases studied. Almost none of the partner organizations visited had a gender policy, and the issue had not been a subject of discussion in any partner relationship. The exception here was LVCT–Hivos, where a gender mainstreaming programme was part of the internal capacity development programme of LVCT. LVCT had the capacity to facilitate the whole process itself and did not need external technical support. It looked for funding only for the activities related to this gender research, which was funded by a different donor.

Organizations in the South can be strengthened through a close collaboration with partners in the North. This can be achieved through joint political action, for example, or when a partner from the North takes on the role of a broker in changing power relations in the South.[7] This type of collaboration can contribute to enhanced legitimacy and credibility for the partner in the South. However, this kind of support for capacity development was not very evident in the cases studies. This could be because this kind of capacity development support is often implicit and should not be compared with explicit capacity development support for projects and programmes with clear objectives and expected results.

Some elements of implicit capacity development support were identified in the policies of two organizations: IKV/Pax Christi and Both Ends. One of the characteristics of this type of capacity development support is an evolution towards more balanced and real partnerships that are not negatively influenced by the financial relationship. Joint political action and research are just elements of this type of support and do not indicate full, implicit capacity development support. The cases in the sample do not yet deliver evidence for the type of capacity development support outlined above. (However, the cases evaluated can not necessarily be seen as being representative of the whole partnership portfolio of these NGOs).

[7] Huyse, H., Phlix, G. et al. (2010) *Evaluatie van partnerschappen gericht op capaciteitsversterking*. Brussel: FOD Buitenlandse Zaken, Buitenlandse handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

PSO funds can be used for three types of activities: the financing of long-term placements, the financing of short expert missions and the financing of local capacity development activities. PSO members must indicate in their project or programme proposals what instruments they will use – for example, training, advising, coaching, facilitating, organizing exchange visits, or, in a limited way, supporting implementation and management. Most of the proposals describe a mix of instruments. Recently, there has been a reduction in the number of technical assistants being placed in partner organizations. This reduction is confirmed in the policy documents of the member organizations that were visited. [8] PSO member organizations seem to gravitate more towards funding local capacity development activities and engaging local expertise where possible. The evaluation did not generally find evidence of capacity development support related to 'gap filling' – an exception here is the case of HealthNet TPO in their strengthening of the Wau County Health System. All capacity development projects and programmes genuinely aim to empower the partner organizations. The trend away from long-term placements from outside and towards local capacity development activities confirms the ambitions described in the PSO grant decision (*subsidiebeschikking*).[9]

Though HDR was an element in almost all the capacity development projects and programmes studied, the strongest focus was on organizational development. Institutional development was mostly limited to linking the partners with other partners and networks with which the member organization was already involved. Table 14 gives an overview of the effectiveness of PSO member organizations' contributions to changing the capacity of their partner organizations. (The funding of partner organizations' programmes is not included in the overview).

In 12 of the 15 cases, at least some of the objectives of the capacity development project or programme were achieved. In five of the cases, the objectives were entirely realized; in seven cases, the objectives were partly met, and in the remaining three cases, the objectives were not met at all. However, as described earlier, there is little evidence that improved capacity leads directly to desired outcomes. In a number of cases, such as KDDS and MKC-RDA, capacity interventions did not result in increased performance of the organization's management and leadership structures. In other cases, including St Martin, KDDS, MKC–RDA, NACODEV, SCOPE/CADEP, it did not improve the organization's technical functionality. So we can conclude that it is evident that much more action is required in order to reach desired outcomes.

The sustainability of the results achieved by the capacity development projects and programmes was not ascertained in any of the cases except St Martin. Sustainability was considered to be sufficient but weak in four of the 15 cases and at risk in ten of them.

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8   Except at VSO, where long-term placements were at the core of the capacity development strategy.
9   The focus of this evaluation is on explicit support for capacity development. However, many implicit ways of supporting capacity development can be just as effective in strengthening capacity development. See Huyse. H., Phlix, G. et al. (2010) *Evaluatie van partnerschappen gericht op capaciteitsversterking*. Brussel: FOD Buitenlandse Zaken, Buitenlandse Handel en ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

		Contribution to capacity	Effectiveness	Sustain-ability	Relevance
		Table 14. An overview of each case in terms of its effectiveness, sustainability and relevance.			
St Martin		Governance structures, policies, operational guidelines, set up training and facilitation department, training of staff, management.	(1)+	+	+
		Set up of a curio shop.	(2)x	0	0
MKC-RDA		Improved staff policy.	x	0	+
		Improved participative programmatic work.			
KDDS		Application of an OCA.	0	0	x
FXI		Important source of core funding in the period 2002–8; access to expertise on role of new media; increased networking capacity.	0	0	0
CADEP		SCOPE – strategic planning, technical skills to conduct technical training, increased skills of staff in project management, business plan developed.	(1)x	0	x
		SCYMI – strategic plan, increased skills of staff in project management, and to implement life skills training.	(2)x	0	x
NACODEV		Governance structure, policies, leadership, improved technical skills of staff, improved relations.	+	0	+
GPDC		No contribution.	0	0	0
LVCT		Improved information and counselling services for youngsters addressing issues such as HIV/Aids and sexuality.	+	x	+
EMG		Improved training in lobbying and advocacy; improved knowledge products. Improved networking capacity on drylands.	x	x	x
Amref		Development of a CD policy and strategy for the Amref network.	(1)+	0	+
		Case Ethiopia – good practices documented.	(2)x	0	+
UCMB		Improved training offer.	+	x	+
VSO		Improved programmatic work of the country office; OCA done at partner level.	x	0	x
Turqle Trading		Improved trading, marketing, certification and production capacity (partly resulted from the business relationship).	x	x	x

Wau County health system	Health infrastructure rehabilitated, community health management committees installed, health promoter and community health workers trained, no impact on strengthening county health department.	x	0	x
ZOA Sudan	Increased project management skills of partner organizations.	x	0	x

+ = very good; x=sufficient; o= results not achieved, not sustainable, not relevant and poor efficiency

All cases except GPDC said that the support of the PSO member organizations was relevant. (More detailed information can be found in the description of the cases and in the case study reports.)

Several factors explain the levels of effectiveness and sustainability achieved by the capacity development projects and programmes.

Effectiveness

Vision and strategy are needed in order for capacity development of the partner organizations to occur – Almost none of the partner organizations had a clear vision of their own capacity development process or a strategy for how to manage it. Exceptions here are St Martin and, to a certain extent, LVC. None of the organizations had its own capacity development plan managed and implemented by relevant staff. Therefore, capacity development projects and programmes responded to a perceived need and were implemented and managed on an *ad hoc* basis. When no member of staff is appointed to manage planning and other processes, the effectiveness and sustainability of the projects and programmes are put at risk. Strong leadership is needed to manage and guide the capacity development process to ensure success. Moreover, unless there is sufficient internal capacity and adequate experience in dealing with external development partners to promote capacity development, the actions of external partners may result in haphazard and incoherent capacity development actions.

Leadership is vital – Effective support for capacity development is possible only when leadership is open to change and is accepted by staff. Organizations with leadership crises or weak leadership were confronted with many challenges that are not usually addressed by the Northern organizations. Leadership in combination with internal capacity to manage capacity development programmes are important and create favourable conditions for capacity development programmes.

Internal learning systems, approaches and style must be clear – Training is vital, but on its own it is not sufficient to promote organizational capacity. Training offers knowledge to individuals but to be useful, this knowledge needs to be shared with and transmitted to others in the organization. Appropriate mechanisms should be put in place to achieve this. There must also be other factors that enable staff to translate knowledge into practice. So to

be complete, training should be accompanied by other initiatives such as encouraging changes in attitudes to make new ways of doing things more acceptable or helping staff to feel ready and committed to take up their roles. Personnel exchanges and the South-to-South sharing of experience is a relevant strategy in capacity development because it generates new ideas and encourages organizational reforms through peer influence. However, this can be effective only in organizations that are well prepared and ready to use the new knowledge they have gained. This evaluation found that such readiness implies, in part, the presence of well-elaborated internal mechanisms to utilize the lessons learned from short study visits and exchanges. However, in the majority of Southern organizations these mechanisms are nonexistent.

Monitoring and evaluation should support organizational learning – In partner organizations, the absence of a structured view of capacity development, the lack of internal organizational learning systems, weak leadership and poor management of change processes adversely influenced the effectiveness of the capacity development programmes. To improve effectiveness and strengthen the sustainability of capacity development, second-order changes often need to be brought about in an organization. However, PSO member organizations do not generally focus on second-order changes. Member organizations feel hesitant to intervene in the internal affairs of an organization in order to, for example, address leadership issues.

Sustainability

The technological, institutional and financial sustainability of capacity development projects and programmes needs to be planned in advance. Institutional sustainability is at risk when the elements that are necessary for effective capacity development are not guaranteed. Technological sustainability is hampered when trained personnel are not supported in putting the knowledge they have acquired into practice. New techniques or organizational changes will only be sustained when the financial resource implications have been taken into account.

Relevance

In all the cases reviewed, support for capacity development was in response to a perceived need. In half of the cases, this need was identified or made explicit through a formal needs assessment. A SWOT analysis or a formal OCA facilitated by an external consultant was used to identify these needs. In nine of the 15 cases, capacity development initiatives were set up within the framework of a capacity development programme – usually involving several organizations, sometimes from different countries. Capacity development activities needed to be consistent with the overall programme approach. Although the projects and programmes were perceived as relevant in the eyes of both the partner organizations and the member organizations, the relevance of this can be questioned and we must ask whether the right capacity needs were really identified.

In six cases, formal OCA instruments were used. The use of OCAs as a tool has gained significance as can be seen from the prominence it is given in the policy documents of the PSO member organizations as well as in several of the LWTs. However, OCAs run the risk of

resulting in over-ambitious capacity development plans because the starting point in capacity analysis is a checklist of the capacities that are present and those that are missing in the organization. No sound risk analyses were found in the cases that addressed the entire results chain in order to create a link between the capacity development initiative itself, the organization that is supposed to use it, the process that is employed to deliver it, and the validity and sustainability of the results it is expected to achieve. Risk analysis creates a technical basis for prioritization and dialogue on what to undertake in capacity development, resulting in more realistic and relevant plans.

Choice of strategies

The strategies that were chosen influenced the effectiveness of the support for capacity development. Below is an assessment of whether the three main inputs of capacity development programmes were used effectively:

a. *Training* was effective only when internal learning mechanisms supported the implementation of acquired skills. Hands-on and in-house training seemed to be much more effective than hands-off and extra-mural training. (For examples of this, see the cases of St Martin, MKC–RDA, KDDS and LVCT). The same applies for exchange visits and regional workshops and meetings. Partner meetings contributed to capacity development only when they were well prepared, part of a comprehensive capacity development plan, focused and followed up.

b. Another point to bear in mind is the focus on products to the detriment of processes. More attention was given to the production of policy papers and operational manuals than to how to develop policies, and how to implement operational guidelines. In four of the cases, there was too much focus on the products.

c. PSO member organizations made use of local expertise when it was available for activities such as training, product development and technical assistance. In five of the cases, the partner organization was supported by the long-term placement of a technical assistant, either from the region or from Europe. This was justified by the partners and the member organizations who argued that specific expertise was needed that could not be sourced within the country – either that type of expertise was not available, people were not willing to work in remote areas, or people were unwilling to work under the existing organizational conditions. The technical expertise used in the cases assessed varied from a specific technical expert needed for a particular programme (as was the case for UCBM and VSO), to an organizational adviser (as was the case with St Martin, MKC–RDA and GPDC). The input of these long-term placements was effective in only two cases (St. Martin and UCMB). The effectiveness of such input depended not only on the experts themselves (all the technical assistants had the relevant profile and expertise, a strong personality and the necessary skills), but primarily on the way the expert was embedded in the organizations – on the possibilities that existed for the handing over of tasks, on the expert's place in the structure of the organization, on the way their work was followed up and on their protection from requirements to become responsible for management and implementation tasks. Follow up of the input made by technical assistants is linked to the conditions described above.

Good monitoring and evaluation of capacity development programmes is needed in order to identify and manage the risks related to such complex programmes. The monitoring of capacity development projects and programmes was very weak and was mostly limited to a description of the output or products delivered. Assessments of how these outputs enhanced capacity development were weak. Evaluations of the effects of the capacity development programmes were never linked to evaluations of their outputs and outcomes. Hence there was no insight into the extent to which capacity development projects contributed to improved organizational performance. Monitoring and evaluation roles and responsibilities were often described in documentation but were not respected in reality by the partner organizations.

2.8.5 *Professionalism of the support for capacity development*
Here we assess the professionalism of the member organizations' support for capacity development in the various cases, according to the different criteria as described in the general terms of reference and the inception report.

The quality of the policy of the PSO member organizations (Is the policy topical, result oriented and relevant?) Most of the member organizations still are in the process of developing their capacity development policies. Strategies supporting capacity development were often not explicit or were incorporated into overall strategic plans (see Chapter 3 for more information). All the member organizations took advantage of the LWTs to further develop their capacity development policies. Consistent practice with regard to supporting capacity development was often lacking in the member organizations and it depended greatly on the competences and expertise of the programme officers involved. Intervention theories regarding support for capacity development were not made explicit by the member organizations.

The case studies show that member organizations did not often address the issues related to effectiveness and sustainability:
- Project descriptions often lacked a sound risk analysis and an examination of opportunities. Analyses were limited to general context descriptions and descriptions of general risks without assessments of the probability of particular risks occurring and the effects such risks would have on the implementation of the capacity development plan. So, the preconditions described above were not taken into account.
- Many project descriptions included the results of needs assessments. However, as we saw earlier, needs assessments do not always result in realistic and relevant capacity plans.
- The support provided did not always address the real capacity challenges of specific partner organizations.
- The support focused too often on products and not on the processes to achieve these products.
- None of the cases showed evidence of profound monitoring and evaluation of the support provided. Often roles and responsibilities regarding monitoring were not taken up by the partner organizations, and monitoring was limited to visits from the member organization to their partners. The logical frameworks, containing descriptions of results and indicators, seem to have been used as an administrative tool producing annual reports rather than as a management tool for the partners and the member organizati-

ons. Even in the member organizations' annual reports, little information was found on what indicators were identified. As a result, the annual reports are weak in quality and do not deliver sufficient information in order to assess the progress of the capacity development plan and its contribution to changed capacity. As is often the case though, there are exceptions: in two capacity development programmes, supported by Hivos and Dorcas, monitoring and evaluation were taken up by the programme coordinators. These coordinators were based locally and paid regular visits to the partners and used a well-developed monitoring instrument.

A favourable partner relationship is vital for facilitating support for capacity development
All partnerships with member organizations were deemed by all partners to be of a high quality and there seemed to be a good deal of trust and respect. Most of the partnerships were programme supporter partnerships (based on the typology of Alan Fowler), where two member organizations aim to establish a balanced partnership. The flexibility of the funding of the Dutch NGOs and the additional funds for capacity development were greatly appreciated by the partner organizations, who argued that this way of funding was the only way to facilitate or encourage capacity development.

The role played by the member organizations was very much welcomed by the partner organizations. They appreciated the way programme officers were prepared to ask critical questions and to challenge the partner organizations. Partners believed that this broadened the perspective of their organizations. Programme officers were actively involved in a critical dialogue with their partners. Nine member organizations have local representatives who act as facilitators or coaches in supporting capacity development.

Although a good deal of respect and trust existed between the partners, there were difficulties at times addressing sensitive issues, such as leadership, gender, etc. Issues such as role definitions and the designation of responsibilities were not generally discussed between member organizations and their partners.

Cost-effectiveness
Cost-effectiveness seems to have been taken into account by partner and member organizations – though a thorough analysis of this cost-effectiveness was not possible within the boundaries of this evaluation. Where possible, local expertise was used. The placement of long-term experts was done only at the request of the partner organizations. It can be seen that neither the member organizations nor the partner organizations had an overview of what is spent on technical assistants, because this is managed directly by PSO.

Table 15. Overview of budgets spent by the member organizations and funded by PSO, as a percentage of the partner organizations (PO's) overall budget (€)			
Case study	**Budget spent by the member organization**	**PSO budget spent**	**Average % of the PO's overall budget**
St Martin	108,260 (over 7 years)	421,130 (over 9 years)	22%
MKC– RDA	172,371 (over 5 years)	197,163 (over 5 years)	28%
KDDS	201,698 (2009)	10,000 (2009)	Unknown
FXI	0	564,031 (over 9 years)	Unknown
CADEP – SCOPE*	50,000 (over 2 years)	Not directly added to PO budget	Not applicable
CADEP – SCYMI*	0	67,520 (over 3 years)	60%

* PSO has funded the CADEP programme advisor. No PSO budget was transferred to the participating organizations, except some small grants financing pilot projects. (See the SCYMI case.)

The PSO funds make up a considerable portion of the total budget that is spent by the member organizations on their partner organizations. In the case of Niza, all funding was PSO funding. The financial reports do not offer sufficient data to analyze cost-effectiveness. In the financial and narrative reports, the link between budgets and activities is often unclear.

Twelve of the 15 cases were part of a larger capacity development programme. From the case studies, we can identify three main advantages related to the cost-effectiveness of the programmatic approach:
- In five cases, a local capacity development coordinator/advisor was present in the country or the region. This coordinator took on several roles. The role of coach made these coordinators very accessible to the partner organizations and fostered relationships of trust. In the role of broker, the coordinators helped to negotiate with external stakeholders and facilitate access to networks and knowledge institutes.
- The pooling of funds and expertise yielded various advantages such as (a) joint training on technical skills involving several partners and specific technical expertise; (b) it was easier to justify investment in knowledge products when it was shown that they would be available to all partners participating in the programme, (c) creation of a pool of local capacity builders.
- The possibility to learn from one another and exchange experiences was increased, leading to opportunities for institutional and sectoral development.

Staff quality of member organizations and partner organizations
The ability of staff to manage capacity development programmes varied in quality within each member organization. There variations were noticed during the case assessments.

The management of capacity development programmes was organized at a number of levels – local, regional and in the Netherlands. At the local level, two types of programme officer can be distinguished: (1) The programme officers, in the respective countries, who coordinated specific, PSO-funded capacity development programmes seemed to possess the appropriate skills and attitude to facilitate and manage the programmes. According to the interviewees, they had been engaged because of their specific competences and experiences. They had not been involved in specific training on capacity development. (2) Staff at local or regional offices, who coordinated the programmes at local/regional level, had a general development profile without specific expertise in facilitating organizational development processes. All member organizations have started initiatives to enhance the capacity of these programme officers to better manage capacity development programmes funded as a specific PSO projects or through the LWTs.

The technical assistants sent to the partner organizations were well chosen. They had the appropriate profiles, skills and expertise to facilitate capacity development projects and programmes. The evaluation did not find much evidence related to specific training being provided for them in the area of support for capacity development, organized by either the member organizations or PSO. Their capacity depended above all on recruiting the right person. An exception to this was the juniors who were sent through the Youth Zone programme and who received specific training organized by PSO. However, PSO organizes a collective learning trajectory (CLT) called 'Civil society and capacity development for professionals being sent abroad'. Feedback from participants indicated that it was relevant and useful. (Its effectiveness could not be assessed here because technical assistants from the cases had not participated in it.)[10]

At the level of the programme officers, based in the Netherlands, the quality of the capacity to manage capacity development projects and programmes varied. This is the reason why much emphasis was given to strengthening staff competences in the framework of the LWT. Member organizations felt a real need to increase the capacity of staff so that they would be better able to manage capacity development projects and programmes. Staff wanted to increase their competences to discuss several approaches to capacity development with partners, to learn how to better monitor capacity development plans and to learn how to facilitate OCAs.

The competence of staff in partner organizations to manage capacity development projects and programmes was generally very limited. Only when the organization invested in internal capacity development, as was the case with St Martin, LVCT, was this successful. As described earlier, most of the partners have neither explicit vision nor strategy regarding internal capacity development. For them, capacity was mainly related to the capacity development of beneficiaries such as community members, self-help groups, CBOs and local governments and was often linked to training.

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[10] The activities of PSO's department of personnel affairs are not the subject of this evaluation. These activities are mostly about the working conditions of technical assistance.

There is little evidence from the case studies to show that lessons learned about capacity development were shared. This is because of weak M&E practices, the limited extent to which experiences are documented, and the limited capacity to know how to learn lessons from practice. Three organizations are investing in these processes: ICCO, through its own specific capacity development programme; Hivos, through its own knowledge academy and through the PSO-funded LWT, and Dorcas, through its PSO-funded capacity development programme and the LWT. The PSO quality fund could be used to this end and has been used in the case of Hivos to document the STAR programme in order to prepare the second phase of the programme. In all LWTs, this documenting of good practices and sharing of lessons learned with the partner organizations, is planned. The AMREF case specifically is about the documenting of good practices. As the implementation of LWT activities started only in 2009, there are not many results available yet.

Through the innovation fund, member organizations can introduce and discuss new or innovative approaches with their partner organizations. Looking at the innovative projects that had been selected for the innovation award in 2010, these projects focused on improving programme implementation, and introducing new approaches to realize the objectives of the organizations (instrumental approach to capacity development).[11]

Added value of PSO

The most important contribution made by PSO's support for the effectiveness of capacity development programmes and projects is the specific earmarking of funding for them. And this is appreciated by the members and partner organizations. Member organizations do not experience sufficient room for manoeuvre in the MFS (*medefinancieringsstelsel*) co-financing system, although the evaluation concludes that *some* of the projects and programmes could easily have been financed with MFS funds. These cases related to instrumental support for capacity development.

In terms of added value, PSO's most important contributions are financing the support for OD and financing the enhancement of the quality of capacity development programmes implemented by local offices of the member organization and associated local capacity building organizations. Neither of these qualifies for MFS financing.

PSO contributed to the quality of the capacity development projects and programmes, but to a limited extent – see Chapter 3. The format for presenting proposals for projects and programmes forced the member organizations to take several points into account. However, a sound risk and opportunity management system was not developed in any of the cases. Relevant comments have been formulated by PSO in order to improve the quality of all proposals, but only a few of them have been followed up.

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[11] One case involved a project funded by the PSO innovation fund (Tearfund-MKC-RDA – new approaches towards creating HIV/Aids awareness in the communities). The effectiveness of this project was hindered by high staff turnover in the organization (including staff trained in the innovative approaches) caused by a leadership crisis.

Conclusions

Their membership of PSO allows member organizations to make funds available explicitly for capacity development. For partner organizations, this type of funding is a rare commodity, and one which they value very highly. The collaboration between the member organizations and the partners in the case studies took place in the context of conducive relationships between members and partners and was characterized by a good deal of trust and respect.

Partner organizations appreciated the fact that the programme officers at the member organizations were able to ask critical questions about the way the partners operated and to challenge them in order to help them to develop. However, while a great deal of respect and trust existed, in many cases it seemed to be difficult for member organizations to address sensitive issues such as leadership and gender.

The findings of the case study assessments indicate that member organizations' level of professionalism in relation to capacity development left much to be desired. Many member organizations do not yet have a capacity development policy or strategy, or explicit capacity development support models. In addition, their administrations tend not to be favourable to the principles of organizations as open systems, or the perspective of capacity development as an endogenous process. It is also clear from the evaluations that the expertise and competences of staff are mostly very limited.

Several factors influenced, positively or negatively, the effectiveness and sustainability of the capacity development achievements seen in the case studies.

- In the partner organizations, the absence of a structured view of capacity development, the lack of internal organizational learning systems, weak leadership and poor management of change processes adversely influenced the effectiveness of capacity development support. Partner organizations often faced organizational challenges which required second-order learning, but neither member organizations nor their partners were keen to discuss these issues, partly because members were hesitant to intervene in the internal affairs of a partner organization in order to, for example, address leadership issues.
- The member organizations either completely lacked or had not yet finished developing detailed policies and strategies on support for capacity development. The process for formulating such policies and strategies was not yet fully owned by all staff. The quality of the implementation of capacity development programmes always depends largely on the capacity of individual programme officers. In the cases assessed, enhancement of staff competences to enable them to manage capacity development programmes had only just begun. In three of the cases, a programme officer with expertise in capacity development had been specifically targeted by the member organizations to manage capacity development programmes. Evidence that the lessons learned were shared among staff members was very limited, as was evidence of the documentation of good practices regarding capacity development programmes. Building up staff competences and sharing lessons learned are included in all the LWTs. But since the LWTs only began in 2009, it is probably still too early to see any major results.

- The management of the capacity development programmes was also hampered by the lack of good monitoring and evaluation. The fact that many of the programmes were too ambitious and not fully owned by the partner organization, coupled with the lack of a sound risk-management strategy for the programmes, also hindered effective management. In cases where the partner organization was unable to lead the capacity development programmes, this weak management had a negative influence on effectiveness and sustainability.

The relevance of the capacity development programmes seemed good in almost all cases, although one can question whether the most appropriate actions were taken. In eight cases, capacity development interventions were based on a perceived need. In these cases, instead of addressing perceived capacity gaps, one could question whether more fundamental capacity challenges needed to be addressed.

In four cases, formal OCAs were conducted, albeit within the framework of larger capacity development programmes. These programmes were rather donor driven, with capacity assessments resulting in over-ambitious plans and starting from the point of view of a deficit. In none of the cases was there a real prioritization of capacity challenges or an analysis of risks and opportunities. Had these been done, it could have resulted in more realistic programmes.

PSO member organizations responded to partners' problems in a rather traditional way by offering financial and technical support to strengthen their capacity. They focused principally on strengthening of the *capability to act and commit* and the *capability to deliver on development objectives*. But organizations are also frequently confronted with many other challenges, particularly challenges relating to the *capability to relate to external stakeholders*, the *capability to adapt and self-renew* and the *capability to achieve coherence*. These challenges were addressed only to a limited extent in the capacity development projects and programmes evaluated.

Qualitative changes were noticed in the cases that focused on the improvement of a particular implementation strategy. Qualitative changes in output were observed, particularly in the areas of improving or changing approaches and adopting new approaches. Most changes brought about by capacity development interventions are first-order changes that improve existing approaches. There were also a few examples of second-order changes where partners started doing something fundamentally different from what was done before. These changes were supported by strong and inspiring leadership and committed staff who were open to change and willing to try new approaches.

It is less easy to see the effects of capacity development programmes that focused on organizational or institutional development. Support for organizational development that focused on first-order changes – usually related to the establishment of an organization – was effective in the cases studied and this led to improved outputs. Support for organizational development that aimed to contribute to second-order changes was more

difficult to identify. In these cases, the support for capacity development brought stakeholders beyond their comfort zones and was far less effective.

2.8.6 Lessons learned

None of the partners involved in the evaluations had a clearly formulated understanding of capacity and capacity development or of the theory of change. No explicit values and principles regarding capacity development were found, nor did partner organizations explicitly express what they considered to be the essentials of their capacity. Interventions were planned on an *ad hoc* basis without paying much heed to the risks and assumptions that might hinder the effective implementation of the programmes. This was not problematic in the cases that aimed to improve effective programme implementation because only first-order changes were envisaged. [12] However, this lack of a clear vision of and an approach to capacity development certainly held back those cases that intended to bring about organizational or second-order changes.

The biggest changes in capacity were influenced by internal factors ranging from internal attitudes and the commitments of managers and leaders, to internal values and policies, internal reform processes, the availability and quality of personnel and the outputs. These internal factors were not fully taken into account when developing capacity development programmes. There was a lack of understanding, by both members and partners, of the factors that influence capacity development processes. They also did not realize the way organizations learn and were slow to bring about change. This hampered programmes aiming at OD in cases where the preconditions to bring about change were not met.

In the cases studied, many internal factors were looked at from the point of view of a deficit or capacity gap. Capacity gaps were identified without analyzing pertinent facts about the partner organization, such as where it comes from, where it wants to be, and what its priority needs are now and in the immediate future. In other words, the objectives were not considered within the context of the organization. This resulted in over-ambitious plans that could not realize their objectives. It is important to remember that capacity development programmes need to consider how willing people and organizations are to take on change processes. Problem-based approaches that focus on the negative can undermine willingness to change. Strength-based approaches emphasizing the positive and identifying what is possible can help to encourage people to think about what they can do, rather than what they cannot.

Organizations need to be seen as open systems that respond to a range of contextual factors, such as political decisions and policy development at central and local level, climate change, security situations and the influence of external donors. In the cases reviewed, these factors did not receive sufficient attention when the capacity development programmes were being designed and implemented. No profound analysis was done on the effects that these external factors would have on the capacity of an organization. Capacity

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[12] First-order changes involve adjustments within the existing systems, while second-order changes involve doing something fundamentally different from what was done before.

development programmes were developed in a technocratic and linear way that did not leave much space for adaptation when it was needed. Capabilities, particularly the *capability to adapt and self-renew*, which would have allowed organizations to respond to contextual changes, were not focused on.

Personnel exchanges and South-to-South sharing of experience is a relevant strategy in capacity development because it generates new ideas and encourages organizational reforms through peer influence. However, this can only be effective if the organizations are ready and well prepared to use the new knowledge they have gained. This evaluation found that this readiness implies, in part, the presence of well-thought-out internal mechanisms that allow organizations to use the lessons learned from short study visits and personnel exchanges. However, in the majority of Southern organizations, these mechanisms are not present.

Both partners and member organizations showed a lack of insight into the various ways of learning and how learning happens for individuals and within organizations. Traditional methods of learning, such as training sessions, were present in all cases assessed. These methods can be useful when the aim is to adjust a particular way of working, often related to technical knowledge. But training is not sufficient when the capacity development project or programme intends to fundamentally change an approach.

3

Changes regarding the quality of support for capacity development by PSO member organizations

This chapter focuses on the member organizations and the changes that have taken place at this level. It describes the changes that occurred in the member organizations with regard to support for capacity development. This is followed by an assessment of the effectiveness of PSO's contribution. A description of the input made by PSO to enhance the quality of support for capacity development, and the strategy they used to implement this, can be found in the inception report and in the next chapter.

3.1 Changes that have taken place in the member organizations

Changes have taken place in the member organizations. This is demonstrated by the responses to the electronic survey completed by the majority of PSO's 59 member organizations (34 of the 59 members took part in the survey). The results of PSO's contribution are shown at the level of individual staff and at organization level. The questions about change that received the biggest numbers of responses all relate to changes at the organizational level:

- 65% of respondents agreed that the level of importance of capacity development in their organizations had increased.
- 64% of respondents agreed that their organizations were focusing more on learning for partners and on partner exchange schemes.
- 60% of respondents agreed that there was an increased awareness of the importance of partner relationships, including more focus on choosing the types of partner to engage with and the different phases partnerships go through.

The following important changes were observed at the individual staff level:

- 50% of respondents indicated that they felt staff members were growing increasingly more skilled at following up capacity development programmes and projects.
- 46% of respondents indicated that insight into the importance of capacity development had improved.
- 46% of respondents felt that staff members were increasingly competent at proposing innovative activities and capacity development instruments to partners.

Regarding the changes taking place at institutional level:

- 39% of respondents agreed that it was important for PSO to foster exchanges between member organizations.
- 39% of respondents felt that PSO is contributing more to internal cooperation between member organizations in terms of encouraging links between different programmes.

These results were confirmed in the interviews held with the 15 member organizations involved in the evaluation. PSO has made an important contribution to the further development of the programmatic approach and the partner policies of the member organizations, and on the importance of capacity development in this programmatic work.[13]

From 2004–2005, all PSO member organizations started to move towards a more programmatic approach. They also started to increase the professionalism of their partner policies. These moves were encouraged by, among other factors, the quality criteria of the MFS financing system. Evolutions in the policy and practice of capacity development were also encouraged by the overall shift in thinking about capacity development in the realm of development cooperation and by internal reflections on the results of evaluations and initiatives carried out by partners and partner networks. As mentioned by the member organizations, PSO influenced the thinking of the member organizations by challenging them to address some essential questions. Member organizations were often questioned about their policies and practice. On many occasions, PSO facilitated this policy change processes in its member organizations by, for example, facilitating workshops. The critical dialogue and the availability of funding created opportunities to further explore the practice of capacity development. This role is very highly valued by the member organizations.

Several changes can be seen when we analyze the evolution of the policies of the 15 member organizations involved in the evaluation with regard to capacity development, and how these policies have affected the way they put it into practice:

- There was an evolution away from long-term placements.
- There was an increase in the diversification of instruments used to support capacity development.
- There was an evolution away from strengthening programme implementation (capacity development as a means to an end) and towards strengthening organizational development, strengthening exchange between partners, and strengthening of networks (capacity development as an end in itself).
- There was an evolution away from human resources development (HRD) towards organizational development (OD) and institutional development (ID).
- There was change in the way tools were being used to conduct organizational capacity assessments (OCAs).
- There was a change in the way strategic planning of capacity development programmes and projects was conducted.
- There was increased consideration given to monitoring and evaluating capacity development.

These changes confirm the continuation of trends described in the evaluation reports – and in the reports of the two meta-evaluations commissioned by PSO and the PSO programme

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[13] During the interviews, a timeline was developed setting out milestones in the evolution of the member organization's policies and adding factors that had an influence on these evolutions. PSO was one of these factors.

evaluation of 2006. Two meta-evaluations were executed by PSO to review the mid-term reviews and evaluations assessing the effectiveness and sustainability of PSO-financed capacity development programmes (2003–2006 and 2006–2008).

These two evaluations showed a slow improvement in the quality of capacity development supported by member organizations. The most recent meta-evaluation revealed a trend towards a stronger focus on sustainable capacity development for partners in the South and less focus on support for individual projects and programmes. It showed that a broader range of instruments, not just a focus on the transfer of knowledge and expertise, was used in capacity development compared with the previous meta-evaluation.

There seems to be a growing understanding among PSO's members of the importance of adopting a balanced approach and addressing all three areas of capacity development, HRD, OD and ID. However in practice, the focus still remains largely on HRD and OD. While the aims and objectives of capacity development seem to have shifted towards the longer-term capacity needs of partner organizations, there is still a clear tendency at the implementation stage to focus on the capacity that's needed to execute and maintain a good quality programmes. The evaluators explain this because many member organizations have a project- and programme-based relationship with their partners, for which they have to report results to their respective donors. This also explains the focus on HRD and on the structure and systems part of OD. According to the independent PSO evaluation carried out in 2005, the focus for HRD was on technical and managerial skills-building rather than on motivation and attitude changes. The OD focus included, in particular, strategic management, planning, control and finances. Training, according to the 2005 evaluation, was frequently applied as an instrument but was not always tailor-made or based on a full needs assessment. As far as could be assessed in all the evaluations mentioned, ID seems to have been left unaddressed.

These observations are confirmed by the practices observed in the case studies in this evaluation.

In the first meta-evaluation (2003–2006), the evaluator observes that many member organizations were involved in capacity development in some form or another. The definitions and approaches were, however, often radically different. Some organizations limited capacity development to training and paid little attention to the wider context. Others saw their entire programme as a contribution to capacity development. There appears to have been great variation between member organizations and often even within organizations themselves with regard to the understanding of the concept of capacity development. This was also reflected in their levels of expertise and in the types of support they provided (Block, l. 2007).

Although there are still differences between the member organizations in terms of their understanding of the concepts of capacity development, it appears from the interviews that the concepts have become clearer during the current programme period. Analyzing the definitions and visions of capacity development as described in the learning-working

trajectories (LWTs), more consistency can be found between the member organizations in the way they think about capacity development. PSO seems to have invested a lot of time (sometimes to the annoyance of its member organizations) in the development process of the LWTs, stimulating the members to define the concepts related to capacity development and to make their strategies explicit. In the end, the member organizations that have developed an LWT appreciate these efforts. This resulted in a more common understanding of capacity development within the organizations.

3.2   Changed outputs with regard to support for the capacity development of the member organizations

Intervention theory regarding capacity development
The intervention theory on capacity development has not changed a great deal, except in the fact that since 2007, member organizations have started to make their intervention theory more explicit. All member organizations adopted a planned and technocratic approach to capacity development, trying to realize pre-set objectives. This seems to be a result of the practice with regard to capacity development in the past when member organizations focused more on single organizations aimed at improving programme implementation and improving their financial and management capacity to implement results-based programmes.

Though there is an increase in the emphasis given to enhancing organizational development, the approach is very instrument-focused and follows a linear planning logic. Member organizations contribute to the development of a strategy, management processes, planning, monitoring and evaluation with a clear set of predefined inputs, activities and expected results. (Of course, adaptations to these are possible because PSO and its member organizations are flexible donors/partners.) According to the results of the meta-evaluations, ID has become increasingly important. The intervention logic behind this ID consists mostly of bringing partners together in partner meetings, South-South exchanges, peer visits, etc. and linking them to networks. This shift towards more ID has been fostered by the programmatic approach introduced by PSO in the last programme period. Within programmes this linking and learning has become evident.

Only three member organizations from the sample in this synthesis report started, in the current programme period, to invest in enhancing sectoral development and institutional development that go beyond forging links, by adopting multi-stakeholder approaches and strengthening or creating networks. Some member organizations ventured to leave the technocratic and results-based approach and showed a tendency to leave space for experiments and interactions in which the ends were not clear from the beginning. In these cases, joint action, joint social learning and joint participation in networks take place, where capacity will emerge out of the multiple interdependencies and multiple causal connections.

Strategy and approach

All member organizations reviewed considered capacity development to be an integral part of their work. But it is only in this programme period that the member organizations have started to create a separate policy on capacity development. During discussions in the LWTs it became clear that the member organizations did not have an overall view on how each programme officer should deal with capacity development and what the practice of capacity development meant to the organizations. The strategy and approach to capacity development by all member organizations in the sample was strongly influenced by PSO – together with some of the member organizations such as ICCO – particularly in terms of the way they introduced the concepts of HRD, OD and ID, and in their descriptions of the various instruments for supporting capacity development (since 2003). These three approaches were adopted by all member organizations, although the focus of these approaches differs from one organization to another.

Several member organizations explicitly chose to offer support to new and start-up organizations. This had consequences on their strategies and approaches to capacity development. The focus was very much on OD – the registration of organizations, the development of governance structures, vision, mission and strategic planning, and on HRD, the training of basic project- and programme-management skills.

Five member organizations in the sample implemented projects and programmes themselves and have installed local offices to that end – though all of the organizations are currently evolving towards a hybrid model that combines being operational in the South with strengthening local partners. Part of their approach to capacity development was about developing the capacity of their own staff. And here, PSO funds were used to train local staff and financing activities implemented by these local offices.

Three member organizations did not have a donor funding relationship with their partners, or if such a relationship did exist, it was very weak. Their strategy on capacity development also involved joint actions and joint learning.

For eight of the 15 member organizations in the sample, it was difficult to become engaged in a genuine dialogue with PSO for a long period because their approaches differed so much from the PSO approach in terms of how they addressed capacity development. It is only since the discussions in the LWTs that these member organizations and PSO have come to an understanding of each other's ways of working – allowing more appropriate funding of projects and programmes to be realized.

It was very clear from the cases assessed for this report that gender did not receive much attention in the policy documents. Five member organizations in the sample referred explicitly to gender – with only three of those, ICCO, Cordaid and Hivos, having a clear policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming. PSO has started a collective learning trajectory (CLT) on gender and capacity development, but the results of this initiative for the member organizations are not clear yet.

Core products and process

The tools used by member organizations in capacity development are: exchange, facilitation of capacity development activities by partner organizations, coaching, research, training, advice, management and implementation. The last two are considered to be only temporary measures to prevent substitution. Member organizations have gained insight into the advantages and disadvantages of certain tools. We can see that there is more focus on exchanges, peer-to-peer visits in the South, and linking partners with the member organization's other partners. Training is still important and an evolution can be seen from standalone training activities to more embedded and in-house training. In addition to these inputs, financial and material support for programme implementation and capacity development is also an important tool to increase capacity.

The carrying out of needs assessments and the use of formal OCAs seems to have gained importance in the last years. All organizations were systematically assessing the needs of the partner organizations.

There is more evidence of consideration being given to the ways in which programmes and projects are monitored. Monitoring of capacity development projects and programme was still weak and was restricted to reporting in accordance with the PSO format. In many LWTs, improving the monitoring of capacity was formulated as one of the learning objectives. In the current programme period, PSO started to develop a monitoring and evaluation handbook, with a working group of members that could guide the member organizations to developing their own M&E system for capacity development projects and programmes. This was introduced only at the end of 2009, so there are no results yet. Through the interviews with the member organizations, it appeared that, for most of them, it wasn't clear whether this instrument was a new format that needed to be followed in order to be in compliance with PSO demands, or whether this instrument was meant to inspire their own thinking on M&E. The latter certainly happened, as many member organizations were interested in adopting the five core capabilities (5CC) model, which was part of the M&E handbook.

Conclusions

Since 2003 an evolution has been taking place in the nature of member organization support for capacity development. These changes are related to an evolution towards a more programmatic way of working. They also relate to the identification and diversification of the instruments used to support capacity development and the approaches adopted, including a concentration on OD and ID. PSO has contributed to these developments through its changed funding approach, through the introduction of the HRD-, OD-, ID approach, through its discussions on instruments and its descriptions of quality criteria, etc. PSO has also contributed to the further development of partner policies and the development of its programmatic way of working at the request of member organizations involved in these kinds of processes.

PSO's contribution is mainly at organizational level, and is aimed at increasing awareness of the importance of the partner relationships, of having a partner policy and increasing the

importance of capacity development within the organization. It is only since 2009, after the introduction of the LWTs in 2007, that most of the member organizations started to develop an explicit policy on capacity development – describing an intervention theory, strategies, approaches and instruments – and started to invest in learning from their experience. Challenges with regard to the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development programmes and projects still exist. It is not yet clear how learning from projects and programmes will be organized and used to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of future capacity development projects and programmes.

3.3 Effectiveness of PSO's support for the capacity development of member organizations

The programme period 2007–2010 must be seen as a transition period. PSO has long been seen as a financer of capacity development projects. Since 2003, PSO has paid more and more attention to improving the quality of the support for capacity development. A programmatic approach was introduced, quality criteria developed and project proposals were assessed on their quality. PSO started to invest in a critical dialogue with its member organizations – sometimes at the request of PSO, at other times at the request of the member organizations. Collective learning was introduced to encourage the exchange of experiences between member organizations. Improvements to the quality of the support for capacity development however were not clear. Lessons learned were not formulated in a systematic manner and there was little evidence that insights gained through the learning processes were being put into practice.

In 2006, PSO started to reflect on a different approach to encourage learning and to improve the quality of capacity development programmes. This resulted in the introduction of the LWTs and, more recently, in the start-up of thematic learning programmes (TLPs). As both approaches influenced the quality of support for capacity development in the cases selected for this synthesis report, the old and the new approaches are described in the following.

Effectiveness of the approach based on the multi annual agreements

In the period 2003–2006, the relationship between PSO and its members was usually managed by a multi-annual agreement (MAK) framework – though not all member organizations had signed a MAK. The financing of capacity development projects and programmes was guaranteed, as long as certain quality criteria (such as context analysis, needs assessments, clear description of objectives, results, and an M&E) were respected. The quality control of the projects and programmes was organized through the assessments of proposals and annual reports by the PSO account managers, in the case of individual proposals, and through an ex post assessment of a sample of proposals and annual reports that had been funded within the MAK framework, in the case of delegation competence. Specific assessment schemes with criteria and indicators were developed and used by PSO. But discussions on individual project proposals and annual reports were not organized in a

systematic way. Communication on a project proposal was done by phone or email or using the PSO application tool. Discussion on the results of the MAK assessments was organized once a year. This meeting was welcomed by the member organizations. However, the impact of these meetings was limited as only member organizations' directors and a small group of staff participated.

The evaluation highlighted that not much follow-up has been given to the comments and suggestions written in the PSO assessment reports – except in cases where PSO specifically insisted, for example, that a mid-term evaluation should be held. The member organizations interviewed did not refer to many discussions about the annual reports.

PSO realized the bottlenecks in the approach and was looking for alternative ways to enhance learning within the member organizations. This was taken into account during discussions on the new grant decision (*subsidiebeschikking*) in 2006. This stipulated that the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development programmes needed to be increased. PSO and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs agreed to start introducing a new instrument, called the learning-working trajectories (LWTs), which were inspired by the partial success of the MAK framework.

Effectiveness of the learning-working trajectories (LWTs)

In 2007, the LWTs were introduced. Member organizations were encouraged to formulate learning questions with regard to their own ability to develop capacity that could be translated into specific objectives and expected results. They were encouraged to formulate these questions in terms of the capacity of their own organization and its staff to manage and implement capacity development programmes and projects. Project or programme proposals seeking PSO funding need to be linked to the LWT objectives.

The implementation of these LWTs is slow. According to the PSO internal study, the following factors were hampering the swift development of the LWTs (PSO, 2009):[14]

- The member organizations did not have a good understanding of their learning questions (for example, based on the discussion related to the MAK assessments or assessments of projects and programmes).
- The member organizations and PSO did not share the same or similar definitions and visions of capacity development.
- The member organizations needed to clarify their own definition and vision of capacity development.
- The member organizations had not yet given priority to formulating policies for capacity development.
- The member organizations were hindered by internal factors such as reorganization processes, internal decision-making processes, overloaded agendas, staff workload, etc.
- The objectives, expectations and processes of the LWTs were not clear.
- The member organizations had difficulties with the LWT format.

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[14] Kessener, B. (2009) *Leerwerktrajecten PSO onderzoeksrapport*. Intern werkdocument.

In the sample of 15 member organizations being studied here, 14 signed an LWT (one LWT was signed in 2007, ten LWTs were signed in 2008 and three LWTs were signed at the beginning of 2009).[15]

The observations of the internal PSO study were confirmed in the electronic survey organized during this evaluation:
- 75% of the respondents indicated that they did not have a good understanding of their own learning questions regarding capacity development (which proves the ineffectiveness of the approach in the past).
- 62% of the member organizations had a vision of capacity development that was different from PSO's definition (this was confirmed in the interviews). Interviewees mentioned the time that was needed to arrive at a common understanding. Some of them had the impression that PSO wanted to impose a certain way of thinking or certain models on their work.
- 67% of the respondents referred to the internal factors that hampered the swift development of the LWTs.
- 58% of the respondents confirmed that the objectives and processes of the LWT were not completely clear.
- 46% of the respondents indicated that the jargon and format were difficult.

Despite the difficult start-up of the LWT model, all interviewees underlined the appropriateness of the LWT instrument with regard to stimulating learning processes and eventually contributing to more qualitative support for capacity development. Ownership of learning increased as the member organizations themselves needed to identify the learning questions and recognize where there was room for improvement. (Previously, this had been mostly in the hands of PSO). Some 59% of respondents to the electronic survey agreed that the LWTs were a good way of improving the quality of the capacity development programmes. Interviewees mentioned an improvement in the quality of their dialogue with PSO. This opinion was also shared by the member organizations interviewed. But about 25% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this proposition. It transpired during the interviews that some organizations had developed an LWT because they believed that this was the only way to secure PSO funding in the future.

Analyzing the subjects of the LWTs leads to the conclusion that the focus of all LWTs is on further development of policies and strategies for capacity development. This is done through:
- studying the practice of capacity development (3/14 LWTs);
- developing and improving the policies and guidelines for capacity development (10/14 LWTs);

[15] Cordaid did not find it relevant and useful to sign an LWT as they already invest in learning processes to do with capacity development and were not interested in becoming engaged in the management of a complex PSO programme from which the results and added value were not clear. Oxfam Novib (not part of the sample) have not yet finalized the negotiations on the LWT because of internal factors (internal restructuring and insufficient time to finalize the negotiations).

- training and supporting of member organizations' own staff to implement and follow up the capacity development programmes of local partners (3/14 LWTs);
- implementing specific capacity development projects and potentially documenting lessons learned (all 14 LWTs); and
- improving the monitoring and evaluation practice of the capacity development projects (7/14 LWTs).

Four member organizations also paid attention in their LWT to the further development of the partner policy. Only the LWTs of Hivos and ICCO paid specific attention to learning in terms of capacity development when they referred to structures and strategies for learning. The LWT of Niza is the same as its programme in the South, as this programme is about the establishment and strengthening of a network. Through this, Niza wants to learn how the capacity development of networks takes place.

PSO member organizations seem to use the opportunities offered by the LWTs, to further develop a structured approach to capacity development in order to increase the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development interventions. Two kinds of activity were distinguished: (1) specific activities related to studying practice, developing policy documents, holding discussions and meetings with partners on capacity development, organizing workshops and training sessions for staff and Southern partners, and (2) implementation of capacity development projects and programmes with a strong focus on documenting the practice and describing the lessons learned. Within the framework of the LWTs, member organizations can propose specific projects to be funded by PSO. The only projects that PSO will fund are those that involve partners in the South or specific capacity development projects in the South that have a learning component. Since 2010, member organizations have been encouraged to develop an annual plan describing all the projects and initiatives that will be implemented. This is a change from previously when there was a separate proposal for every initiative taken within the framework of an LWT.

As implementation of the activities of the LWT only started for most organizations in 2009, there are no results yet. The LWTs do not seem to be fully owned yet by member organization staff, and it has been indicated that it is too early to comprehensively assess learning effects. However, based on the interviews with the member organizations, the following learning effects can be described:

- The importance of capacity development and the place it holds in the programmatic way of working has been enhanced. Through the discussions during the preparation stage of the LWTs, many discussions took place within the member organizations on capacity development (this was confirmed by the electronic survey).
- The learning potential of the organizations has received a boost. The process of developing the LWTs has strengthened the understanding of the importance of learning and the fact that organizations need to invest in this learning processes. Some organizations have established a better organized, or formalized, learning approach, for example by indicating focal points for capacity development, installing working groups on capacity development and organizing specific learning events on capacity development. Interviewees confirm that the position of the PSO contact person and/or the persons in

charge of capacity development have been strengthened. They have received more authority to encourage learning processes on capacity development within the organization.
- PSO activities are better embedded within the organization compared to the past, when the PSO initiatives used to be standalone initiatives.

Most of the effects detectable so far are related to the development processes of the LWTs – results of the activities implemented in the course of the LWTs are not yet visible. Some examples of results already seen are:
- the current practice of capacity development has been studied;
- a policy on the capacity development of local partners has been formulated;
- good practices have been documented;
- more organizational capacity assessments have been carried out; and
- concrete capacity development projects and programmes are being implemented.

It is not clear, however, how learning from these projects and programmes will be organized, and no hint of this was found in the LWT-related cases in this sample assessment. Interviewees confirmed that many programme officers continue to present PSO project proposals just as they have always done. Specific efforts will be needed to enhance and encourage learning, and an appropriate approach is needed in order for that to happen. The PSO contact persons in the member organizations are convinced that the new PSO project/programme proposals that will be presented by their colleagues will fit better with the philosophy and ambitions of the LWTs. Time is needed to make all staff aware of the objectives of the LWTs and to create ownership of the LWTs in the whole organization. Many PSO-funded projects that started before the implementation of the LWTs are still running. This makes it difficult to turn the attention of the programme officers away from these projects and towards the LWTs, where they can prepare proposals that fit the LWT better, and have a clear focus on documenting the lessons learned.

Effectiveness of the CLTs and TLPs

CLTs are learning events involving several member organizations who want to learn and share experiences on a specific subject. Subjects are chosen or proposed by PSO based on questions received from member organizations or issues that have arisen from the LWTs. The LWTs involve several activities and meetings spread over a period. Between these meetings, the member organizations are encouraged to translate acquired insights from the CLT to their own practice. The subjects of the CLT can be divided into four categories:[16]
- personal roles and competences;
- organizational learning and organizational systems;
- international relations, partner relations and networking; and
- specific trends and themes regarding, for example, capacity development in fragile states and how gender influences capacity development.

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[16] See PSO annual reports.

Approximately 43% of the respondents to the electronic survey indicated that CLTs were an important service to PSO in contributing to better quality capacity development projects and programmes. Of the 30 organizations that answered this question, 19 indicated that they had participated in one or more CLTs.[17] According to the PSO annual reports, around 60% of members participated in a CLT. The reasons given for participation in CLTs lay in the opportunities they offered to learn from the experiences of others and to network with similar organizations. The main reasons for non-participation were linked to lack of time or the fact that the subject matter was not relevant to the organization. Only 21% of the respondents indicated that there was a good and relevant connection between the subject matters of the CLTs and their own LWT.

From the interviews it was learned that the quality of the CLTs varies. Interviewees felt that the huge diversity of members' backgrounds and experiences hindered learning and the relevant exchange of experience. Comments were also made on the lack of guidance in these trajectories. Member organizations seemed to expect more input from PSO.

The interviewees referred to two CLTs that have improved the skills and knowledge of staff members, namely the CLT on 'the balance between being a financier and an advisor' and the basic trajectory 'capacity development and civil society'. The extent to which the individual participants could put the acquired knowledge and skills into practice depended largely on the learning culture of the member organization and the relevance of the acquired knowledge to its daily tasks and responsibilities. To increase the relevance of the CLTs, PSO has improved its intake mechanisms. The interviewees did not mention knowledge dissemination or the transmission of insights to the wider staff of the organizations after participation at a CLT. Except for ICCO and Hivos, none of the member organizations interviewed invested much in staff training on capacity development - with the exception of recent activities undertaken in the LWTs. Hence, PSO events were the most important learning opportunities for the staff of member organizations.

PSO acknowledged the limitations of CLTs and in 2009 it introduced a new approach, called the Thematic Learning Programmes (TLPs). A TLP is a series of learning activities undertaken by member organizations to respond to a central learning question. This learning question is related to specific aspects of capacity development. The objective is to bridge the gap between knowledge generated by knowledge institutes and centres, and the putting of that knowledge into practice. The TLPs will create opportunities to test methods and tools in a real context and to develop practical methods and tools in order to be able to apply 'academic' knowledge in real-life contexts. Action learning will take a prominent place in the TLPs. PSO is proactively involved in these TLPs. Two thematic learning programmes have started recently and there seems to be a good deal of enthusiasm for them among the member organizations interviewed.

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[17] This number is representative. PSO's 2007 annual report states that 36 member organizations participated in one or more of the eight CLTs organized in 2007, and 42 participated in 2008.

Effectiveness of specific funds

Several specific funds have been created or extended in the current programme period. In particular, these aim to encourage innovation and experimentation. Table 16 gives an overview of participation in these funds.

Table 16. Overview of the number projects funded under the various funds			
Specific fund	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**
Innovation fund	13	6	14
Quality fund[18]	9	15	17
Quality Bonus	?	8	?
Cross Over	6 placements	13 placements	4 placements + 3 extensions
Youth Zone	22 starters and 30 juniors placed in 12 member organizations	23 placements from North to South 2 placements South to South	21 placements from North to South 5 placements from South to South

Source: PSO annual reports.

The table shows that participation of member organizations in these funds is limited. The results of the electronic survey back this up by revealing that 36% of the respondents had participated in the innovation fund, 7% in the Cross Over programme and 39% in the Youth Zone programme.[19] Based on interviews from the cases studies, it seems that, while these funds were intended to encourage innovation and experimentation, they were generally perceived as extra funding opportunities. The fresh and original character of the innovation projects seen in this evaluation does not come across very clearly and seems to be mainly related to introducing new programme implementation approaches for the partner organizations.[20] The Cross Over fund and Youth Zone programme did not encourage the member organizations to develop new and innovative strategies. The member organizations were already implementing a youth programme, for example, or in cases where no strategy existed, the specific fund did not result in a new policy or strategy related to the issues (for example, in collaboration with the diaspora). It is not possible to give a well-founded appreciation of the effect of these incentive funds, as the assessment of these programmes was not the subject of the evaluation.

The quality fund was valued highly by the interviewees because it increased the overhead budget, and the quality bonus created more financial space for the projects already

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[18] PSO used the Quality Bonus fund to reward quality. It was a way of distributing available funds among the member organizations that was based on a historically developed distribution system. The amount was €60,000 per year and it was not earmarked. The Quality fund was about €10,000 per year and this could be used to finance capacity development initiatives in the Netherlands. It can be seen as compensation for low overhead costs. Both funds are in the process of being phased out.

[19] The percentages from the questionnaire are slightly higher compared to the percentages in the PSO statistics (for example 13 applications for the innovation fund = 22%).

[20] Through participation in the Innovation award 2010 and the presence of one innovative project in one of the cases.

implemented. For many member organizations interviewed, the distinction between these funds was not clear. Several member organizations interviewed did not know why they had benefited from the quality bonus.

Both PSO and the member organizations felt that the management of these funds, with their various application forms and quality criteria, was complicated. As the effectiveness of these funds was limited, PSO decided to phase them out, as all financing in the future would become strategic financing related to the LWTs.

Table 17. Overview of the budget spent in Euros in relation to the specific programmes for the years 2007, 2008 and 2009				
Budget post	**2007**	**2008**	**2009**	**Three-year total**
Regular financing	17,772,725	18,428,505	14,832,225	51,033,455
Quality fund	50,000	171,875	152,433	374,308
Index numbers	33,618	35,355	36,967	105,940
Innovation fund	435,087	903,922	2,246,410	3,585,419
Youth zone	1,647,934	1,405,047	1,181,775	4,234,756
Activities in the South	-	-	124,500	124,500
Total programme DSO	19,939,364	20,944,704	18,574,310	59,458,378
Programme Cross Over	73,280	228,852	476,003	778,135
Programme Humanitarian aid[21]	325,960	1,066,008	767,185	2,159,153
Programme Sport and development cooperation	309,848	-	-	309,848
Total	20,648,452	22,239,564	19,817,498	62,705,514

Regular financing = regular funding for long-term assignments and strategic funding
Source – PSO data

Appreciation of the relationship with PSO

The survey questionnaire included a question on the importance of the various services offered by PSO with regard to improving the quality of capacity development projects and programmes:

- 85% of respondents agreed that the funding of capacity development projects and programmes was an important service;
- 66% agreed that the discussions related to the LWT were important;
- 58% agreed that training organized by PSO was an important service;
- 49% agreed that participation at learning events was important;
- 43% agreed that participation in CLTs was important; and

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[21]   The Humanitarian aid and the Sports programme were not included in this evaluation.

• Only 33% or less felt that facilitating networking, discussions on the annual reports and information on the website were important PSO services.

The relationship with PSO was assessed as being of good quality. This came across in both the questionnaire and the interviews. Interviewees and respondents felt that PSO was flexible and that there was an open dialogue between it and its members. It was broadly agreed that PSO encourages reflection and tries to understand the approaches of the member organizations. Staff quality at PSO scored highly: 77% of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the expertise of the PSO staff and 87 % appreciated the attitude of the PSO account managers. It was acknowledged that the relationship is above all a financial relationship; however PSO is not seen only as a donor but also as a stimulator of learning processes.

On the negative side, the member organizations interviewed thought that PSO could be more 'compelling'. They felt that PSO was too flexible when following up their suggestions and recommendations regarding the quality of project and programme proposals. In addition, PSO's input was felt to be too much at the conceptual level, introducing new models and concepts that were often not sufficiently tested. Member organizations seem to expect more hands-on tools and models as they often lack the time to invest in experimentation. The last set of criticisms was related to the administrative application tool and the management demands of the PSO-funded projects and programmes. These created much frustration and often decreased the willingness to participate in certain events or prepare proposals for the specific funds, taking into account the relatively low overhead costs that could be charged.

Conclusions

The effectiveness of PSO in strengthening the capacity of its member organizations to support the capacity development of partner organizations was limited in the past. With the introduction of the LWTs, PSO has created an instrument that, in principle, promises to encourage endogenous capacity development within the member organizations. The challenge will be whether PSO can really have an influence on the learning culture of the member organizations. It is too early now to make a judgement in this regard. The participation in training and collective learning activities was successful when the activity was linked to a clear learning question relevant to the participant, and the organizational context was one that allowed the transfer of knowledge.

The effects of PSO interventions do not emerge quickly because time is needed for results of learning and change processes to be seen. But some results are clear. Looking at the results observed, and taking into account the context within which PSO is operating – the size and diversity of member organizations, the demands of the MFS system, and badly developed learning cultures within the member organizations – PSO has a certain added value in enhancing the quality of capacity development support:

1. Staff at member organizations have a very heavy workload and do not have much time to invest in learning or reflecting on issues related to capacity development. PSO takes on this role for them. The approaches of the member organization have evolved to become

more relevant, although issues of effectiveness and sustainability remain relevant. Capacity development has become more important to the member organizations and that has happened largely because of the additional funding and support from PSO.

2. From the case studies seen here, it has been confirmed that it is difficult to find donors to finance specific capacity development projects and programmes, and when they are found, the funds are usually related to programme implementation and not to strengthening endogenous capacity development processes. In the interviews, member organizations felt that while financing capacity development activities is possible within the MFS framework, this can happen only in a limited way. Member organizations interviewed indicated that capacity development initiatives could include only partners that are involved in the MFS-financed programmes. However, many capacity development initiatives are also open to partners that are not funded with MFS funds. Another barrier indicated by the member organizations interviewed is the results-based nature of the MFS framework. It was felt that this discouraged member organizations from starting capacity development projects for which they could not see clear outcomes.

3. Through the contributions of PSO, member organizations have started to make their capacity development policies and strategies explicit. This is a precondition for learning from experience and a way of improving the effectiveness and sustainability of the capacity development projects and programmes.

4. The added value of PSO for smaller member organizations is obvious. They benefit a great deal from the exchange between members, the training programmes and other PSO learning events.

3.4 Analysis and lessons learned

Before the introduction of the LWTs, PSO's approach to enhancing the capacity of their members for support capacity development was driven by PSO itself – it could have been described as donor driven. As a result of this, the achievements at organizational level were very limited. The real barriers to the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development were not taken on by the member organizations. This can be explained by the fact that on the one hand, training and other PSO inputs were highly conceptual, whereas organizations preferred a more down-to-earth contribution. On the other hand, real obstacles to effectiveness and sustainability were discussed only with a limited group of member organization staff. Because there were no systems within the member organizations to translate the PSO recommendations into concrete guidelines that could be shared by everyone, or to create learning moments in the organizations to discuss the PSO recommendations, little follow-up was given to the PSO recommendations. There were no financial sanction systems at PSO which could have acted as external incentives to make members take PSOs observations on board.

PSO had an effect on changed capacities when the intervention was related to a specific question formulated by the member organization. In this way, they facilitated or supported a learning or reflection process that had started within the member organizations. Individual participation of staff at training sessions or in CLTs was also effective when this activity was

linked to a participant's clear learning question and when there were opportunities for the staff members concerned to put the knowledge they had gained into practice – for example, by developing a policy paper on civil society. In these cases, more endogenous capacity development is at stake.

It is clear that a vibrant learning culture does not exist yet in most of the member organizations. Not many member organizations have so far developed a comprehensive approach or learning plan regarding organizational learning and knowledge development (ICCO, Cordaid and Hivos are exceptions here). Learning is often seen by members as something that takes place during workshops and at training sessions or by accessing knowledge products. It is an 'add on' activity that takes you away from daily business. In all the organizations visited for this synthesis report, learning was under time pressure and not many organizations made time for it. Some organizations introduced reflection days once or twice a year or lunch meetings involving all programme staff. Only at ICCO, Cordaid and Hivos (Oxfam Novib was not part of the sample) had specific staff been appointed to coordinate learning within the organization. Smaller organizations lack the means for this kind of job profile. There seems to be a lack of understanding that most learning is informal and takes place at work. Member organizations need to transform the working conditions to an environment where working and learning are linked.[22]

The challenge now is whether PSO can contribute to this transformation process if it does not start spontaneously from within the organization. Training and formal education on their own are not sufficient to increase knowledge and skills. Changes within individuals and organizations are linked to identity, motivation, commitment and the space individuals receive within the organization to implement new insights. PSO tries to give sufficient attention to these aspects in its learning events – however, it has not yet had yet much influence on the learning culture within organizations.

With the introduction of the LWTs, PSO showed it was willing to encourage these learning processes within the member organizations. Apparently, this has caused a shift in mindset. As part of the process, all of the member organizations were asked to formulate a learning question – something that had never been done before. During the development of the first LWT, PSO did not sufficiently analyze the context within which the organizations and staff members work and learn. This hindered the swift implementation of the LWTs because they were felt to be inconsistent with the learning environment and the vision of knowledge productivity within the organizations. From the interviews with PSO it was learned that more attention is now being paid to this context and a TLP has started to address this issue.

[22] See also the seven learning functions formulated by Kessels, J.W.M. (1996) *Het Corporate Curriculum.* Leiden: Rijksuniversiteit, and Keursten, P. (2000) *Werken aan kennisproductiviteit: vormgeven aan leerfuncties van het corporate curriculum.* Opleiding & Ontwikkeling, themanummer over kennisproductiviteit, June 2001.

4

Policy reconstruction PSO

4.1 PSO's overall policy

PSO wishes to contribute to structural poverty alleviation by strengthening civil society organizations in developing countries through capacity building (PSO, 2002; PSO, 2006). PSO intends to achieve this long-term goal by enhancing (1) the quality of its members' capacity development activities, (2) the input of expertise from the South and (3) the exchange of knowledge and learning. To reach this objective, PSO finances projects and programmes aimed at the capacity development of partner organizations and networks implemented by their member organizations, and is developing a knowledge centre aimed at developing and sharing knowledge on capacity development.

To PSO, capacity development is the process through which individuals, groups, organizations, institutions and societies increase their options for: (1) executing their core tasks, solving their problems, determining goals and achieving them and (2) understanding whether their development needs are embedded in a wider context, and dealing with them in a sustainable manner (PSO website).

The grant decision (*subsidiebeschikking*) stipulates that the quality of support for capacity development needs to be enhanced, mainly by addressing the challenges with regard to the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development programmes and projects (as demonstrated in the PSO programme evaluation of 2005). Member organizations had to move from a mindset of filling capacity gaps to an empowerment mindset. PSO has a clear overview of the problems their members are facing regarding the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development. PSO identified several 'quality criteria' that characterize effective support for capacity development (PSO, 2007):

- a sound analysis of the problem the organization wants to deal with, of the wider context and of the relevant stakeholders;
- an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the organization in relation to its objectives;
- ownership, demand orientation: the partner organization needs to feel it is the owner of the capacity development process and that it's involved in the process from the beginning to the final evaluation;
- partner organization and member organizations need to make as much use as possible of local capacity;
- a mix of appropriate activities needs to be put in place – for example the exchange of knowledge, coaching and training;
- the approach of the organization should be logical, realistic and based on a good risk analysis;
- there should be coordination, cooperation and alignment with the input of other stakeholders and donors; and
- the strengthening of the organization needs to be sustainable.

According to PSO, the relationship between the member organization and the partner organization is a crucial factor in the success of capacity development programmes.

The capacity development approach as promoted by PSO is based on a holistic view where human resources development (HRD), organizational development (OD) and institutional development (ID) are expected to progress simultaneously.

4.2 PSO's intervention theory on enhancing the quality of support for capacity development

For the policy period 2007–2010, PSO (together with all NGOs applying for co-financing) was asked by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to develop a monitoring protocol with clear output and outcome indicators. Impact, outcome and output have been defined as outlined below. (PSO, 2006).

The impact of the PSO programme is defined as a stronger civil society in the South to contribute to structural poverty alleviation, through the capacity development of these organizations.

The outcomes of PSO have been grouped into four clusters. Cluster A is the leading cluster while the outcomes of cluster B and C feed into cluster A.
- *Cluster A: Quality through sustainable capacity development*
  - Member organizations and partner organizations invest more in sustainable capacity development and improve their approaches based on the lessons they have learned, reflection, and documenting and implementing new insights.
- *Cluster B: Innovation and new actors with regard to capacity development*
  - Member organizations and social organizations collaborating with PSO are involved in innovative approaches with regard to capacity development, strategies, sectors and themes. Experiments are documented and disseminated.
  - Member organizations actively involve migrants in their programmes and projects and reflect on the relationship between capacity development and diversity.
  - Member organizations involve young people from the Netherlands and the South in their capacity development programmes and projects.
- *Cluster C: PSO as an expertise centre for knowledge development and learning in the field of capacity development*
  - PSO is a source of expertise and information on capacity development.
  - PSO, its member organizations and social organizations contribute to the debate on the role of civil society in development and the importance of capacity development of civil society.
  - PSO collaborates with Southern umbrella organizations specialized in capacity development.
- *Cluster D: Responsible secondment of development workers and volunteers*
  - Member organizations organize their secondments in a professional manner.

For each of these four clusters, outputs have been defined. The most important outputs are the individual learning-working trajectories (LWTs), the collective learning trajectories (CLTs) and the thematic learning programmes (TLPs). Other outputs are advice, training, facilitation and publications.

Outputs are defined as concrete products and results at the PSO level, outcomes are identified as results at the level of PSO's member organizations. Realizing the outputs and outcomes, PSO intends to have an impact on the Southern partner organizations and their respective target groups.

4.3 Strategy for enhancing the quality of support for capacity development

In the current policy period, learning at member organizations and partner organizations has come to the forefront. Learning about capacity development and the innovation of capacity development are the main focus. Member organizations are encouraged to formulate learning questions with regard to their own development capacities. By working on their own learning questions, member organizations gain a better insight into the substance of capacity development and the role they themselves play in the process. By consciously engaging with this, the member organizations attempt to make their interventions more effective and the results more sustainable. These learning questions are the starting point for the multi-annual agreements (now replaced by the LWTs) between PSO and the member organizations.

The policy period under review, 2007–2010, is the last period in which the financing of long-term and short-term technical assistance was channelled through PSO funds, separate from MFS financing. So this period can be seen as a transition period. Many projects and programmes currently implemented are financed through the financing systems that had been installed in the period 2003–2006. At that time, there were two main budget lines: one for the financing of long-term and short-term technical assistance, and another for financing partner organizations' local capacity development activities.

Several funds were created to encourage innovation and experimentation. Among these were the Youth Zone programme fund (which financed the long-term and short-term placements of juniors), Cross Over programme fund (which financed the placement of migrants), the Quality fund and the Innovation fund (which financed innovative approaches and experimentation and was based on the assumption that this helps in achieving effectiveness and sustainability). In 2007, PSO introduced the concept of strategic financing related to projects and programmes implemented within the framework of the LWTs. In the LWTs, member organizations and their Southern partner organizations work consciously on learning questions.

PSO also encourages learning between member organizations. To this end, PSO developed CLTs on subjects that were relevant to several members. In 2007, collective learning and individual member learning took place more or less separately. In 2008–2009, collective learning was increasingly linked to the LWT. Learning questions formulated in the LWT, and which had been formulated by other member organizations, were taken further by CLTs. However, learning within the organization and learning within the CLT were not linked very closely and the transfer of acquired knowledge into the practice of participating member organizations was difficult. To overcome this problem, the methodology of the CLTs was adapted to include better intake mechanisms, the involvement of senior staff or managers, the integration of special sessions to help the participants find ways of spreading their new insights throughout their organizations. In December 2009, PSO introduced another instrument to enhance collective learning: the TLP. With the introduction of the TLPs, the link between the LWT and the collective learning was strengthened as financial space was created for action learning and the implementation of the acquired knowledge throughout the organizations.

4.4   Core products and processes

Support from PSO for the capacity development of the member organizations
As we have already seen, the following products and process were signed to develop the capacity of the member organizations: LWTs, collective learning, TLPs, strategic financing, innovation funds, etc. As the relationship between PSO and the member organization grew, and the capacity development of the member organizations themselves became more important, the planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) system needed to be adapted in order to assess changes at the level of the member organization as well.

Monitoring and evaluation
An essential element of the PSO policy reformulation was the revision of the PME system. The PME system developed for the period 2003–2006 was based on the concept of capacity development focusing on human resources development (HRD), organizational development (OD) and institutional development (ID) at the partner organization level. The PME system also included elements for assessing the programmatic approach of the member organization. The system was largely based on a linear project approach. To monitor progress, member organizations were asked to report on outputs, results, effects and impacts of the partner organizations on a yearly basis. In addition, PSO account managers were asked to assess the quality of the projects or programmes by analyzing the reports using the OECD-DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, sustainability and impact.

In January 2008, a PME working group was formed to review the existing PME system and to adapt the system for PSO's extended mandate in the policy period that had started in 2007. The greatest problem encountered when trying to fit the existing PME model into PSO's new mission and ambitions was the orientation of this model towards prescribed and well-planned programmes and projects – in which capacity development is seen as supportive of the technical and thematic objectives of these programmes and projects – to the detriment

of supporting endogenous processes of capacity development. Another shortcoming of the old PME system was the absence of indicators to monitor the relationship between the member organizations and partner organizations and between PSO and the member organizations. Evaluations had shown that this relationship was crucial for the quality of the support for capacity development and thus needed to be monitored as well as evaluated (PSO, 2009).

The new PME model is built on five domains of change. Within all five domains of change, a number of 'categories of change' have been defined. The member organizations and their partners are encouraged to formulate pointers for each 'category of change' that's relevant to their specific needs and context. To define the categories of change at the level of PSO, member organizations and partner organizations, PSO has kept the categories HRD, OD and ID but added the five core capabilities (5CC) as developed by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM). PSO hoped that in doing this, more attention would be paid to the context in which the partner organizations work. Pointers have also been proposed to assess the relationships between PSO and member organizations and between member organizations and partner organizations. These would be based on categories such as relevance, trust and respect, role division and learning. The new PME model was introduced to the members in December 2009.

4.5 Present policy in perspective

PSO was founded in 1985, as a result of the merger of two organizations: Jongeren Vrijwilligers Corps and Vereniging Overleg Particulier Initiatief Tropenartsen. These organizations specialized in seconding experts to developing countries. During the 1990s, the organization grew considerably and the number of secondments increased – as did the number of staff and member organizations.

Reflections on a new policy and strategy started in 2001 as PSO responded to changes in thinking on capacity development. Since 2002, its strategy has placed a greater emphasis on the capacity development of Southern organizations. This shift in strategy has allowed PSO to formulate policies aimed at enhancing the quality of support for capacity development and making sure it addresses the needs of partner organizations in the South. Internal debates and workshops were organized involving member organizations and a SWOT analysis was carried out on PSO's capacity development instruments. This research was carried out in the context of a general change in policy on development cooperation that questioned the use of technical assistants and secondments in development cooperation.

PSO's strategy for 2003–2006 defined PSO's missions as follows: 'to contribute to sustainable structural poverty reduction in the South by strengthening the capacity of local NGOs and civil society organizations'. In order to achieve its mission, PSO 'supports organizations in the Netherlands that are working in these fields to build the capacity of their partner organizations in developing countries at three levels: human, resources development, organizational strengthening and institutional development'.

PSO's strategic orientation between 2003 and 2006 led to fundamental changes in its policy, approach and role. Since then the association has stopped regarding itself as primarily a funder of secondments to Southern organizations, but has expanded its role to concentrate on ways of improving the quality of the capacity development support provided by its member organizations for their partner organizations. In order to achieve this, PSO's entire way of working has changed. It introduced a programme approach[23] made up of a framework of analytical criteria that are used to assess the quality of the funding proposals it receives from member organizations. The relationship between PSO and each of its member organizations is formalized in multi-annual agreements (*Meerjaren Afspraken Kader*) that stipulate the amount of financing the member organization will receive, and over what period. The member organizations formulate their programme and project proposals within the framework of the multi-annual agreement.

A knowledge centre was established in 2003 to facilitate the knowledge transfer processes. The idea behind it was to spread the knowledge and experience gained both inside and outside its own member organizations among all member organizations and also among non-PSO groups. The centre has three main functions:
- to collect knowledge – by linking with other knowledge centres such as MDF and ECDPM in the Netherlands as well as capacity development organizations in the South;
- to develop knowledge – via its own research and by the development of tools; and
- to disseminate knowledge – through training programmes, discussion forums, making tools available to all and via web dossiers and publications.

Knowledge themes are selected on an annual basis. In the 2003–2006 policy period, PSO started to encourage collective learning within its own association. The collective activities held during that period focused mainly on exposing the members to ideas and concepts from outside the sector.

In the 2007–2010 policy period, collaboration began with like-minded organizations in the South. Concrete collaboration was established with Easun in Tanzania and Community Development Resource Association (CDRA) in South Africa. It is too early to assess fully what effects these collaborations have had on improving the quality of the capacity development programmes and projects implemented by the PSO member organizations, and what added value such collaborations have brought. However, all three collaborating partners agree that there are some early visible effects on output at the level of the PSO secretariat. PSO, CDRA and Easun have mutually influenced each other's ways of working and have gained

[23] PSO defines the programme approach as follows: 'a programme needs to be based on a collective analysis and planning, creating synergy between interventions as well as linking and learning between relevant stakeholders, in which local ownership is key. Four elements need to be in place: leadership by (a) local organization(s); local participation with respect to analysis identification, programme design, implementation, management and monitoring and evaluation; one cohesive programme and budgetary framework; donor coordination and harmonization of procedures'. PSO (2004) *Aanvraag- en beoordelings-systematiek voor programma's en projecten; Beleid en stramien.* Block, L. (2007) *Reviewing the reviews.* Amsterdam: Royal Tropical Insitute.

insights into how to improve organizational learning. These insights have been introduced into discussions with the PSO members. The CDRA publication, 'The Barefoot Guide to working with Organisations and Social Change' became the foundation of a TLP whose aim it is to develop a barefoot guide on organizational learning for civil society organizations. Discussions on partnerships were held with Easun, and PSO and Easun together organized a conference in Tanzania to discuss the concepts and practice of partnerships (the Moshi dialogue).

Many internal and external reflections and discussions contributed to the development of PSO's new strategic framework. Just a few of the many examples are: a peer review carried out in 2007 and a study on the mid-term reviews and reports of PSO-financed capacity development programmes in the 2003–2006 period. The work on the strategic framework that began in the previous policy period continued into 2007–2010. However some major changes took place, including:

- widening the scope of PSO – this was in response to the newly emerging initiatives in the Netherlands that have become involved in north-south cooperation;
- introducing the strategic financing of innovative capacity development projects and programmes;
- putting much more emphasis on the learning process that takes place among all stakeholders involved in capacity development processes; and
- developing instruments such as the LWTs, the CLTs and the TLPs to support the new focus on shared learning.

4.6   Analysis of policy practice

Strengthening civil society organizations (the impact of the PSO programme)
The effectiveness of PSO member organizations' contribution to poverty alleviation through the strengthening of CSOs is somewhat mixed. On the positive side, two main achievements are noted. PSO member organizations have contributed (1) to better implementation strategies of their partner organization through financial and/or technical improvements and (2) to the establishment and further organizational development of less well-established or weaker CSOs, mainly through the development of their systems and procedures. Bothe of these achievements resulted largely in improvements in service delivery.

However, PSO member organizations did not contribute meaningfully to enhancing the *capability to relate to external stakeholders* or to the capability *to adapt and self-renew* – although all partner organizations face some challenges in these areas. No evidence has been found on a contribution to a stronger positioning of the partner organizations within civil society. This is because the *capability to relate to external stakeholders* has not been the focus of capacity development programmes. Input was limited to linking CSOs with other partners involved in the programmes of the PSO member organizations. Strengthening advocacy and lobbying has not generally been an element of the sample cases in this evaluation.

Nor, (with some exceptions), are the member organizations and their partners very politically oriented or concerned with exerting influence on the political environment.

There is a lack of reliable outcome data at partner level, though there is an identifiable contribution to direct poverty alleviation for the beneficiaries. The cases studied do not deliver evidence on the impact of structural poverty alleviation. This is because all the organizations visited were involved in service delivery that is not implemented from a transformative perspective.

Strengthening member organizations (outcomes of the PSO programme)

PSO has succeeded in putting the importance of capacity development on the agenda of the member organizations. This process has been accelerated with the introduction of the LWTs. But most member organizations are not yet learning organizations when it comes to capacity development, and their practice still remains very dependent on individual programme officers, whose competences vary considerably.

The capacity of the sample member organizations to implement qualitative capacity development programmes is well developed in terms of their policies, knowledge of instruments, and practice when compared with the capacity of Belgian NGOs, for example.[24] This observation can probably be explained by the presence of an organization such as PSO. However, practice still remains very dependent on the capacity of the individual programme officers both at headquarters and in the South. This capacity varies in quality and depends very much on the competences of each individual staff member. Very little documentation of practices takes place, and if it happens at all, it is not clear how learning from this practice was organized. Similarly, little learning and reflection on the quality of support for capacity development is organized within the member organizations. None of the programme officers interviewed had received relevant training or an in-depth induction course on capacity development from the member organization. There is no evidence of fundamental discussions or reflections in the member organizations on the subjects of how to conduct good and relevant risk analyses of capacity development programmes, how to address sensitive issues such as leadership, and how to bring about second-order changes. Nor is there any evidence of detailed debate on instruments and approaches that can facilitate the learning of partner organizations, or on how they should become engaged in joint learning, etc. As a result, challenges related to the effectiveness of capacity development, and above all on sustainability, remain unresolved. It is not clear how they are being addressed by the member organizations. Over the past few years, PSO has increased its emphasis on this essential learning and on the learning environment of the member organizations. Results remain to be seen.

Involvement of new actors

PSO has tried to encourage innovation and encourage new actors to become involved in capacity development. Member organizations confirm that PSO has created space for experimentation and innovation. Innovation projects are mainly linked to the introduction

[24]   Huyse, H. and Phlix, G. (2010).

of innovative technical implementation approaches aimed at improving the outputs of the partner organizations.

There are no clear indications that the innovation fund has encouraged innovative approaches to OD or ID, has brought about the introduction of new instruments to allow partners to become engaged with the capacity development process, or formulated innovative ways of discussing capacity development programmes with partners. Participation in the Youth Zone programme and the Cross Over fund have not resulted in the development of a policy regarding the involvement of either youth or the diaspora in capacity development programmes (although it should be noted that some of the organizations interviewed for this study already had such policies). Member organizations approached these funds and programmes primarily because they offered an extra funding opportunity.

PSO's knowledge centre
PSO's knowledge centre has merged with the PSO programme department in order to support the members in a coordinated way. This has been welcomed by the member organizations. It is a particularly welcome step for member organizations that have no specific in-house expertise on capacity development as it gives them access to information and expertise. Information is obtained through bilateral contacts with PSO and through the collective learning events. PSO has the capacity in-house to offer a wealth of information and expertise.

Traditionally, PSO has not been a major publisher of articles and research papers, nor has it carried out much research of its own. Because of these factors, PSO is not perceived as a 'knowledge centre' in the sense that it does not generate and disseminate knowledge. It is also generally felt that the PSO website, www.pso.nl, is not being used to its full potential. PSO was encouraged by Easun and CDRA to publish more, using the potential for practice, as it has access to much material in this field. This community of practice seems underutilized. Responding to the demand of the PSO member organizations and encouraged by contacts with CDRA and Easun, PSO has recently started to take on a more active role in collective learning. Collective learning events need more guidance and substantial input from PSO to boost experiential learning and encourage double- and triple-loop learning.

Collaboration with Southern umbrella organizations is promising. Interviewees from the member organizations that are based in the South and at the partner organizations would like to see more coordinated actions and learning events in their respective regions or countries to enhance learning on capacity development.

Strategies, core products and processes

PSO's own *capability to adapt and self-renew* is very strong. It is constantly improving its strategies in response to changing demands. It does this through:

- introducing concepts such as the LWT and the TLP;
- paying greater attention to the learning style and culture of its member organizations;
- extending the number of intake interviews for accessing collective learning events; and
- increasing the involvement of management and senior staff.

This strategy is promising, but results remain to be seen.

Some of the products introduced by PSO were perceived by the interviewees as being too conceptual. Sometimes innovative approaches were introduced before being fully tested. Examples have been quoted on the way the LWTs were introduced and the recent establishment of the PME system. Some approaches introduced by PSO caused unintended effects – for example, the introduction of programmatic way of working, which has often been implemented in a donor-driven way; the proposal formats and the management of the projects and programmes that enhanced a linear and technocratic way of thinking; the focus on products to the detriment of processes; the focus on organizational capacity assessments (OCAs), which have been applied from the point of view of a capacity gap or deficit, and the lack of attention paid to the importance of a sound analysis of risks and opportunities.

Based on a study of technical assistance commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a discussion was launched on the commissioning of technical assistants for long-term projects.[25] This study influenced the political decision to decrease the number of long-term technical assistants. In the PSO's policy for granting subsidies, the *subisidebeschikking*, a decision was taken to limit the funds for long-term placements to a maximum of 40% of the total budget. PSO adopted this policy and encouraged its members to decrease the use of long-term placements. This was implemented during the 2007–2010 policy period.

However, evidence from the cases showed that long-term technical assistants who have been well embedded in the organization can bring added value to supporting and sustaining capacity development as long as they do not become embroiled in taking over management tasks. (Effective contributions of this type were seen in the cases of St Martin and UCMB.) In such cases, the added value was the specific technical expertise of the technical assistants, which was not available locally, and the relationship of trust that was built up. The latter is very important in supporting capacity development. This trust can also be developed further in capacity development programmes that are coordinated at programme level in the countries or the regions as opposed to programmes monitored from the Netherlands. We saw examples of this in the cases of Dorcas, Hivos, ICCO, ZOA and VSO. Their locally based programme officers had the time to build up a strong relationship that made it possible to share, discuss, facilitate, etc. Another added value is that these programme officers were able to pool local expertise and make it easily available to the partners.

[25] Hoenderdos (2004).

PSO is an organization with a growing number of members. For the older members, a clear mind shift was needed to move away from project funding and towards emphasising learning, and on the funding of that learning. Such a process needs time. As the 2007–2010 period was a period of transition, most of the projects and programmes that were financed still fell into the 'traditional' category. Member organizations confirmed that the new project proposals will focus more on learning, documenting and experimenting. The challenge facing PSO now will be how to enhance learning within such a large and diverse group of members – the majority of whom will not participate in the TLPs. (PSO plays a more proactive role in the TLPs than it did in the other collective learning events).

PSO is now an organization operating on two fronts: on the one hand it is a well-established group with a wealth of experience in the field of capacity development, a group where members are keen to invest in knowledge building and sharing in order to support capacity development; on the other hand it is a steadily growing group of disparate NGOs that still need to acquire basic insights into civil society, partner relations and capacity development, and who still have much to learn about which approaches will work and which will not, about the limitations of training, and the principles of being a good coach.

Conclusion

PSO has implemented its policy intentions as set out in its 2007–2010 programme document. However, because it has taken time for these intentions to be translated into operational terms, it will take more time still before they have a chance to take effect. The LWTs became operational in late 2008 and PSO's role as a knowledge centre is only beginning to emerge. Therefore it is neither possible nor instructive to attempt to draw final conclusions about the effectiveness of these policies. This does not mean that we should not compare the policy intentions and their first implementations with the findings of the case studies. Some conclusions can already be drawn and some lessons already learned in the form of the dilemmas that will inform future policy decisions. This will be dealt with in the next chapter.

5

Conclusions

5.1 Conclusions regarding support for the capacity development of Southern partners

The theory of change as presented in the sample cases in this report is predominantly a technocratic and linear planning logic that's related to results-based management (RBM). Support for capacity development has been seen as a means, instrumental to improving programme implementation. As such, contributions to enhancing capacity were mainly related to enhancing the *capability to deliver on development objectives*. For example, they were contributions such as improving the technical skills of staff, enhancing infrastructure and equipment, providing programme financing, developing PME systems, drawing up operational guidelines, etc.

In some cases, support for capacity development was seen as an end in itself, focusing on the organizational development (OD) of mainly less-well-established and weaker organizations. To that end, support for capacity development also focused on the *capability to act and commit*, which involves boosting the management skills of directors and senior staff, developing a vision, a mission statement and a strategic plan, and formulating a range of policy documents.

However, capacity development interventions were too basic on their own to generate strong civil society organizations (CSOs) that would contribute meaningfully to structural poverty alleviation. Other challenges also needed to be addressed, not least the *capability to relate to external stakeholders* – which includes advocacy and lobbying skills and networking; and the *capability to adapt and self-renew* – which includes competences to collect outcome data and to improve implementation strategies based on that outcome data.

Support for capacity development was effective because, in general, the expected results of the capacity development projects and programmes were realized. However, this did not always result in an increased capacity to realize or improve the outcomes of the organization. In order to achieve this, more fundamental changes, principally in implementation or organizational management, were needed.

We saw from the results of the evaluated cases that the sustainability of the changed capacity was often at risk. Sustainability was hindered by a combination of management weaknesses of the capacity development programmes at the level of the member organizations, and by the lack of an articulated view on the capacity development of the partner organizations. Also the non-existence of internal organizational learning systems, coupled with weak leadership and poor management of change processes, adversely influenced the effectiveness and sustainability of the capacity development programmes. Management of the capacity development programmes was further hampered by the lack of a good monitoring and evaluation procedure, the fact that many programmes were too ambitious and not fully owned by the partner organizations, and the lack of a sound risk management policy.

5.2 Analysis

In all the cases evaluated, a 'traditional approach' to support capacity development was adopted. Member organizations made use of standardized analyses to identify 'capacity gaps' in the partner organizations with little attention given either to the societal strengths on which outside interventions might be built or to the broader context that shaped the organizations. Solutions have tended to assume the existence of a best practice that is universally applicable and transferrable through training, developing management systems, carrying out studies and providing equipment and supplies (Baser, 2009). The importance of the context is often neglected – for example, the organizing of exchange visits that do not pay sufficient attention to translating the principle of good practice into a practice that works in the context of the particular organization.

The theory of change as presented in the PSO-funded projects in the sample is predominantly based on a technocratic and linear planning logic that's related to RBM. The implementation of change seen in the sample studies is very much top-down and in several cases it is donor driven and based on systematic and scheduled interventions. This approach can be effective for interventions where support for capacity development is aimed at contributing to technical and functional improvements of the practice. These programmes are often very technical, and open to being well planned and accurately measured.

The core assumption that lay behind the technocratic approach is that capacity development can be managed like a project. However, complex systems are living organisms and are not manageable in conventional ways. This has been proved many times over in the case studies. Many factors influencing the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development support were not given full attention and the consequence of this was that they were not dealt with. The driving force of capacity development is not the goal setting but the relationships, interactions, common interests, communication and awareness of the organizations involved (Baser, 2009).[26]

This technocratic approach seems to be at odds with the perspective of organizations as open systems that need to respond to a specific range of contextual factors. In the open system approach, capacity development is seen as an endogenous non-linear process that is strongly influenced by a range of internal and external factors (see the terms of reference of the evaluation.). Change emerges from a complex and difficult-to-forecast process of organizational learning and adaptation. Baser describes a different intervention theory that seems to respond better to the ambitions of PSO and the member organizations. From Baser's complex adaptive systems perspective, capacity development interventions are not planned on pre-set objectives, but a broad strategy is foreseen that combines experimentation, facilitation, multiple interdependencies, facilitation of the processes of change and the securing of freedom to explore ways forward. Capacity emerges out of

[26] Baser, H. (2009) The Law and Justice Sector Programme Papua New Guinea. *An experimental approach to monitoring capacity and capacity development: an overview of the findings and an assessment of the framework.* Maastricht: ECDPM.

multiple interdependencies and multiple causal connections. As the author acknowledges, this approach is little used in donor-funded programmes.

Baser also describes a third theory of intervention, 'incrementalism', where the objectives of capacity development may be clear but the strategy is not. This theory sees objectives as guidelines, not fixed targets. Further, it suggests that strategy is developed gradually leading to more appropriate capacity development. Such a strategy leaves room for making adjustments and small interventions, for experimentation with different methodologies so that we can learn what might work under certain conditions. The STAR programme implemented by Hivos shows characteristics of this approach.

All three approaches, the technocratic approach, the complex adaptive systems approach and Baser's incrementalist approach, can be useful and can even be used together within a single programme. Moving towards incrementalist, or even towards a complex adaptive systems approach to capacity development, seems appropriate – particularly in cases that aim to facilitate OD, and ID processes and/or second-order changes. In only two cases studied have elements of the incrementalist approach been found. This can be partially explained by PSO's way of working, which unintentionally stimulated a technocratic approach. Another partial explanation could be that the IOB study focused on explicit capacity development projects and programmes, which do not lend themselves to implicit approaches to capacity development.

5.3 Dilemmas

Focus on results-based management versus support for endogenous capacity development
The demands set by the Dutch co-financing system in relation to results-based accountability have unintentionally narrowed the scope for capacity development interventions implemented by the PSO member organizations. In order to enhance RBM, the focus of many capacity development projects and programmes has been on improving financial and reporting management capacities, implementing PME systems, developing procedures and systems and the technical improvement of specific programmes. Capacity development projects and programmes have been developed that could produce tangible results in the short term, by producing 'products' such as manuals, training programmes, etc. RBM and the co-financing system have not encouraged capacity development approaches that stem from complex adaptive systems thinking or from incrementalism, because these approaches are not set in advance, and space is given for experimentation and the facilitation of multiple interdependencies. This focus on RBM as included in the co-financing system, is also the reason why many PSO member organizations are reluctant to include specific capacity development projects and programmes in their MFS proposals and why the strengthening of weaker CSOs is often not included.

A limited role for Dutch NGOs contributing to capacity development versus an ambitious role supporting endogenous capacity development

One can question what part should be played by Dutch NGOs in relation to capacity development. The evidence shows that the role of Dutch support for capacity development is limited. Most of the capacity development programmes are donor driven and look for immediate solutions for perceived needs. Member organizations seem not to be able yet to solve the issues related to effectiveness and sustainability as they seem hesitant to intervene in internal organizational processes.

Taking into account the ability of the PSO members to support capacity development and the 'programme supporter'[27] nature of the partnership between member organizations and partner organizations, effective and sustainable support for endogenous capacity development is at risk. Because of this, long-term relationships and trust need to be built up to broaden the scope for learning through joint action and creating space for the multiple interactions though which informal learning takes place. It is difficult to create this kind of relationship from a distance – and it will inevitably be compromised by frequent changes of staff at the PSO member organizations. Seeds of this approach have been noticed in the capacity development programmes that have been managed locally by a capacity development officer.

5.4 Conclusions regarding the quality of the member organizations' support for the capacity development of their partners

PSO has contributed to the quality of the capacity development support that its members offer to their partners. Various strategies and instruments for capacity development have been clarified for staff at the member organizations, and the management skills they need in order to prepare, manage and report on capacity development programmes have been strengthened. PSO contributed to the further development of partner policies and the development of programmatic working. The increasingly active involvement of the member organizations in PSO has emphasized the importance of capacity development within the organization. The introduction of the learning-working trajectories (LWTs) has motivated most of the member organizations to develop an explicit policy on capacity development that describes intervention theory, strategies, approaches, instruments, etc. It has also motivated them to start investing in learning from experience.

However, the achievements at the level of the PSO member organizations and at the level of individual staff did not result in qualitative and professional capacity development projects and programmes in the South. Challenges with regard to effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development programmes still exist and it is not clear yet how learning from capacity projects and programmes will be organized.

[27]   This is different from an institutional supporter or even a "partner".

5.5 Analysis

PSO has a clear vision of learning and considers experiential learning to be the driving force behind its intervention strategy. PSO aims to encourage single-, double- and triple-loop learning processes. However, it is confronted with the limitations of the context within which it is operating – the fact that organizational learning in the development context is difficult. Member organizations are dealing with complex and dynamic external environments and have many 'anti-learning elements' in their organizational culture.[28] PSO still is looking for the appropriate way to improve learning within the member organizations. And because of this, it is constantly improving each instrument.

Kessels (1996) describes seven learning functions that need to be addressed in order to foster a genuine learning environment in organizations and to increase the quality of the services they deliver. PSO seems to focus on the development of the following learning functions or learning competences with their member organizations:
- acquiring specific knowledge related to capacity development – which it achieves through training and collective learning events (CLTs);
- using this acquired knowledge to solve problems, or address the challenges related to the effectiveness and sustainability of capacity development programmes – which it does to a limited extent through the LWTs and the CLTs; and
- stimulating double- and triple-loop learning processes to reflect on the current practice, explore new knowledge and approaches, and apply these in practice – which it does to a limited extent through the CLTs and the LWTs, and promises to do more comprehensively in the thematic learning programme (TLP).

The support for these three learning functions is limited and the strongest focus is on limited numbers of staff from the member organizations acquiring specific knowledge.

The other learning competences are barely addressed by PSO. An organization needs a plan for learning that helps to generate knowledge and insights, disseminate knowledge and insights and apply them.[29] A first step was taken with the introduction of the LWTs. However, regular reflection by the member organizations on the context, the learning culture, the learning competences, and the commitment and motivation of staff is needed to gain insight into how the organization learns and how this learning can be improved.

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[28] From Berg, E. (2000) *Why aren't AID Organizations better learners?* Cited in PSO concept note on Thematic Learning Programmes, December 2009.

[29] Other learning competences of organizations are described as communicative and social competences; the ability to regulate motivation and affection; the ability to create stability and momentum, and the ability to foster creativity.

5.6 Dilemmas

PSO as a training institute versus PSO as a facilitator of organizational learning
PSO has a wide diversity of member organizations. Many of them and many individual staff members still need to acquire basic knowledge of and insights into civil society building, partner relations and capacity development. They also need to learn how to distinguish approaches that work from approaches that do not, recognize the limitations of training as an instrument, and develop the competencies to become good coaches, etc. To that end, the instruments that PSO has developed are of good quality and are very relevant. However, PSO also aims to facilitate organizational learning. According to the organization itself, the major change in the current policy period has been an increased emphasis on analyzing the learning style, culture and capacity of the member organization and tailoring the learning instruments accordingly. Not many results can be seen yet. It is the responsibility of each member organization to develop its own learning plan and it is not clear yet to what extent PSO has a real influence on this learning culture in organizations, taking into account the many anti-learning elements described above.

Funding of capacity development projects and programmes versus funding of learning for capacity development projects/programmes

Up to 2007, PSO was seen by its members as a 'back donor', financing specific capacity development projects and programmes. This role was highly appreciated by both its members and their partners as not many donors are willing to fund specific capacity development projects and programmes. PSO contacts within organizations were perceived by their colleagues as the administrators of capacity development projects and programmes.

After 2007, when the focus shifted to learning, the position of the PSO contacts within their organizations was strengthened, particularly in terms of their ability to encourage learning on capacity development projects and programmes. PSO funding created time and space for learning – though both of these essentials are still limited. Considering the inadequate emphasis given to organizational learning as an essential element of capacity development, the risk exists that a decrease in dedicated capacity development funding will lead to a reduction in the number of capacity development programmes, and a corresponding decline in the motivation to learn.

Annexes

Annex 1: About IOB

Objectives

The objective of the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) is to increase insight into the implementation and effects of Dutch foreign policy. IOB meets the need for independent evaluation of policy and operations in all policy fields falling under the Homogeneous Budget for International Cooperation (HGIS). IOB also advises on the planning and implementation of the evaluations for which policy departments and embassies are responsible. Its evaluations enable the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister for Development Cooperation to account to parliament for policy and the allocation of resources. In addition, the evaluations aim to derive lessons for the future.

Efforts are accordingly made to incorporate the findings of evaluations into the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' policy cycle. Evaluation reports are used to provide targeted feedback, with a view to improving both policy intentions and
implementation. Insight into the outcome of implemented policy allows policy makers to devise measures that are more effective and focused.

Approach and methodology

IOB has a staff of experienced evaluators and its own budget. When carrying out evaluations, it calls on the assistance of external experts with specialized knowledge of the topic under investigation. To monitor its own quality, it sets up a reference group for each evaluation, which includes not only external experts but also interested parties from within the Ministry.

Programme

The evaluation programme of IOB is part of the programmed evaluations annex of the explanatory memorandum to the budget of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

An organisation in development

Since IOB was established in 1977, major shifts have taken place in its approach, areas of focus and responsibilities. In its early years, its activities took the form of separate project evaluations for the Minister for Development Cooperation. Around 1985, evaluations became more comprehensive, taking in sectors, themes and countries. Moreover, IOB's reports were submitted to parliament, and thus entered the public domain.

The year 1996 saw a review of foreign policy and a reorganization of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As a result, IOB's mandate was extended to include evaluations of the Dutch government's entire foreign policy. In recent years, it has extended its partnerships with similar departments in other countries, for instance, through joint evaluations.

Finally, IOB also aims to expand its methodological repertoire. This includes placing greater emphasis on statistical methods of impact evaluation. Since 2007 IOB has undertaken policy reviews as a type of evaluation.

Annexes

Annex 2: Overview of the reports

De Lange, P. & Feddes, R. (2008) *General Terms of Reference 'Evaluation of Dutch support to capacity development' Evidence-based case studies on how to support organisational development effectively.*

Kasumba, G. & Dhaene C. (2010) *Evaluation report mission Uganda. Analysing support from Woord en Daad to capacity development of KDDS.*

Masheti, K. & Phlix, G. (2010) *Evaluation report mission Southern Sudan. Analysing the CADEP programme implemented by ICCO in Southern Sudan.*

Ng'ethe, N. & Phlix, G. (2009) *Evaluation report mission Kenya. Analysing support from Mensen met een Missie to capacity development of St Martin SCA.*

Phlix, G. & Kasumba, G. (2009) *Inception report on the evaluation of Dutch support for capacity development. Evidence-based studies.*

Phlix, G. (2010) *Addendum to PSO inception report on the evaluation of Dutch support for capacity development. Evidence-based studies.*

Turpin, M. & Huyse, H. (2010) *Evaluation report mission South Africa. Analysing the support of Niza to capacity development of the Freedom of Expression Institute.*

Tsega, L. & Phlix, G. (2010) *Evaluation report mission Ethiopia. Analysing support from Tear to capacity development of MKC-RDA.*

All reports are available on request from PSO.

Annexes

Annex 3: Glossary of terms

Human resources development (HRD) – This refers to the improvement and maintenance of the quality of personnel within an organization – in other words, ensuring that staff members continually widen their knowledge and skills base and maintain positive attitudes and good levels of motivation in order to keep pace with the demands of the organization they work for. At this level, capacity development involves factors such as acquiring information and insights, changing perceptions, accepting values, honing practical skills, and enhancing outlook and style. HRD is split into three elements: management skills, technical skills, and attitude and motivation.

Organizational development (OD) – refers to the sustainable strengthening of the internal elements of an organization in a way that enables it to achieve its objectives and fulfil its mission. This does not refer exclusively to staff improvements, although this does form part of the theory, but also includes strengthening an organization's systems and processes. PSO differentiates between the following aspects of organizational development: strategy and policy, learning capacity, structure and systems, staff, management style, networking, culture, financial management and technical skills.

Institutional development (ID) – refers to the influence an organization has on the context in which it operates. Only when an organization is fully integrated into its environment can it exert any influence on that environment. ID is primarily a long-term process that is seldom realized by a single organization working in isolation. PSO does not invest directly in institutional development, but achieves it indirectly by strengthening the advocacy and learning skills of individual partner organizations and encouraging the formation of strategic alliances between partners. PSO differentiates between the following ID dimensions: strategic harmonization, operational harmonization, learning capacity and external influence.

Output – the products, capital goods and services that result directly from a development intervention or that result from a change brought about by the intervention. Such outputs are relevant to the attainment of various outcomes. (Output refers to what is within the sphere of control.)

Outcome – a level of performance or a consequence that is likely or already achieved in the short-term or medium-term resulting from an intervention's outputs. (Outcome refers to what is outside the sphere of control but within the sphere of influence.)

Five domains of change (PSO, 2009):

1. The capacity of the PSO organization – the extent to which PSO is equipped as an organization to improve the quality of the practice of capacity development.

2. The relationship between PSO and its member organizations – the extent to which the relationship between PSO and its member organizations creates an enabling environment that will improve the quality of the practice of capacity development in the South.

3. The capacity of the member organizations – the extent to which each member organization is equipped as an organization to improve the quality of the practice of capacity development. The challenge is to involve not only individuals but the organization as a whole in the learning process.

4. The relationship between the member organizations and the partner organizations – the extent to which the relationship between the member organizations and the partner organizations creates an enabling environment for improvements within both organizations in a way that allows them to improve the quality of the practice of capacity development.

5. Capacity of the partner organizations – the extent to which partner organizations are equipped to add value to their environment. Partner organizations will contribute to a strengthened civil society through which poverty is alleviated in a structural manner.

Annex 4: Documents consulted

Barefoot Collective (2009) *A Barefoot Guide to Working with Organizations and Social Change*. CDRA, South Africa. www.barefootguide.org

Baser, H. and Morgan, P. (2008) *Capacity Change and Performance: Study Report*. Discussion paper 59B. ECDPM, Maastricht, the Netherlands. www.ecdpm.org/dp59b

Baser, H. (2009) *The Law and Justice Sector Programme Papua New Guinea. An experimental approach to monitoring capacity and capacity development: an overview of the findings and assessment of the framework.* (unpublished).

Berg, E. (2000) *Why aren't AID organizations better learners?* In PSO (2009) *Concept note on Thematic Learning Programmes*.

Block, L. (2009) *Lessons on monitoring and evaluation in capacity development. Second meta-evaluation of PSO-financed capacity development programmes 2006–2008*. Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam.

Block, L. (2007) *Reviewing the reviews: effectiveness of PSO financed capacity building programmes and quality of the monitoring and evaluation process 2001–2006*. Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam.

Britton, B. et al (2007) *PSO Peer review. Reflections of the peer review team.* Driebergen, the Netherlands.

Capacity.org issue 37, *Understanding Context*, September 2009.

Capacity.org issue 38, *Local Capacity Developers*, December 2009.

Ecorys (2005) *PSO Evaluation*. Final report. Ecorys, Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

Elbers, W. and Schulpen, L. (2009) *Partnerships between Private Aid Agencies and Partners: Sitting at the Decision-making Table or Standing at the Side Line?* CIDIN, Nijmegen. (peer-reviewed article).

Fowler, A. (2000) *Partnerships: Negotiating Relationships,* Occasional Papers Series No 32, INTRAC, Oxford, UK.

Hoenderdos, H. and Bloten, A. (2004) *Beleidskader Technische assistentie: uitvoering en effecten op beleid, strategie en implementatie van subsidie-ontvangende organizatics PUM, PSO en SNV* (unpublished).

Huyse, H., Phlix, G. et al. (2010) *Evaluatie van partnerschappen gericht op capaciteitsversterking.* Brussel: FOD Buitenlandse Zaken, Buitenlandse handel en Ontwikkelingssamenwerking.

INTRAC (2010) *Monitoring and Evaluating Capacity Building: Is it really that difficult?* Praxis Paper 23. INTRAC, Oxford, UK.

James, R. and Hailey, J. (2007) *Capacity Building for NGOs: Making it Work*. INTRAC, Oxford, UK.

Kessels, J.W.M. (1996) *Het Corporate Curriculum*. Leiden: Rijksuniversiteit.

Kessener, B. (2009) *Leerwerktrajecten PSO onderzoeksrapport*. Intern werkdocument.

Keursten, P. (2000) *Werken aan kennisproductiviteit: vormgeven aan leerfuncties van het corporate curriculum*. In *Opleiding & Ontwikkeling*, themanummer over kennisproductiviteit. Juni 2001.

Maarse, A. (2009) *Mission report IICD Zambia. 21–27 February 2009*. PSO, The Hague, the Netherlands.

Morgan, P. (2006) *Study on Capacity, Change and Performance. The Concept of Capacity. Draft version*. ECDPM, Maastricht, the Netherlands.

PSO *Procedure meerjarenafsprakenkaders.*

PSO *Aanvraag en beoordelingssystematiek voor programma's en projecten. Beleid en stramien (2003–2006).*

PSO (2001) *De vereniging PSO en haar lidorganizaties*. Brochure 2001.

PSO (2002) *Bedrijfsplan 2003–2006*.

PSO (2004) *Monitoring and evaluation of capacity building. Policy and instruments*. A PSO manual.

PSO (2005) *Het PSO Youth Zone Programme*. Beleidsnotitie 2005–2010.

PSO (2006) *Subsidieaanvraag deel 1 voor de periode 2007–2010*.

PSO (2006) *Subsidieaanvraag deel 2 voor de periode 2007–2010*.

PSO (2007) *Aangepast activiteitenplan en monitoringsprotocol PSO 2007–2010*.

PSO (2007) *Capaciteitsopbouw in Humanitaire hulp*. PSO 2007–2010. beleidsaanpassing.

PSO (2007) *PSO youth Zone programme for Southern young professionals. Policy 2008–2010*.

PSO (2008) *Samen werken aan kwaliteit. Jaarverslag 2007*.

PSO (2008) *Jaarplan en begroting 2009*.

PSO (2008) *Monitoringsprotocol bij jaarverslag 2007*.

PSO (2009) *Leerwerktrajecten PSO onderzoeksrapport (*Internal working document).

PSO (2009) *Handboek PM&E van capaciteitsontwikkeling*.

PSO (2009) *In beweging naar het Zuiden. Jaarverslag 2008*.

PSO *Process document on the review of the PSO PME system on capacity building*.

PSO annual reports 2007, 2008 and 2009.

PW Consult (2010) *Youth Zone Matters? Third study into the effects of the PSO Youth Zone programme.*

Tukker, H. and Van Poelje, R. (2009) *Sustainable capacity development in crisis. Practice and lessons learnt on strengthening civil society organizations.* PSO paper presented at the World Conference on Humanitarian Studies, Groningen, the Netherlands, February 2009.

Veenstra, B. and van 't Wout, P (2008) *PSO's Youth Zone. Effectmeting PSO jongerenprogramma juli 2005–juli 2007 vanuit het perspectief van Jongeren, Lidorganizaties en Partnerorganizaties.* www.pso.nl/ content/rapport-effectmeting-youth-zone

For all member organizations visited as part of this study, the following PSO documents were consulted:
- project descriptions of the capacity development projects and programmes selected in this sample;
- narrative and financial reports of the capacity development projects/programmes;
- PSO assessment forms on the project description and annual report (when available);
- communications between PSO and the member organizations;
- learning-working trajectories (LWTs); and
- reports of the first meetings to discuss progress of the LWT (when available).

In addition, other documents have been consulted. An overview of these documents is added in annexes to the separate case study reports.

Annexes

Annex 5: Organizations visited and individuals interviewed

Member organizations visited

Mensen met een Missie
Kees Schilder – Programme officer
Frank van Eenbergen – PSO contact person

Tear
Caspar Waalewijn – Programme officer
Willem Klaassen – Programme officer
Jaap Boersma – Team leader
Marnix Niemeijer – Director
Martin Herlaar – Head of Department of programmes and partners

Woord en Daad
Cees Oosterhuis – PSO contact person
Marike de Kloe – Programme manager, Education
Luuk van schothorst – Programme manager, Basic needs and emergency assistance
Melinda Jansen – Programme officer, Advocacy
Maryse Tanis – Programme officer, Advice and research
Ellen van den Hil – Assistant manager, Projects and programmes

Niza
Julia Szanton – Head of Partnership development and programme department
Rosemarie Wuite – Programme officer
Kwaks Gerno – Head of Policy and campaigns

ICCO
Hettie Walters – R&D department, Advisor capacity development
Peter de Lange and Laurens den Dulk – Programme officers responsible for Southern Sudan
Herman Brouwer – Former CD advisor
Angelica Senders – Programme officer, Fair economic development (Former CD advisor)
Urdice Sno – Programme officer, Southern Africa
Anong Boonchuey – Programme officer

Hivos
Catherine van der Wees– Programme officer, Economic development; former PSO contact person
Marjan van Es – Focal point capacity development, contact person LWT
Loe Schout – Programme officer, ICT programme
Josine Stremmelaar – PSO contact person

Dorcas AID International
Dirk Jan Otte – PSO contact person
Arendje Mensveld – Quality management
Peter den Hoog – Programme officer, Job and business programme
Iris Brouwer – Assistant project coordinator
Marleen Vonk – Trainee

IKV/Pax Christi
Jan Jaap van Oosterzee – Team leader, Middle East and PSO contact person
Simonne Remijnse – Programme officer, Latin America
Evert-Jan Grit – Programme officer, Middle East
Judith Olij – Programme officer, Africa
Nico Plooijer – Programme officer, Horn of Africa

AMREF
Woutine van Beek – Programme manager and PSO contact person
Joris van Oppenraaij – Programme Officer
Dawn Betteridge – Head, programme department
Nzomo Mwita – AMREF HQ Nairobi, Assistant director capacity building

Cordaid
François Lenfant – Policy officer and PSO contact person
Piet van Gils – Programme officer, Health programmes
Paula Mommers – Programme officer, Health programmes

VSO
Cindy Geers – Programme funding officer and PSO contact person
Caroline van der Wal – Teamleader, Programme team and follow-up LWT
Bart Bossers – Recruitment and placement advisor and follow-up STAP programme
Karolien Molenaar – Programme funder and follow-up STAP programme
Anneke Donker – STAP volunteer and STAP I coordinator

FTO
Martin Boon – Business consultant FTO
Ron van Meer – Business consultant FTO
Inge op ten Berg – Business consultant FTO
Connie Valkhoff – Programme manager FTO and PSO contact person

Both Ends
Tamara Mohr – Coordinator, Partner development
Christa Nooy – Coordinator, Capacity development
Huub Scheele –Coordinator, capacity development (Former PSO contact person)
Marie Jose van der Werft Ten Bosch – Programme coordinator, South Africa

ZOA

Leo Den Besten – Manager, Monitoring and policy development and PSO contact
Simon Manning – Programme support officer and PSO contact person
Roelof van Til – Programme officer Sudan and Cambodia
Everd Jan Pierik – Programme officer
Tommi Gaasbeek – Policy development officer
Corita Corbjin – Policy development officer
Kevin Beattie – Country director, Southern Sudan

HealthNet TPO

Aletta Jansen – PSO contact person
Steven Allard – Director, Resources and organizational management
Marion van der Heijden – Portfolio manager, Sudan
Ada van der Linde – Portfolio manager
Catelijne Mittendorff – Portfolio manager, Great Lakes
Kasia Furman – Portfolio manager

PSO

Margo Kooijman – Director
Marcela Tam – Head of programme department
Rob van Poelje – Head of knowledge centre
Akke Schuurmans – Officer, knowledge centre – PME officer
Arja Aarnoudse – Officer, knowledge centre
Koen Faber – Account manager
Michael Baumeister – Account manager
Tessa Roorda – Account manager
Anneke Maarse – Account manager
Pieterbas Buys – Account manager
Mayke Harding – Account manager
Joseph Seh – Account manager – Cross Over

Other stakeholders interviewed

Eveline van Manen – Account manager PSO at DGIS
Maarten Brouwer – DGIS
Dirk Jan Koch – Former account manager PSO at DGIS, currently based at
   the Netherlands Embassy in the Democratic Republic of Congo
Nomvula Dlamini – CDRA
James Taylor – CDRA
Atieno Anwol – Easun
Oxfam Novib
Madeleine Brases – External funding and PSO contact person
Marco de Swart – Programme officer, R&D, contact person negotiations LWT
Participants at the CLT Civil society and capacity development
Veronique Ehlen – Policy officer MCNV
Aukje de Beer – PSO contact person CARE NL
Arthur Zuidersna – Senior financial officer Oxfam Novib (Horn of Africa)

Overview of participants in the electronic survey

Member organization that participated	Member organizations that did not participate
Foundation Dark & Light Blind Care	Connect International
Agriterra	Edukans
Dorcas Aid International	Theatre Embassy
Mama Cash	Both Ends
War Child Nederland	AMREF
Cordaid	Free Voice
Aim for human rights	MCNV
ETC	Interserve Nederland
GZB	Vluchtelingenhulp Nederland
Hivos	NIMD
ICCO	Niza
ICS	NOC*NSF
Mensen met een Missie	Press Now
Care Nederland	NVTG
Oxfam Novib	SOMO
IKV Pax Christi	IICD
World Population Foundation	Transnational Information Exchange
Het Nederlandse Rode Kruis	Global Initiative on Psychiatry
Simavi	Milieukontakt International
Solidaridad	IRC
SOS-Kinderdorpen	Stichting Kinderpostzegels Nederland
Dance4lLife International	Netherlands Leprosy Relief
Schorer	Terre des Hommes Nederland
HealthNet TPO	War Trauma Foundation
Social Trade Organization	ZOA Refugee Care
Fair Trade Organizations	WASTE
World Vision	
VSO Nederland	
WEMOS	
Woord en Daad	
ZGG	

Annexes

Annex 6: Overview of the cases

Table 18 lists the cases selected for the 2007–2010 PSO programme evaluation.
- Five countries were visited. In each country three partner organizations were visited. In the Netherlands, interviews were held with a number of staff from PSO member organizations.
- PSO proposals are categorized as either a project or a programme. All the programmes have the same characteristics:
  - several partners are involved and they have one common objective;
  - they contain plans focusing on the individual partner level and on joint activities such as regional workshops, exchange visits, etc.;
  - some partners take the lead in the programme and others benefit in a more indirect way from the programme; and
  - in accordance with PSO criteria, programmes are developed with the participation of the partners, although the degree of participation differs from one programme to another.
- All projects and programmes were financed through 'regular' and later 'strategic' financing. Projects that also benefited from additional funding via the Cross Over and Youth Zone programmes are specified in the 6th column of the table.
- The last column shows which project is funded under the conditions of the LWT. Because most of the LWTs were signed in 2008 for projects starting in 2009, not many LWT initiatives could be identified.

Table 18. Overview of the cases selected for the 2007–2010 PSO programme evaluation				
Country	**Member organization**	**Partner organization**	**Period**	
Kenya	Mensen met een Missie	St Martin SCA	April 2001–July 2006 2006–2009	
	Hivos	LVCT	2005/2006–2008/2009	
	Dorcas	NACODEV	2005/2006–2008/ 2009	
Ethiopia	Tear	MKC-RDA	2005–2009 2008–2010	
	AMREF	AMREF	2009	
	IKV/Pax Christi	GPDC	2006–2007 2007–2010	
Uganda	Woord en Daad	KDDS	2009	
	Cordaid	UCMB	2005–2008	
	VSO	VSO	2006–2008	
South Africa	Niza	FXI	2005–2008 2009–2010	
	FTO	Turqle Trading	2004–2008	
	Both Ends	EMG	2008–2009	
Sudan	ICCO	CADEP programme	2005–2008 2009–2010	
	ZOA	ZOA	2005–2006 2006–2007 2008–2010	
	HealthNet TPO	HealthNet TPO	2005–2008	

	Short description	Programme / project	Specifics	Case of LWT
	Advisor for institutional and capacity development Capacity development – support for the establishment of a curio shop	Project Project	Technical assistant Youth Zone	No
	Strategic ICT Application in the Africa Region (STAR)	Programme	Quality Fund	No
	Capacity development programme	Programme		No
	Organizational capacity development programme technical assistance to support the organizational capacity building programme	Project Project	Technical assistant Cross Over	No
	Documentation of the Malaria Afar project achievements	Programme		Yes
	Support Gambella/Pagak Support joint sustainable peace and development programme in the Upper Nile and Gambella region	Project Programme	Technical assistant	No
	Organizational and institutional strengthening partners	Programme		Yes
	Health sector capacity development plan	Programme	Technical assistant	No
	Strategic technical assistance programmes	Programme	Technical assistant (volunteers) Youth Zone	No
	Media and freedom of expression programme Support to the international Alliance on Natural resources Africa (IANRA)	Programme Programme		No Yes
	Omhoog in de klimmop	Programme		No
	Institutional and human resources capacity development by CSOs working on drylands and land degradation	Programme		yes
	Capacity assessment development programme	Programme		No
	Relief and rehabilitation programme Darfur Capacity building in Darfur Enhancing ZOA's capacity for capacity enhancement of local partners in post conflict areas (LWT)	Project Project Programme		No No Yes
	Wau County Health Systems Development	Project		No

Table 19. Overview of the various types of capacity development programme presented in this synthesis report	
Type of support for capacity development	**Cases studied**
Support for organizational capacity development Capacity development as an end in itself – strengthening civil society	St Martin CSA; NACODEV; MKC-RDA; GPDC; KDDS; CADEP
Strengthening implementation of programmes – instrumental capacity development Capacity development as a means to a specific end	LVCT; EMG; KDDS; FXI; ZOA; HealthNet TPO
Increasing the quality of support for capacity development offered by local service providers (local partners, affiliates or local representatives of the PSO member organization)	Amref; UCMB; VSO; Turqle

Regional or local coordination

The following nine of the 15 member organizations evaluated have representatives in the region/country who play a role in the coordination of the capacity development programmes (9/15): Hivos; Dorcas; Tear via Tearfund UK; AMREF; ZOA; VSO; ICCO; Pax Christi; and HealthNet TPO.

Annex 7: Feedback on the methodology

This assignment was very interesting and challenging, not least because of the subject matter of the evaluation and the approach set out in the general terms of reference. The evaluation team compiled a number of reflections in relation to the five core capability (5CC) framework, the Southern perspective and the focus on capacity development.

The 5CC framework
The evaluation team gave the 5CC framework its approval and agreed that it was a good model for assessing the effectiveness of capacity development interventions. Many previous PSO evaluations of capacity development programmes assessed the expected output without taking into account the extent to which this output really contributed to increased capacity. The 5CC framework can be helpful in overcoming this problem.

All the partner organizations liked the 5CC framework approach. The evaluation team reported that they were able to convey a good understanding of how it should work to senior staff at the partner organizations. However, it is a highly conceptual framework that requires a certain education level in order to understand it and a certain amount of time to become familiar with the concepts. For that reason, the framework has not been introduced at less-senior staff levels nor has it been discussed in depth in the desk studies.The team leader felt that it was important to spend time introducing the concepts to the national consultants. No problems of understanding were encountered at that level.

There is an inherent danger that the 5CC framework could become just another organizational capacity assessment (OCA) tool, with no proper introduction or thorough understanding. Evidence of this has already been seen in the field (for example in the MKC-RDA case). In the case of the CADEP programme, it was integrated into the programme proposal as a monitoring tool, but was never actually used as such by the successive programme advisors.

It might have been useful to examine the link between the evolution of the five core capabilities and the phases of organizational growth.

Approach – Southern perspective
It was difficult to strike a balance between the local, or contextual, relevance of indicators and the need to look for consistency with the indicators as described in the general terms of reference. In practice, the indicators formulated by the partner organizations were used to collect data. However, when crucial indicators had not been formulated by the partner organization, for example on the issue of leadership, the evaluator raised that particular indicator and discussed its relevance with the partner. Often, this resulted in the inclusion of that indicator.

It is not clear to what extent a Southern perspective has been brought in. The, the 5CC framework and the approach were all developed by IOB. The only Southern perspective was the collaboration with national consultants and members of the general reference groups

coming from the South – this is an approach that is always used in our evaluations. However, one can question the degree to which these consultants can articulate the perspective of the South. Additionally, the organizations visited (usually NGOs and CBOs) did not have a detailed vision of or strategy for capacity development. It was difficult for them to really participate in the debate on capacity development. Discussions were limited to the operational level.

Main data collection was carried out by just one national consultant. This decision restricted the amount of data that could be collected and prevented in-depth discussions on data and analysis within the team of evaluators. The team leader had to rely on second-hand data. The result of this was that a good deal of time had to be invested by the team leader in supervising report writing.

Approach – focusing on capacity development

The basic methodologies used to identify the 5CCs were: self-assessment exercises, interviews (with an emphasis on data triangulation), focus group discussions, general observation, and the study of documents. Some indicators used to measure the 5CCs were easier to define than others. And many indicators needed to be assessed based on second-hand sources or on self-assessment exercises. Examples of such indicators are those that measure the skill levels of staff in various areas including financial management skills, reporting skills, leadership skills, etc. For some indicators, it would have been more appropriate to use different methodologies. The timeline exercise was used in conjunction with stories of change and this was found to be a very useful technique that delivered a lot of information in a short time.

There was a lack of qualitative evaluation reports at almost every level and no reliable data were available at outcome level. Using the approach described in the terms of reference and with the time available for the field studies, it was impossible to collect data at the beneficiary level, apart from information gleaned from focus group discussions. This made it very difficult to link capacity changes to changes at output and outcome level. The evaluation team would have liked to have been able to combine the capacity development evaluation with a programme evaluation in order to assess the effectiveness of the overall intervention strategy based on data at output and outcome levels combined with changes in capacity.

At all times, a point was made to explain to all stakeholders (national evaluators, member organizations and partner organizations) the difference between assessing the capacity of an organization as a whole and assessing the results of support for capacity development in particular.

In addition, questionnaires have been carried out. The formats are available on request.

Evaluation Studies published by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) 2005-2010

Evaluation studies published before 2005 can be found on the IOB website: www.minbuza.nl/iob

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Support for capacity development has long been
an important aspect of Netherlands development
cooperation. This evaluation aims to provide
insights into the support of PSO, a Dutch
organization that supports capacity development
in developing countries. This one of seven studies
is carried out in the context of an extensive
evaluation of the impacts of capacity development
activities financed through Dutch development
organizations. The research for the PSO evaluation
began by examining the processes and results at
the level of the partner organizations of PSO
followed by PSO-member organizations and then
assessed these findings against PSO's theory of
change. The evaluation is based on case studies
of PSO members, work in Ethiopia, Kenya, South
Africa, Southern Sudan and Uganda.