

The Swedish Helsinki Committee Programme in the Western Balkans, 1999–2003

Lars Weiss

**Department for Central and
Eastern Europe**

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Sida Evaluation 03/38

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Executive summary

Since 1999, SHC has funded more than several hundred projects in the Western Balkans and including the 2003 budget more than 150 Mkr has been invested in operations and projects. During that period the organisation has gradually increased in size, structure and geographical scope. 12 employees, together with retained consulting support for accounting, now operate out of the Stockholm secretariat, the Belgrade field office and also, within a couple of months, from 2 satellite offices in Skopje and Sarajevo.

The Terms of Reference aims at two main areas to be covered in the evaluation. (1) The analysis of the SHC organisation in regard of capabilities, resources, processes and financial control. (2) A recommendation to Sida for future direction of SHC with regard to objectives, support and organisation of support.

Our consolidated impression of the result of the last 5 years of project funding is positive despite a few failed initiatives. It is however expected that, out of such a large number of projects, distributed over a large geographical area, and managed under very challenging political circumstances, some failures are likely to happen. The overall impression from our review translates into three main areas, governance, administration and management, project management and control and finally strategy. Findings are supported by documentation and confirmed in interviews and visits to the organisation and the projects.

First, the administrative functions, including accounting, are seemingly in very good order in regard of support documentation, accounting and payments and overall project administration. Management at the secretariat in Stockholm has a tight handle on ongoing activities in the organisation and the deficiencies we found in handling of SHC owned assets all refer to individual projects. At the same time there is a strong need to change the overall governance approach to SHC. The present system for managing the SHC operations has evolved over the years and is to a major extent the consequence of an “organic” evolution of individual experiences and commitments and less of a more systematic view on how to assure adequate monitoring and guidance. The gradual build-up of the SHC organisation, and the fact that a few very experienced and committed individuals have driven the organisation to a large extent, explains much of our findings. Real decisions are based on an informal organisation at the same time as formal decision structures in regard of project funding is very centralised to the board of directors and, Sida. On one hand there is no evidence other than that the bulk of all funded projects have been successful and that SHC operations on balance is in good administrative order. The flip side is that SHC to a large extent developed into an organisation where the necessary division between the board’s guiding, overseeing and controlling function and operations executive role has diminished. Key governance instruments such as firm strategies, performance measurement tools and systematic control methods are redundant and compensated only by the commitment and knowledge of key people.

We believe that it is time now to make an overhaul of the governing approach in order to strengthen and develop SHC, a new phase.

Further, several indicators verify a need for enhanced project management. Un-accounted assets referring to projects lack of systematic control initiatives and the large number of projects being administered by a relatively small organisation are all factors that need the attention by the board and management.

Finally, it is also evident that the last years of shift in strategy from media focus to a human rights focus, has triggered project initiatives that we find less clear in respect of activity focus and expected results. This, together with other governing principles such as cooperation with other NGO’s is core strategic components we see ripe for reconsideration.

Summary of findings – Governance, management and administration

Recordings of board meetings, interviews with key directors of the board and officers of the Secretariat and its field office in Belgrade points at a need to enhance the overall governance system. The board lack a necessary systematic foundation of strategic guidance, economic and project performance evaluation and an ongoing feedback of control activities. Documentation and sample control clearly show that the administrative and financial order is good but enhanced systems directed more at evaluations and results certainly would add quality to SHC.

The financial audits from 1999 are clean and no irregularities have been reported. The auditor of SHC confirms in an interview that the financial administration is of adequate quality. However, some of our findings directly related to project funding have disclosed deficiencies relating to project equipment not being activated in the balance sheet of SHC. Also we have observed a few cases where the handling of shareholding related to projects needs improvements. Firm policies, transparent guidelines, training of staff and better use of available specialist resources would eliminate such issues for the future and the need for corrective actions. None of the deficiencies are of material importance to the SHC economic foundation or performance but, besides formal accounting requirements, corrective measures are needed in order to avoid future problems with primarily ownership discussions.

The project work organisation is to a large extent self-controlled and need a significantly strengthened system for control. The normal auditing process so far has not included the project activities or the Belgrade field office. The organisational shift of weight to the Balkans through the introduction of two new satellite offices suggests that also audit activities should be expanded to include the Belgrade operation. Besides the control aspect with regard to possible irregularities, periodical and sample-based controls also would serve to support managements and case officer's effort to achieve results.

The legal situation of SHC in Serbia and consequently the employment situation for officers at the Belgrade field office are still unresolved, but we understand from discussions with management and legal advisors that a solution is underway.

Summary of findings – Project management

Annually SHC manages some 50–75 projects distributed to Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, Croatia, Macedonia and Albania. In 2003 some 40% of funds is channelled to Serbia. The large concentration of the project portfolio to one officer in the organisation is a situation we would recommend attention to because of the unnecessary workload and following risk for mistakes.

1999–2001 media projects dominated SHC activities, but since 2002 human rights projects (including civil society building activities) have gradually increased and now is the largest funding area in numbers and money. This gradual shift in strategic focus is a move that need the attention of the board and management.

Beginning in 2003, the creation of Resource Centers in Serbia has risen as a new and financially large funding category. It is our assessment that this type of project – and other humans rights projects like the ones we visited in Pristina, Kosovo and in Sveti Nikole in Macedonia – are demanding more out of the SHC organization. For obvious reasons it is more difficult to define objectives, implementation and evaluation processes in these projects than in some of the media projects where SHC has a long experience. In this area we feel that SHC should put more effort into defining what kind of projects to support and how to measure results against clearly defined objectives.

Summary of findings – Strategy

Over the last two-three years SHC has tilted its strategy away from direct media support to more concentrated efforts in “strategic media support”, human rights and civil society building activities. Documentation does not show, however, that basic strategy has been discussed on the Board or at Annual Meetings, but seemingly has been the result of informal discussions leading up to the yearly application process with Sida.

Now SHC is in the process of evaluating and discussing strategy as well as the fundamentals of the existing strategy. Our findings show that there are a number of issues that need consideration in this process. A basic strategy platform has to be discussed and decided on by the governing bodies of SHC. Regional strategy has to be broken down into country-by-country strategies. Clear guidelines on how to select projects, define objectives, monitor implementation and install exit strategies have to be worked out. This is not only necessary on the part of SHC but will also make it easier for Sida centrally and for the agencies field offices to monitor and evaluate objectives and results of the individual projects.

The main strategy so far also have been to allocate funds to a large number of projects out of the main cities, and in close cooperation with other support organisations. The argument is that this strategy clearly is more productive as far as the ultimate objectives and that cooperative funding reduces the projects dependency on SHC as well as enhances effective control possibilities. As we have commented in chapter 4d, we believe there are reasons to at least discuss this approach in favour of at least a test of alternative approaches.

Summary – Recommendations

Our recommendations when evaluating SHC translate into three main areas that need consideration and change. We base our conclusions and recommendations on the fact that SHC has the core competence and the focus we believe should benefit from taking the next step of development of the organization.

1. A strengthened overall system for governance and operations
2. A partly renewed approach to project management
3. A new and strengthened approach to strategy, planning and evaluation procedures

The size and scope of SHC operations, especially in the light of the ongoing focus shift to human rights activities, requires a new order of governance and operational approach. Strategies, overall planning, evaluation and control capabilities need to be focused and exercised properly by the board and management at the same time as more room for authority and initiatives could be delegated to the organisation. A clear borderline between the executive responsibility of the Secretary General and the organisation, and the overseeing, guiding and controlling responsibility of the board would benefit SHC going forward. Clear-cut responsibilities and accountability serves the organisation insofar as strengthening the overall competence and resource distribution.

The audit procedures of SHC should be expanded to include the Belgrade operation. Further, systemised control activities, coordinated with the auditing process, should be directed to the project sphere. Control initiatives should include economic and legal issues and in order not to stretch cost increases too far, the present consultants retained by SHC could be used for this purpose. Coordination with the SHC ordinary auditing functions however is key.

The initiated decentralisation of field resources is a correct direction of the organisational growth and one we believe could be further enhanced. At the operational level we see a need for instituting stronger policies and guidelines for issues concerning shareholdings and asset investments in projects and this combined with the specialisation of a few support persons and access to outside legal support will eliminate future problems.

1. Programme Context

1.1 The development context of the SHC

SHC, The Swedish Helsinki Committee, was organised to monitor the observance of human rights according to the Helsinki Final Act of 1975 and other relevant international human rights laws and norms. The Committee also is engaged in the growth and strengthening of democratic development in prior and present repressive states by providing support to individuals and organisations working for human rights and a civilian society built on law.

1.2 Overview and history of SHC

Since the signing of the Helsinki Final Act, a total of 41 national, independent and non-government committees and cooperating human rights groups have evolved and The International Helsinki Federation in Vienna is the joint representative body of the network.

Brief overview

The Swedish Helsinki Committee for Human Rights was founded in 1982 and today the committee has some 160 members. Members of the SHC represents a broad variety of professional backgrounds such as members of The Swedish Parliament, industry, unions, the academic world, media and various other organisations. The Board of Directors, appointed by the Annual Meeting, leads and oversees the work of the Secretariat, situated in Stockholm and the field operations in Belgrade, Skopje and Sarajevo. In 2003 the total SHC budget is 32,6 Mkr of which the dominating share is geared to former Yugoslavia. Other countries of engagement are Albania, Moldavia and Belarus and as part of the basic assignment of all Helsinki committees, a domestic Swedish focus warrants reporting as well as activities.

Areas of interest and activities

SHC's main objective to develop the democratic society is primarily exercised through project work in the Balkans and Eastern Europe by direct project engagements. On balance the organisation has a portfolio of 50–75 projects annually and the projects cover media, human rights, civil society building activities and culture. Traditionally, and especially in the Balkans, a large share of the financial commitments have targeted media development within the field of newspapers, TV and radio. However, in recent years, and in the light of a today more developed media structure in the Balkans, SHC has moved more in the direction of human rights support and strengthening of the civil society. However, going forward it is expected that media support still will be needed in regions where strong nationalism or other influences prohibit independent and objective distribution of public information – an area of support which SHC in their own terminology describes as “political support”.

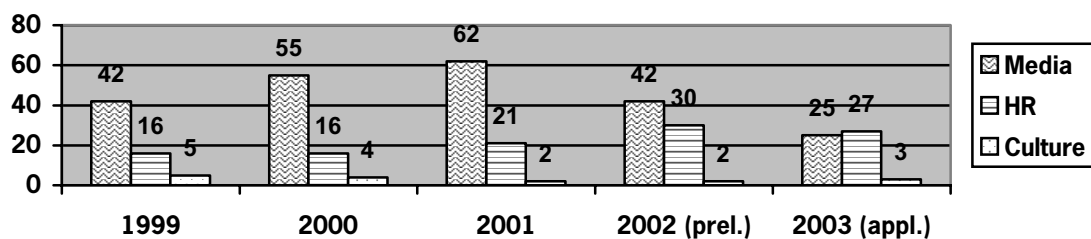
In addition to the core activities, SHC provides reports for authorities and organisations involved with human rights issues and fact-finding missions to several countries and especially where the organisation is active with projects.

Distribution of funds

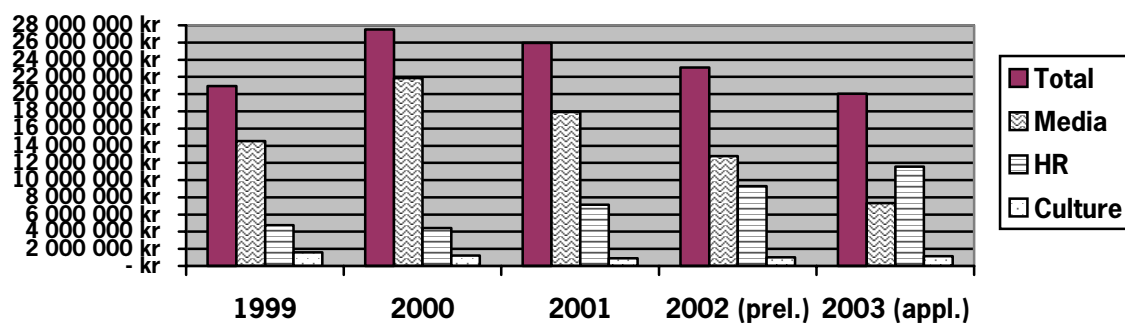
Since 1999, media funding has consumed the majority of SHC funds and until 2001 more than 50%. In the same period human rights (including civil society building activities) is the second area of engagement and culture the third. From 2000, the distribution has changed with human rights projects taken an increasing share of overall funds and media being gradually reduced. Culture responds only to a minor share and in any one year not exceeding 10%.

Since 1999 Serbia has been the largest receiver with 35% of funds in 1999 and 40% in 2003 of the fund programme excluding costs of the Belgrade office. Bosnia-Herzegovina is the second target area in size with 31% in 1999 and 19% in 2003. Remaining regions are Croatia (15% in 1999 and 12% in 2003), Kosovo (5% in 1999 and 11% in 2003), Montenegro, Macedonia and Albania.

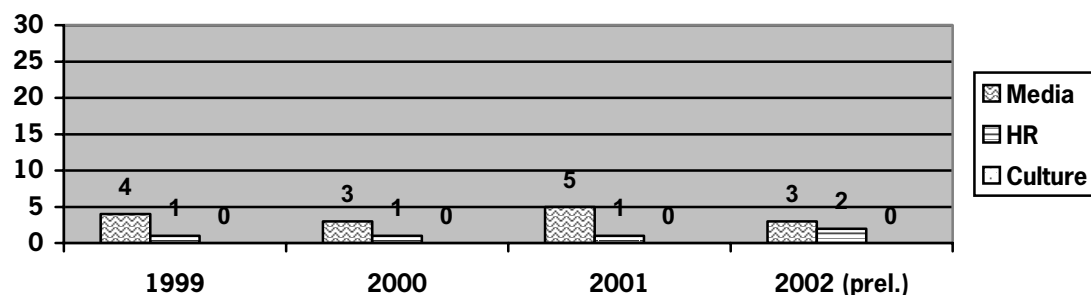
**Project distribution (EU+Sida)
Western Balkan 99-02 (no of projects)**



Distribution of funds (EU+Sida) Western Balkan 99-02 (SEK)



Project distribution Macedonia 99-02 (no of projects)



Forms of activities

SHC's initiatives over the years have been translated in to many forms. In general all activities are channelled together with or through Non-Government Organizations (NGO's) and in most instances in cooperation with other donor organisations, aid organisations, NGO's or government bodies. Examples of initiative forms are development loans such as the cooperation with the Media Development Loan Fund (MDLF) in Prague, the International Media Fund (IMF) cooperation with other international donors i Macedonia, direct economic support to media, human rights and culture projects, economic support to organisations in the field of media, training initiatives for journalists, lawyers and police, seminars, studies and publishing of reports and participation in the development of legislation such for example in Belarus.

History of geographical engagements

Since 1994 a large share of the SHC engagements has been directed to former Yugoslavia including Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Macedonia. By 2000, following years of cooperation with IHF and other national Helsinki Committees, the first project in Belarus, funded by Sida, was initiated. In 2002 Moldova and Albania was added to the list of engagements.

Financial highlights and funding of SHC

The largest contributor of funds for the committee over its existence has been Sida, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, but also other financial sponsors such as the OSCE, The Council of Europe, The Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Swedish Institute and The Bonnier Group have contributed. In the years of 1999 through 2002, the total income of SHC was 122,5 Mkr of which Sida contributed 112,8 Mkr responding to a share of 92%. For the year of 2003 32,6 Mkr has been granted SHC of which 32,0 Mkr from Sida.

All in all, in the five-year period from 1999 through 2003, SHC has handled total funds of ca 155 Mkr of which 93% is financed by Sida.

Organisational development

Gerald Nagler heads the Board of Directors since 1997 and the rest of the board consists of directors with extensive experience from the Balkans and/or other competencies within the field of interest of the SHC. No remunerations are paid to members of the board other than compensation for expenses incurred as part of direct assignments for SHC.

The organisation is administered through a Secretariat located in Stockholm. In addition, a Belgrade field office managed by Ann-Marie Boström was established in 2001. In 2003 two satellite offices, Skoplje and Sarajevo, are being established in order to further strengthen the field presence. The personnel resources of SHC are furnished by full or part time employees and partly through outsourcing. At present the organisation retains 12 employees and 3 outsourcing arrangements for accounting respectively legal services.

Several key people have been with the organisation for a long period. Besides Gerald Nagler being the Chairman, most of directors as well as key personnel have extensive experience from work with SHC. Robert Hårdh, the Secretary General of the committee, Ann-Marie Boström, retired in 2003 but previously the Belgrade field office manager and prior to that a long tenure with the board, Marie Månson, the present Programme Coordinator, Natasha Jevtic Esbjörnson, the head of the Belgrade field office and finally the accounting function staff in Stockholm.

1.3 Description of SHC objectives

The Constitution of SHC defines the mission and activity areas of the committee. In §1 it is stated that the mission of the Committee is to monitor the observance of basic human rights and freedom in the states that joined the Helsinki Document of 1975.

The overall objective of the SHC activities is the build-up of a democratic society in the Balkans and East-Europe. A sustainable civil society providing an environment of a just legal system and human rights also for minorities requires access to information and freedom of expression.

With reference to the two geographic main areas of interest to SHC, three objectives are mentioned as key (ref. SHC website), the development of the civilian society, a renewed media structure and finally improved respect of human rights.

2. The Evaluation; Methodology

2.1 Reasons for and scope and focus of the evaluation

Sida, being an organisation ultimately financed by tax receipts, carries a responsibility towards the Swedish parliament, the government and the citizens of Sweden. The use of funds and coherence with objectives set is the foundation for periodical review of performance of organisations financed by Sida. In addition, a new framework agreement in between Sida and SHC is considered for coming years. In such a perspective Sida has decided to perform an extensive evaluation of past years operations and performance by the SHC. The evaluation covers the programme 1999–2003.

According to the Terms of Reference for the evaluation of Swedish Helsinki Committee dated 2003-05-20, the purpose of the evaluation is to:

- Acquire more in-depth knowledge about SHC's organisation, organisational capacity, roles, administration, financial management, routines and decision processes etc.
- Make recommendations to Sida on future support and the organisation of the support (objectives, relevance, methodology, performance and administration). The evaluation should take into account changes in the relevant environment of the organisation.

The evaluation shall cover the programme carried out by SHC since 1999 and the co-operation with Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania.

2.2 Approaches and methods used in conducting the evaluation

Review areas and the Sida specifics

The evaluation requested by Sida should cover the overall scope of SHC's operational and organisational capabilities and resources. Further, specific request has pointed at how the formal and real selection and decision processes are performed, strategies including exit-strategies for co-operation, routines and formats of reporting processes in respect of projects, measurement of results and contractual formats applied. In regard of financial control request also has been made for administrative and financial routines, control systems and measurement systems. And finally the availability of resources, the organisational structure of SHC and the ultimate use of financial resources is made a priority for evaluation.

Finally Sida also has requested advise on specific issues such as shareholding and ownership of other assets, the use of additional funding parallel to Sida and in broad terms prerequisites and forms for future co-operation between Sida and SHC.

Methodology chosen

Such a broad and in-depth study requires an evaluation process that goes further than an ordinary review process. Evaluating SHC in the perspective of past performance and possible future design of co-operation needs considering the state of and possible development of the ultimate objectives.

The design of the evaluation process has been performed in such a way that the different angles of SHC are covered:

- The SHC operation and performance from the perspective of the “owner”.

SHC is an “economic association” by law and the ultimate forum for control is the Annual Meeting. We have reviewed the organisation with the legal organisation in mind.

SHC is financed by Sida to a very large extent. We have reviewed SHC from the Sida perspective given the specific prerequisites in the Terms of Reference and our understanding of Sida’s objectives.

- The SHC operation and performance from a “professional” perspective.

Processes, organisation, resource allocation, financial control and audit functions have been reviewed with the perspective of our view on a professional organisation.

- The SHC operation and performance from the “end-user perspective”.

The stated ultimate objectives vis-à-vis the actual allocation of funds, advice and other resources has been reviewed by evaluating the broad use of funds in the perspective of geography, class of projects and structure of projects.

Description of approach and methods applied

The findings and conclusions arrived at are based on five main sources of information, interviews with representatives of the SHC organisation, interviews with the auditors of SHC, interviews with outside parties, sample documentation and accounts and visits to project sites.

Interviews have been conducted with representatives of the board, management and organisation in Stockholm and Belgrade, the external and internal auditor, Sida representatives in Belgrade and Pristina, the Swedish Embassy in Sarajevo and the Helsinki Committee in Sarajevo.

Sample documentation represents SHC annual and periodic balance sheet and annual reports, bank statements, verifications of payments, project specifications, policies and guidelines.

Field visits have been conducted to projects in Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Details of interviews, projects visited and documentation are tabled in appendices.

Limitations of the study

A number of important limitations apply to this evaluation without restricting the objectives of the evaluation.

- The purpose and scope of the evaluation as stated in the Terms of Reference does not apply in full to individual projects
- The evaluation is not a financial audit of the SHC operations
- The evaluation does not include a financial or other audit of individual projects

3. Findings and recommendations

Structuring the results of our evaluation we have addressed six different sectors that captures the essence of the Sida specified evaluation requests. Topics or other issues specifically mentioned in the Terms of Reference or issues we specifically want to highlight have been added in separate paragraphs.

- a. Governance of SHC
- b. Organisation, management and operations of SHC
- c. Financial control and audit
- d. Project structure and projects
- e. Strategy
- f. Sida cooperation
- g. Recommendations for future framework agreement

3.1 Governance of SHC

The ownership function of an organisation such as SHC is conducted through the Annual Meeting and regulated by the SHC constitution. The Board of Directors and the Chairman of the Board is appointed by the Annual Meeting likewise the auditing functions. Ove Olsson employed by BDO Feinstein Revision AB, chartered accountants in Stockholm, conducts external and financial audit. Anita Gradin is appointed as the internal auditor and primarily overseeing that the work of the Board of Directors complies with the constitution and the direction given by the Annual Meeting.

The Annual Meeting being the supreme decision forum of the SHC consists of 170 individual members with a broad background of various societal functions, and representing various competencies. There is one regular meeting per year. Interviews have confirmed that the meetings attract only a limited number of members. We have also noted that by constitution the board has the right to decide on any new membership by 2/3rd majority with the possibility of review by the Annual Meeting.

The Board of Directors meets 4–5 times a year. The work by individual board members is pro-bono. The chairman Gerald Nagler, with a long record of experience with human rights issues through SHC and before with IHF in Vienna, has a major role in board and in the overall operations of SHC. Board members are all experienced from the Balkans and human rights and democracy issues, and three of the present members have served more than 4 years.

Documentation from the board meetings 1999–2003 provides an impression that also is confirmed in interviews with board members. There are 4–5 recorded meetings per year but normally there is a monthly summon of the members. In addition, members exercise yearly visits to selected projects in the field. By record, the bulk of discussions in the board are directed to individual projects, report from the field and other issues. Economic issues have gradually over the last years been given more adequate room at board meetings. In the end of the year the annual application for funds from Sida is discussed and serves as a strategy foundation for operations. However, a broader and in-depth analysis and discussions on the longer term strategy, likewise evaluation and performance measurement of the overall portfolio of projects, are lacking at least as far as recorded. Decision processes on individual projects are centralised in large to the board, and it is our impression that it is not uncommon with direct involvement by the board in operational matters.

The appointed auditor conducts annual audits. Auditing is pro bono. Since 1999 all annual audit reports to the Annual Meeting have been clean. As all accounting is centralised to the Stockholm office, auditing procedures are exercised there. No auditing activities have been exercised at the field level, on projects or the Belgrade operation. In an interview with the auditor, he verifies a good order with accounts and overall economic administration. Further, contract procedures are applied in project financing and the sense that the organisation “does not hesitate to inform of bad results” gives comfort to the general positive assessment.

An internal audit function was institutionalised in 2002 to ensure compliance with the constitution and general governance issues. The interview with the internal auditor underlines the need for more stringent board processes but also a statement that SHC in larger degree should move in the direction of human rights and the building of the civil society.

Recommendations

SHC has over the years grown and developed in professionalism, much through far reaching personal engagement by the chairman, the board and a talented and committed organisation. At the same time we recognise that SHC, as a small organisation, is handling a sizeable annual budget consisting of a large number of sophisticated projects in a geographically large and emerging nation building area.

Going forward it is essential that a systemic change of the governance model is executed. The role of the Annual Meeting should be enhanced thus allowing for a real “ownership” to be exercised. The board of directors should shoulder much more of guiding and overseeing the organisation by means of long-term funding strategies, constant adaptation and strengthening of the organisation. Permanent performance measurement and effective control also has to be part of the board agenda.

A strict division between the Secretary Generals and managements operational responsibility, and the boards guiding and control responsibilities, would benefit SHC’s overall strength. A renewed and clear mandate distribution as regards project investments and other expenditures between the board and the Secretary General should be launched. Further, in order to reduce the operative burden on the board, a larger number of project decisions should be authorised by the secretariat at the same time as large or new types of projects must be the privilege of the a board of directors.

There is a need for strengthened and broadened audit and control measures. Many initiatives include complex involvement in funding of emerging companies and as a consequence sophisticated share-holding agreements. Also it is not acceptable that ongoing control at the field level is exercised by the same organisation that manages the respective project. We recommend the introduction of a system for field and project audits coordinated with SHC’s ordinary auditor. SHC audits could also be organized through joint operations between SHC and Sida, where, as we understand, auditing resources now has been disbursed to at least some of the field offices. Such a system we realise would be “extra-ordinary” but at the same time Sida’s share of SHC funding is so large that it could be motivated.

In a system as described it is essential that enhanced systems of reporting, performance measurement and evaluation and control is introduced. Samples extracted in this evaluation clearly show that SHC has high standards of documentation and information. However, performance measurement needs to be introduced and reports standardised and packaged in such a way that allows for an Annual Meeting or more so the board to use it for periodical assessment and strategic consideration.

Board procedures, and among them, documentation of board meetings need improvement. All material presented to the board for decision should be recorded as well as decisions of any kind so that it is possible to reconstruct the full circumstances of decisions.

Finally, with regard to the constitution of the organisation, we do not believe it serves the objectives of an organisation such as SHC to allow the board to basically control membership and thereby indirectly influence the Annual Meeting. This change was introduced in recent years and for reasons yet unknown to us.

3.2 Organisation, management and operations of SHC

The Secretary General manages the organisation and reports to the board of directors. The Stockholm secretariat fulfils the role of a head office responding to core functions such as budgeting, accounting and programme control and programme coordination. In addition individual country managers are employed at the secretariat. The field office in Belgrade has functioned as a field office for the Balkans and in addition the direct country management of Serbia and Montenegro. In addition one person handling MDLF education programmes is employed at the office. All in all SHC employ 12 people of which 5 in Belgrade. Total cost of staff is ca 6–7% of overall budget.

This autumn an organisational change is underway as far as the introduction of satellite offices in Skopje and Sarajevo plus the addition of another project coordinator.

The central accounting function in Stockholm is organised on a consulting basis likewise the Belgrade economy administration. Belgrade also has retained a legal consultant on part time basis.

Substantiated by interviews, by sample documentation and by specific information requests in Stockholm and Belgrade, overall administrative order in terms of systematic order and documentation is good. Managements and the staffs' insight in operations and projects is overall good. The central programme control function in Stockholm has a tight hand on operations, individual engagements and economics. Our visit to the Belgrade office, in light of the management change now being exercised, does not reveal a real weakening. The new management and the fact that core staff functions are in place speak for good continuity.

At the same time there is generally a lack of periodical and systematic follow-up on development of projects in regard of project objectives. Activities are monitored but not systematically evaluated. We believe in introducing a renewed model for evaluation. This should be a model that could be condensed and applied to regions or to different types of initiatives. This would benefit the board and the annual meeting in the evaluation process.

The organisation of SHC decision structure is formally very centralised to the board. In parallel, the present mandate structure in between Sida and SHC, effectively make Sida the real decision maker on individual projects as well as on the annual project structure. The annual application process for funding by Sida in effect makes Sida decide on 75% of overall funds and of the remaining 25% any project exceeding 500 000 kr requires Sida decision. In regard of the real decision making structure, interviews and discussions reveals a different picture. A few key people in the overall organisation have controlled project funding and possibly too much has been controlled by individual board members. One reason for this may also be that SHC, internally, follows the rule that no project exceeding 100 000 kr cannot be decided upon without the consent of the board.

Today's organisational structure with centralised core functions, a strengthened Belgrade field office and the satellite offices in Skopje and Sarajevo is adequate as far as structure and mission of SHC. However we observe of lack of clarity as far as management responsibility in between Stockholm and Belgrade. Further, resource allocation is an issue that need considerations. Management responsibility in regard of personnel, project supervision and regions need clarification to provide for a higher degree of accountability. The large concentration of projects in terms of funds invested and complexity to one key individual in Belgrade is another concern.

Finally we have confirmed through field visits and samples of project documentation, several cases where contracted asset investments have not been activated in the balance sheet of SHC. Direct question to economy staff and auditor confirms that the balance sheet carry no activated assets. Our review has identified projects involving shareholding issues or ownership distribution issues, that need strengthened monitoring and/or policy control and specialist support.

Recommendations

A discussion within SHC is pending on future organisation. We suggest that in the perspective of such plans some critical enhancements should be considered.

A clear distribution of mandates should be defined in between the manager of Belgrade, the programme control function and the Secretary General in regard of project finance decisions. A more stringent decision process where proposals and decisions, according to size and complexity, are distributed to the chain of management would strengthen accountability and clarity. In parallel management responsibility vis-à-vis individual staff, project management and regions needs clarification. Transparent and simple authority levels are recommended.

An improved resource allocation, especially with regard to the Serbia/Montenegro portfolio is recommended. Large concentration of engagements with any one person is counterproductive in terms of necessary focus and control. In addition to improved distribution of project responsibility we also recommend to include a system with permanent “back-up” staff to individual project engagements.

To support the handling of complex asset and owner or share distribution engagements we recommend the introduction of strict policies, guidelines and mandatory technical support. Assets of any kind, owned by SHC, shall be accounted for according to established accounting rules, and any engagement in such investments should warrant qualified technical assistance based on a firm SHC policy. In order not to materially increase overall expenses we suggest expanded use of presently retained legal and accounting advisors.

Realising the challenge of evaluating SHC project funding, we suggest that a systematic and transparent format of performance measuring of projects is introduced. Such a system would enhance accountability and transparency of the SHC and possibly sharpen the professionalism of the organisation. Referring to our recommendations for governance such a system also is needed to support a more strategic role of the board.

SHC staff costs have increased from 4% to some 6–7% in 2002 and primarily because of the opening of the Belgrade office. However, we do not believe that the expense portion of administering the annual 32 Mkr is excessive. Enhanced audit and quality control measures and continued distribution of personnel resources to the Balkan will most likely show adequate “pay-back” in terms of project performance.

3.3 Financial control and audit

The accounting needs of SHC is fairly “straightforward” and the total number of transactions only 700–750 per year of which about 200 refer to projects. All accounting is handled in Stockholm. Transactions derived from the Belgrade office are administered in Belgrade and sent to Stockholm on a monthly basis without delay. Monthly balance sheets are exercised including reconciliation of bank accounts.

Accounting for the SHC is since 1996 handled by an experienced consultant who, confirmed also by our interview with the auditor, has good control of the accounting, payment and documentation

procedures. Administration of the Belgrade transactions is since 2001 managed by a qualified economy consultant.

The Belgrade office does not administer or make payments in regard of projects. All project-related accounting or payments are centralized. Belgrade has two bank accounts and monthly withdrawals of cash are exercised for immediate payments. Any advance payments for travel requires signed receipts. Monthly, normally before the 5th of month, verifications and a summary of transactions are sent to Stockholm by mail and postal service.

All payments from Stockholm are electronic requiring two signatures. One observation we made, which is a weakness in the system, is that even large payments can be authorized without the signing of the Secretary General. Effectively this means that two same employees could exercise the whole chain of a funding decision and payments.

The regular system for audit is described and commented in the governance chapter 4a. Interviews with staff in Belgrade revealed one known case of fraud detected by an audit launched by the SHC organization in Belgrade. Auditing or control measures other than performed by SHC's own staff is not conducted on a regular basis as far as projects. This fact poses in our view a significant risk, as the organization basically is "self-controlled" with regard to project funding. One example of this is the observation we have made concerning inactivated assets such as computers and other equipment.

Recommendations

It is essential that a systemized project audit and control system be introduced to SHC. Because of the large number of projects, the complexity of many projects and the geographical distribution, the control system should be designed in such a fashion that audits are "high-profile", directed to all regions and to the less transparent projects. The project audit system should be well coordinated and discussed with the SHC regular auditor, but also available as a tool for management in Belgrade and Stockholm. Coordination with local Sida representatives in some cases could be considered.

We believe audit and control services could be retained in Belgrade at reasonable quality and cost with support and coordination with the SHC audit organization in Stockholm.

The payment authority system in Stockholm should be strengthened in terms of eliminating the possibility for two identical employees to decide and exercise payments.

3.4 Project structure and projects

Annually SHC manages some 50–75 projects in the area of Western Balkans. The projects are distributed to Serbia (25), Bosnia-Herzegovina (11), Kosovo (9), Croatia (6), Montenegro (5), Macedonia (4) and Albania (7) plus one regional (2003 projects). The share of media projects has since the peak in 2001 (73%) decreased to 45% while MR-projects increased from 25% to 49% indicating a clear shift of strategy. Culture funding respond only to a minor share in numbers and financially.

In 2003 a new type of project was initiated. The so-called Resource Centres are established throughout Serbia. Total annual operating cost is 2,3 Mkr ca responding to almost 30% of the full Serbia funding. The concept is new in that Resource Centers directly aim at being "citizen associations" working with "social empowerment". They serve the function as municipal activity centers for NGO's and also providers of other services such as computer facilities and niche libraries.

SHC, as a principle with few exceptions, sponsor projects in partnership with other organizations. The reason explained is that this reduces project's dependency on anyone fund organization. Another consequence is that cooperation and transparent funding provides for enhanced control possibilities.

Finally, SHC apply a strategy of sponsoring projects outside the big cities. The consequence of this is a large geographical distribution and a large number of projects.

Recommendations

The strategy shift to more of human rights (MR) projects increases difficulties of performance measurement and evaluation. This however is no reason to withhold from creating standardized and systemized system of quality measurement. The substantial volume of funds distributed through SHC, and the ultimate objectives of Sida and SHC, deserves permanent and diligent performance control for two reasons.

- Systematic performance measurement will turn attention of SHC staff more in direction of results than activities
- Performance measurement serves as a structured platform for annual revision of strategy

The SHC organization is small considering the size and scope of operations. In some cases we have observed an unnecessary concentration of project assignments to one person. In our opinion a reduction of the number of engagements certainly would provide for more ample time for each project and thus increased quality and control. Consequently each project would carry larger average funding making SHC's share and relative influence greater. An additional benefit also worthwhile considering is that this would provide for SHC to add more of consulting/education to projects apart of funding.

An alternative to this approach would be to add one or two employees locally at the field level in the Balkans. The increased cost would serve as a means of strengthening the overseeing and controlling capabilities of SHC and thus enhance results.

Along the same lines we recommend that more of the projects should be underwritten by SHC as the sole party. Certainly we recognize some of the benefits of project funding underwritten by joint sponsors but such an approach makes SHC more of "banking" organization than one adding funds and know-how. Our findings also show, in some cases, that funding partnerships are prolonging the decision processes and also can complicate things because of differences in strategy among partners.

We recommend the analysis of such a go-alone-strategy and a test on a limited scale in regions where experienced personnel is at hand. Some of these ideas are also circulating among the field officers of Sida in the region who are stressing the importance of controlling individual projects.

Formally every contract between SHC and the beneficiarys should contain project objectives as well as measurement procedures. That is not the case today.

3.5 Strategy

Over the years SHC donor strategy has developed through discussions between a limited number of persons within the core group of SHC members, historically primarily between the chairman Gerald Nagler and the former head of the Belgrade office, Ann-Marie Boström.

Direct support to newly created and independent media organizations in the postwar-period in the Balkans was looked upon as one of the most efficient ways to strengthen a democratic development and boost economic recovery. Fact finding missions, a deliberate search for people who could be trusted and projects that were realistic (and had a chance to survive) led in the late 90's to a dominant effort from SHC in the field of direct media support, although efforts in the fields of human rights, civil society building activities and culture always played important parts in the strategy of the organization. One example of this is the vital work SHC has fulfilled in creating other Helsinki Committees in the

region. Simply put, you could say that SHC, Sida and large parts of the international donor environment played a political role in supporting a media “resistance movement” against repressive regimes, nationalism and the division of people along ethnical lines.

With the beginning of the new century at least formal democracies (in most cases supported by the international community) were becoming stronger in the region and gradually (partly because of this and partly because the international donor community began shifting activities away from the Balkans to other areas; i. e. Afghanistan, East Timor and now Iraq) SHC and other donors found that direct media support had to be diminished. Even if the markets were not yet mature most of the newly created independent media organizations had to become more market oriented and find their ways to self-sustainability.

So gradually, starting primarily in 2002, SHC efforts tilted over more to human rights and civil society building activities with less emphasis on direct media support, even if it still exists. Media support is today more directed to what in the SHC vocabulary is called “structural media support, i. e. training for journalists or media managers, media law enforcement activities and still – direct support to local/regional newspapers or electronic media who can not live off the market but should be supported for political reasons or because they are minority orientated.

It should be noted that these considerations on the SHC strategy couldn't be found in documentation. We have not found any basic strategy papers, nor is it noted in the protocols from board meetings or annual meetings how these strategies have been formed. It is our understanding that strategy, again, is formed on discussions between core members of SHC, some members of the board, the secretariat and the field office in Belgrade.

The outcome of these discussions has since 2002 been part of the application paper that is going to Sida in december each year, where also country-by-country strategy has been introduced as well as donor- cooperation strategy and a broadened strategy on minority support, for instance to sexual minorities.

A simplified summary of the basic strategic SHC guidelines – based on the yearly applications to Sida, project studies/visits and/or our discussions with members of the board, the secretariat in Stockholm and the field office in Belgrade – give us, point by point, the following SHC strategy as of september 2003:

- Direct media support – primarily to “old customers” who SHC has been supporting for a long time and who are close to self-sustainability or need political support (but may never be able to survive on the market)
- Structural media support – training, local/regional, media law, minorities etc (see above).
- International donor cooperation – SHC has been emphasising this need to work closely with other donors or NGO:s to increase the possibility for projects to go on “their own” when donors leave them.
- Human Rights – away from the big cities, find local partners, work with youth for youth, ethnic and other minorities, i. e sexual and handicaped.
- Human Rights – focus on returnees and internally displaced persons, cross-border initiatives (especially in the light of many big donor organisations who are withdrawing from this area)
- Civil Society Building activities – forming Resource Centers where NGO:s and local authorities can cooperate, finding and supporting local initiatives directed towards children and minorities.

SHC is now in the process of evaluating and discussing this strategy. During the fall of 2003 an investigative process is under way, led by the programme director Marie Månsson at the secretariat in Stockholm and Erik Esbjörnson at the field office in Belgrade. A “fact finding mission” has been started to map out the long-term needs of the different countries in the fields of human rights, media and culture.

So far, during 2003, initiatives have been taken to get “closer to the field”, which is why two officers are sent out to field offices in Skopje and Sarajevo during the coming months.

Recommendations

Notable from our work with documentation, interviews and field visits is that there are a number of issues that have to be penetrated during this revision of strategy. Our findings show that these are of vital importance:

- Whatever the outcome of these strategy discussions they should be presented as a strategy platform, discussed and decided on by the board and the Annual Meeting if the charter of SHC should have any relevance. This strategy should also be broken down into country-by-country assessments since conditions may differ in the area (which has also been done to a certain degree in the 2003 application to Sida)
- Asset management – as already mentioned there are computers, transmitters, and radio- and television equipment spread over the region that belong to the SHC but are not activated in the balance sheet. A policy on this has to be implemented with strict guidelines for asset management
- Ownership issues – during our interviews it has been stated by members of the board that individuals, for instance in the field of media support, should not be able to enrich themselves because of donor grants that helped them to build a business. Again, strict guidelines have to be implemented on project levels and in contract discussions of how to handle future ownership distribution.
- International donor cooperation – in relation to what is already mentioned above we have also found that there are cases when it is sometimes difficult to decide who is the real “owner” of a project (including assets) or, when problem arises, who is to be the “problemsolver”. With the project coordinations through IMF in Macedonia, for example, who is the legal entity behind the combined donor activities? Another example is the economical irregularities in the Bor Resource Center in Serbia, where there were differences between SHC and its partner DFID in how to tackle this. This area needs policy discussions.
- Targeting and measuring projects – although media support can be difficult to evaluate there are still measurements at hand; circulation, ratings, economical progress, advertising, impact on public debate etc. With a tilting SHC strategy away from direct media support to human rights, civil society building activities and culture, we feel a strengthened need, in strategy terms, of targeting projects, goal setting and evaluation. In short: this partly new strategy needs a clear vision-targeting projects-goal-setting-evaluation-exit strategy process that is more defined than at present.
- The “political support” dimension – from discussions with Sida and embassy staff in the field, it is our understanding that there is sometimes a gap between the SHC vision of strategy lines or specific project visions and the Sida/embassy knowledge of these visions. To a large extent this gap is connected to projects in the category of political support. Some examples may be the view on private media support vs. public service media support in Bosnia or the SHC support to a glossy women’s magazine in Kosovo. We feel that if project support is clearly based on a strategic platform and this is clearly communicated through the channels of SHC, Sida and the Foreign Ministry, this gap would not exist.

- Strategic focus – as part of the strategy considerations we would also recommend some analysis of focus. With 50–75 projects each year, whereof relatively small amounts of money are disbursed to individual projects, we find that there is an obvious risk that SHC may become more of a “banker” or an NGO-employment facility than an activating donor. This may happen because it can be difficult to oversee the process of implementation-goals-exit strategies for so many small projects. One solution to this could be to concentrate resources on fewer projects and allocate more time to these, as we have mentioned earlier. Another is to clearly define – especially in the field of human rights and civil society building activities – what is the expected outcome of a specific project. Many of the NGO: s in this area are looking for new projects to sustain the NGO: s more than working for improved human rights or civil awareness. Since the whole idea of the SHC/Sida-financed activities in this field – in the long run – is to make the NGO: s redundant, more emphasis within the projects should be put on lobbying the local and regional authorities to take over responsibility for projects and people.

3.6 Sida cooperation

Sida’s 93% financing share of SHC’s operations effectively makes SHC an entrepreneur operating on behalf of Sida. Operations are tightly controlled as far as project funding by the fact that 75% of annual contributions is formally decided by Sida on a project-by-project basis. In addition, project funding within the remaining 25% share is controlled by a Sida authority/reporting schedule. Further, Sida, through a network of staff locally in the Balkans, has the resources to monitor ongoing activities.

Recommendations

SHC has the staff competence, experience and skills necessary to perform as an organization operating in the interest of Sida. Providing that SHC exercises the “systemic enhancement” we recommend, it is also our opinion that a much higher degree of decision authority should be delegated to SHC. Such a change likely would benefit the quality and the accountability of the organization and thus the intent of Sida. Annually, and based on the evaluation of local Sida staff as well as Sida in Stockholm, results of activities would be discussed, evaluated and form the basis for continued funding.

By strengthening the governance quality of SHC, strengthening the strategic approach, installing systematic audit and control measures and adequate performance measurement systems, Sida would control the use of funding by annual strategic discussions, periodic reports and a tighter contact in between the two organizations, especially at the field level. This recommendation is discussed more in detail in previous chapters 4a–4e.

At the same time it is of importance that SHC widen its funding sources thereby reducing the present dependency on Sida. Total reliance for funding on one source can implicitly create a situation that ties both organizations too close thereby reducing a healthy “arms-length” atmosphere. A reasonable target for the next three-year period is that the Sida share of overall funding should decrease to less than 75%.

Finally we also like to highlight the fact of the SHC capital base. It is necessary that SHC is allowed to maintain a capital base larger than present. A major change of funding strategy from any sponsor might have severe financial consequences because of downsizing needs. An adequate capital strength would serve both the interest of SHC and implicitly Sida in terms of providing economic room for structural or other sudden changes.

4. Lessons learned

Our evaluation of SHC has revealed some experiences we have reason to believe might exist also elsewhere in similar organizations and NGO environments. Our approach to the assignment has been to use our industrial experiences from governance, management and control and apply them to the SHC environment still recognizing the generic differences that exist.

The generally centralized decision environment obviously has some benefits but also creates a false sense of control. Instead we tend to believe that organizations such as SHC should be stimulated to develop in a direction where operational decision authority is pushed down to the operative level while strategies, organizational control and other resource distribution is retained within the board. Such a structure will enhance accountability and competence within the organization at the same time as the board members can focus at providing objectives and resources based on periodical evaluations.

The strong personal commitment we have sensed from all discussions with staff is of course the very foundation of an organization such as SHC. However, we also have a very clear sense that the organization is too focused on activities instead of looking at the outcome, results of initiatives. This is reflected not only in the absence of measurement systems but also in the many interviews we had. We believe that a shift towards more of result orientation should be pursued and that this has to be supported by Sida as well as from the governing bodies of the organization.

Finally we believe that there would be benefits from reducing the number of engagements and gradually take a position of fewer but larger engagements. Such an approach would allow more time for project officers. A general sense is that the mere numbers of initiatives per officer effectively reduces reasonable insight and control. In our view, the cost structure of SHC is far from excessive and definitely not an area in need of other attention than present. Rational efforts of keeping costs under control should instead be balanced by looking at productivity and results.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Terms of Reference for the Evaluation

Appendix 2 List of persons interviewed

Appendix 3 List of documentation and other references

Appendix 4 Timing of interviews and project visits

Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

1 Background

The Swedish Helsinki Committee (SHC) has been active in the field of human rights and democracy in the Western Balkans for many years and has been receiving financial support from Sida for its activities since the mid-nineties. The support has primarily been geared towards the areas of independent media, but also human rights in general. The overall objective of SHC's development work is to contribute towards a democratic development in the Western Balkan countries. This means creating conditions for access to professionally produced balanced information, but also improving the general situation for human rights. Access to information and freedom of expression, as well as respect for human rights in general and minority rights in particular are not only objectives per se, but also constitute preconditions for a democratic development as well as for social and economic progress.

SHC has a general strategy for the entire region, which is then enhanced through country-specific assessments and priorities. A change from earlier years is a realignment of partner focus. SHC has previously been working more with international donors present in the area.

Since 1999, SHC has enjoyed a framework agreement with Sida, which gives them the possibility to plan for a number of years in advance. In 1999 the framework agreement was at 23 MSEK and in 2000 an agreement was signed on a three years period on 25,5 MSEK a year. This year, 2003, Sida has allocated 32 MSEK for the work of SHC. In addition to this, SHC also works as a partner for assessments with regard to the media management programme, implemented by MDLF with Sida funds.

When Sida and SHC entered into the framework agreement it was decided that evaluations should be performed on regular basis. Sida has a responsibility towards the Swedish parliament, government and to the citizens to follow how the Swedish financing is used and the coherence with the development co-operation goals. Since no evaluation has been performed of SHC since 1999, Sida finds it suitable to perform a more extensive evaluation now, as Sida considers to enter into a new kind of framework agreement with SHC. This agreement would give SHC more own responsibility to decide on projects and make financial commitments within a given financial yearly frame from Sida. Sida will base the decision to support the programme on SHC's strategy, guidelines and policy rather than on detailed description of small projects.

Due to this new idea of co-operation Sida wants to evaluate the co-operation so far and use the knowledge from the evaluation as a base for further discussions regarding this new concept.

2 Purpose and Scope of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is to:

- acquire more in-depth knowledge about SHC's organisation, organisational capacity, roles, administration, financial management, routines and decision processes etc.
- make recommendations to Sida on future support and the organisation of the support (objectives, relevance, methodology, performance and administration). The evaluation should take into account changes in the relevant environment of the organisation.

The evaluation shall cover the programme carried out by SHC since 1999 and the co-operation with Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania.

3 The Assignment (issues to be covered in the evaluation)

Organisation and structure of SHC:

- What does the formal (and informal) structure look like? Roles of the programme officers in Stockholm versus the field office and the Board? Responsibilities? Delegation of responsibilities? The general set-up of the SHC organisation and the chain of command?
- Where do the decisions take place within the SHC structure? Policy decision? Decisions on new projects, new areas etc? Are the decisions anchored in the whole organisation (counterparts, field office and headquarter)? Concretely: what is the role of the Board versus the offices?
- To what extent do strategies for the co-operation exist? The process of elaboration of the existing strategies? Does SHC have an exit strategy for its co-operation?
- What does the selection process related to new projects and new co-operation partners look like? What kind of parameters do SHC use when assessing the projects? Logical Framework Approach (LFA)?
- Which are the routines for reporting by the partners to SHC (narrative and financial reporting)? How often do the different parties report? What kind of reporting is provided?
- How do SHC measure the results? What is SHC looking at while assessing the results?
- How do the agreement structure look like? Does SHC enter into agreements with the parties they support? How is the contractual relationship between SHC Stockholm and the Belgrade office, also with regard to individual employees?

Administration and budget

- What do the administrative and budget routines look like? Are the financial books kept in good order and disbursements and income promptly registered?
- How does SHC use the financial resources allocated through Sida?
- What kind of procedure and structure do SHC have for internal audit?
- What kind of structures/procedures do SHC have regarding follow-up and evaluation of projects/programme? How does SHC use the knowledge gained from the above mentioned tools to improve the assistance?
- Is the administrative capacity in Sweden dimensioned for the programme?
- Can one field office in Belgrade cover important issues in the entire region?

Other issues to be covered:

- To what extent does the SHC use other financial sources (EU and others) for this kind of co-operation? Are these financial resources well separated on a budget level from the Swedish support?
- How does SHC handle the ownership issue when purchasing equipment for i.e. radio stations? Does SHC retain ownership? How is the issue solved when SHC phases out its involvement? Are procurement guidelines followed when procuring?
- The relevance and sustainability of future co-operation and assistance from Sida. How shall possible future co-operation be directed in view of phasing out Swedish assistance? What possibilities are there for other ways of funding (EU etc.)? Make recommendations to Sida on future organisation of the support to SHC with regard to changes in goals, content, relevance methodology, performance/implementation, organisation, structure.

4 Methodology, Evaluation Team and Time Schedule

4.1 Method of work

The evaluation may consist of the following parts (the Consultant is encouraged to make amendments to the methodology or to propose an alternative approach):

- Documentation Study: Written documentation, including project proposals, reports and strategies, guidelines shall be studied. To collect the required material the Consultant will review relevant documentation at SHC in Stockholm and at the field office in Belgrade and Sida. Contact person in Stockholm is Mr. Robert Hårdh and in Belgrade the contact person is Ms. Ann-Marie Boström (until autumn 2003).
- Interviews with relevant actors, at SHC in Stockholm and at the field office in Belgrade as well as with counterparts in Western Balkans (to be clarified in the inception report).
- Field visits to at least five SHC projects in different Balkan countries.

The Consultant *shall* prepare an *inception report* and present this to Sida and SHC. The report shall clearly and concretely specify and motivate the approach and methods to be applied in performing the assignment. The Consultant shall also provide a detailed time and work plan for fulfilment of the assignment. The method of work shall be decided in co-operation with Sida.

4.2 Evaluation team

The Evaluation Team shall consist of two persons with substantial knowledge and experience in media and a person with knowledge in evaluation methodology and financial revision. It is desired that one of the persons in the team shall have experience from Western Balkans.

4.3 Time schedule

The inception report shall be presented to Sida not later than 1 week from the commencement of the assignment.

The Consultant shall in the inception report provide a detailed time, work plan and method of work for fulfilment of the assignment.

The time estimated for the fulfilment of the assignment is 5 man-weeks.

A draft report shall be presented to Sida not later than 15 September 2003.

4.4 Undertakings

The Consultant will be responsible for practical arrangements in conjunction with international missions and other visits. Sida will make available or cause to make available all written material (strategies, guidelines, reports, project documents, project completion reports, etc.) deemed to be of relevance to the evaluation by the Consultants and Sida. Responsible officer at Sida; Mr. Per Byman, will inform the SHC of the forthcoming evaluation.

5 Reporting

The evaluation report shall be written in English and should not exceed 30 pages, excluding annexes. Format and outline of the report shall follow the guidelines in **Sida Evaluation Report – a Standardised Format** (see Annex 1). The draft report shall be submitted to Sida electronically no later than 15 September 2003. Within two weeks after receiving Sida's comments on the draft report, a final version shall be submitted to Sida, again electronically and in two hard copies. The evaluation report

must be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing. Subject to decision by Sida, the report will be published in the series *Sida Evaluations*.

The following enclosures shall be attached to the final report:

- Terms of Reference
- List of persons interviewed
- List of documentation

Appendix 2 – List of persons interviewed

SHC organization and retained consultants

Gerald Nagler	Chairman of SHC	Stockholm
Eric Östberg	Member of the board	Stockholm
Jan af Sillén	Member of the board	Stockholm
Ann-Marie Boström	Ex Field office manager	(Belgrade)
Ove Olsson	Auditor, BDO	Stockholm
Anita Gradin	Internal auditor	Stockholm
Robert Hårdh	Secretary General	Stockholm
Marie Månsson	Programme Control	Stockholm
Birgitta Persson	Accountant, consultant	Stockholm
Natasha J. Esbjörnson	Field office Manager	Belgrade
Erik Esbjörnson	Programme coordination	Belgrade
Natalija Bratuljevic	Program officer	Belgrade
Mira Lubora	Accountant, consultant	Belgrade
Zoran Zivkovic	MDLF Projects, SHC	Belgrade
Milan C. Lukic	Lawyer, consultant	Belgrade

Sida staff

Snezana Nenadovic	Sida	Belgrade
Camilla Goldbeck-Löwe	Sida	Pristina
Christoffer Sjöholm	Sida	Pristina
Annika Palo	Sida	Skopje
Peeter Kaaman	Sida	Skopje
Bo Elding	Sida	Sarajevo
Marie Larsson	Sida	Sarajevo

Embassy staff

Anders Möllander	Swedish Embassy	Sarajevo
Andrés Jato	Swedish Embassy	Sarajevo

Projects

Tamara Gojkovic	Resource Center	Leskovac
Dobrosav Nesic	Radio Staff	Leskovac
Blerim Shala	Zeri daily/weekly	Pristina
Merita/Avne Dalipi	Qeshu Smile	Pristina
Armend Hamiti	Qeshu Smile	Pristina
Naim Breznica	Radio K	Kos.Polje
Mirjana Taskov	Sunrising	Sveti/Nik.
Tanja Popovic	IMF/Medienhilfe	Skopje
Violeta Gligovska	IMF/OPI	Skopje
Senad Pecanin	Dani	Sarajevo
Srdan Dizdarevic	HC-BiH	Sarajevo

Appendix 3 – List of documentation

Annual Reports 1999–2002

Minutes of meetings, board of directors SHC 2000–2003

Minutes of meeting, annual meeting SHC 2000–2002

2000, 2001 plan SHC

Regional strategy – Ideas for today and tomorrow

Interview recordings (see list of interviews)

Request documentation (specific questions)

Guideline for SHC personnel (authorities)

Organization chart, SHC

Funding schedule SHC 1999–2002

Balance sheet SHC June 30, 2003

Balance sheet sample account 672–696, debts suppliers Dec 2002

Balance sheet sample account 683–722, other debts Dec 2002

Balance sheet sample account 1041, payments projects January 2003

Bank statements SHC, June 30, 2003 (5)

Accounting comments acc 2398 (-98) and 2399 (-00, -01, -02), unfinished projects

Financial report Q1 2003 Stockholm Office

Financial report Q1 2003 Belgrade Office

Transaction summary Belgrade office May 2003

Diagrams project funding distribution 1999–2002

Project funding specifications 2000–2003 Balkan

Project proposals (2) January 2003

MDLF Program Officer & Training

Interim Report SHC support to MDLF media-training

Resource Center memorandum, ref Natalija Bratuljevic

Radio Staff documentation

Budget 6 months 2003, Radio Staff, Leskovac

Contracts and all of the latest project reports from the following projects:

Resource Center, Leskovac, Serbia

Radio Staff, Leskovac, Serbia

Zeri daily/weekly, Pristina, Kosovo

Qeshu Smile, Pristina, Kosovo

Radio K, Kosovo Polje, Kosovo

Sun Rising, Sveti Nikole, Macedonia

IMF, Skopje, Macedonia

Dani, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

BHC, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Appendix 4 – Timing of interviews and project visits

Initiation	Interview with Per Byman, Sida (LW)	2003-08-01
Board of Directors	Review of all records of board meetings	2003-08-12 – 2003-08-13
	Review of other key SHC documentation such as annual reports, records of Annual Meetings, constitution, certain correspondence, documentation of annual project applications to Sida etc	2003-08-14
Interviews with	Gerald Nagler (LW, LGN)	2003-08-19
	Eric Östberg (EÅ)	2003-08-28
	Jan af Sillén (EÅ)	2003-09-03
	Interviews conducted in Stockholm each one c:a 2 hrs	
Financial control /SHC	Analysis of annual reports, statistics and specific information from annual project applications	2003-08-14
	Interview with Birgitta Persson, accountant (LGN)	2003-08-20
	Analysis of requested financial statistics	
	5 sample statements of accounts SHB	
	Belgrade may 2003 statement	
	Balance sheet ref asset statement	
	Balance sheet ref bond investment/board	
	Mandates and authorities for payments etc	2003-08-20
	Interview with Robert Hårdh and Marie Månson (LGN)	2003-09-01
	Interview with Mira Lubora, acc. Belgrade (LGN)	2003-09-03
	Brief review of administration of books, verifications and cash handling in Belgrade	2003-09-04
Audit/control mechanisms	Interview with Ove Olsson, BDO (LGN)	2003-08-21
	Interview with Anita Gradin, internal auditor (LGN)	2003-08-20
	Interview with Mira Lubora, acc. Belgrade (LGN)	2003-09-03
	Interview with Milan C. Lukic, legal Belgrade (LGN)	2003-09-04
	Prior and later interviews Hårdh, Månson, Persson, (LGN, LW)	
	Interview with Olsson and Gradin at their respective Offices in Stockholm (LGN)	
	Interviews with Lubora and Lukic at the Belgrade office of SHC (LGN)	
Project management	Interview with Robert Hårdh, Secretary General (LGN)	2003-08-19
	Interview with Ann-Marie Boström, prior manager Belgrade field office (LW)	2003-09-01

Interview with Marie Månson, programme Coordinator (LW, LGN)	2003-09-01
Interview with Natasha J. Esbjörnson, Manager Belgrade field office (LGN)	2003-09-04
Interview with Erik Esbjörnson, Belgrade (LGN)	2003-09-04
Interview with Natalija Bratuljevic, Belgrade (LGN)	2003-09-03
Interview with Zoran Zivkovic, Belgrade(LGN)	2003-09-04
Interview with Snezana Nenadovic, Sida, Belgrade (LW, LGN)	2003-09-04
Detailed review of Radio Staff documentation	2003-09-04
Detailed review of Resource Center documentation	
Review of project record system, Belgrade	
Field visit to Resource Center and Radio Staff Projects in Leskovac, Serbia	2003-09-05
Interviews with Tamara Gojkovic, Resource Center and Dobrosav Nesic, Radio Staff (LW, LGN)	2003-09-05
Interview with Blerim Shala, director of Zeri, Pristina (LW)	2003-09-07
Interviews with Merita and Avne Dalipi and Armend Hamiti at Qeshu Smile, (LW)	2003-09-07
Interview with Naim Breznica, Radio K, Kosovo-Polje (LW)	2003-09-07
Interviews with Camilla Goldbeck-Löwe and Christoffer Sjöholm, Sida, Pristina (LW)	2003-09-07
Interviews with Annika Palo and Peeter Kaaman, Sida, Skopje (LW)	2003-09-08
Interview with Mirjana Taskov, Sunrising, Sveti Nikole (LW)	2003-09-08
Interviews with Tanja Popovic, IMF-Medienhilfe and Violeta Gligovska, OPI, Skopje (LW)	2003-09-08
Interviews with Bo Elding and Marie Larsson, Sida, Sarajevo (LW)	2003-09-09
Interviews with ambassador Anders Möllander and first secretary Andrés Jato, Swedish Embassy, Sarajevo(LW)	2003-09-10
Interview with Senad Pecanin, director of Dani, Sarajevo (LW)	2003-09-10
Interview with Srdan Dizdarevic, president of Helsinki Committee for Human Rights in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sarajevo (LW)	2003-09-10
After-the-field-visits – follow-up-interviews with the Belgrade SHC-office: Natasha Jevtic-Esbjörnson, Erik Esbjörnson and Natalja Bratuljevic	2003-09-11

Projects

A sample of the overall project portfolio of SHC was extracted. Projects surveyed represent a spread with regard to regions of the Balkans, the class of project and type of project. The inception report dated 2003-06-12 states that not less than 5 projects will be reviewed but we have decided to expand this to 9 projects.

Project review was exercised through field visits and by interviews with SHC account manager, project leader and reading extracts of documentation including reports from the projects and contracts signed between projects and SHC.

Resource Center, Leskovac, Serbia 03-09-05
Radio Staff, Leskovac, Serbia 03-09-05
Zeri daily/weekly, Pristina, Kosovo 03-09-07
Qeshu Smile, Pristina, Kosovo 03-09-07
Radio K, Kosovo Polje, Kosovo 03-09-07
Sun Rising, Sveti Nikole, Macedonia 03-09-08
IMF, Skopje, Macedonia 03-09-08
Dani, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina 03-09-10
BHC, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina 03-09-10

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Formación de periodistas para el desarrollo**
Jocke Nyberg, Violeta Contreras
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- 03/33 Baltic Agricultural Run-Off Action Programme 1998–2002:
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