2011:25 Sida Review

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Evaluation of Olof Palme International Center

Final Report

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Acronyms

APL	Alliance of Progressive Labor
CIVSAM	Sida's Civil Society Unit
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
FEDCO	Federation of Cooperatives
LEARN	Labor Education and Research Network
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
LO-TCO Secretariat	LO-TCO Secretariat of International Trade Union Development Co-operation
MARINO	Mariners Association for Regional & International Networking Organisation
MO	Member organisation
NCTU	National Confederation of Transport Workers Union
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPC	Olof Palme Center
PO	Partner organisation
SEK	Swedish Krona
SEKO	Facket för Service och Kommunikation
Shia	Svenska handikapporganisationers internationella utvecklingssamarbete
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SMR	Swedish Mission Council
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations

Executive Summary

Sida commissioned this evaluation in 2011 to assess the quality and cost-effectiveness of the Olof Palme International Center (OPC) cooperation projects implemented through its Member Organisations (MO). The evaluation was carried out during August-September 2011 and included two field missions to the Philippines and Bosnia.

OPC is a Sida framework organisation executing a variety of projects in support of civil society organisations (the CSO portfolio). Annual funding is approximately 50 MSEK, of which the MOs carry out about 40 percent, while OPC proper carries out the remaining 60 percent. The CSO portfolio is interesting in itself and comparatively because of the many framework organisations using a similar structure. Evaluation and comparisons make for valuable lessons learned.

In recent years, Sida expressed concerns regarding the cost-effectiveness of the MO portfolio and the degree to which OPC is adhering to the aid effectiveness agenda. The study's Terms of Reference calls for a review of the relationships between the actors, the level of results orientation and learning mechanisms, and aspects of cost-effectiveness. The main conclusions from the evaluation concern these areas.

First, OPC manages its directing and supporting role in a purposeful way, meaning that the comparative advantages of each actor are dutifully addressed. Particularly, the MOs perform especially well as conveyers of skills and experiences that develop partner organisations (POs) and their operations. Whether the MO can bring the OPC reporting format and general reporting content to purpose in overall planning remains a question of concern.

Secondly, results orientation is generally weak. Clear indications of improvement are evident and have been commended in the report. However, the level of outcome results is not systematically or comprehensively reported to give clear indications of results-achievement or cost-effectiveness. Most MOs and POs are acutely aware of the outcome level. Yet a disconnect persists between reporting and overall planning in this context.

Thirdly, coordination on at the country and regional level can potentially improve the MO portfolio. OPC is aware that other evaluations and studies of the CSO grants have reached the same conclusions. Action is being taken.

Finally, cost effectiveness has been difficult to judge regarding implementation-to-outcome and alternative means to achieve outcomes. On the level of activity-to-output and on the project level, however, cost-effectiveness levels may be reasonably high. At the same time, OPC's sub-granting costs are high in comparison with other framework organisations.

Against this background, and while noting that OPC is already implementing a series of steps in these directions, a few recommendations are aimed at garnering improvements in the MO portfolio through:

- A gradual move towards giving MOs a more clear-cut technical advisory role.
- Better coordination both in country (between MO projects) and in relation to country-level developments and results from other actors and initiatives.
- Stronger results orientation with a clear outcome focus, and a systematic view to include country level and project outcomes in OPC and MO planning.
- A continued drive towards larger and more comprehensive (and interlinked) projects, which would also improve overall cost-effectiveness.

1. Introduction

Since its establishment in 1992, the Olof Palme International Center (OPC) has been a framework organisation with which the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) has entered into long-term agreements.

As a framework organisation, OPC operates, on the one hand, as an umbrella organisation that prepares and passes on funding applications from its member organisations working with organisations in developing countries. On the other hand, OPC manages its own development cooperation projects in direct contact with developing country partners.
Sida's Civil Society Unit (CIVSAM), in agreement with OPC, commissioned Indevelop to conduct an evaluation that would contribute to OPC's capacity development and Sida's assessment of the organisation, especially regarding OPC's upcoming framework application for 2012–2014. The evaluation will assess the quality and costs of the portion of OPC's framework agreement portfolio that is sub-granted through its member organisations (hereinafter MO-programmes).

The evaluation was carried out by Mr Martin Schmidt, as team leader, and Mr Henrik Alffram, as team member. Responsibility for Management and Quality Assurance rests with Ms Jessica Rothman, Project Manager, and Dr Ian Christoplos, Project Director. The findings and conclusions of the evaluation, as well as related recommendations, are elucidated in the present report.

The team members are grateful to all those in Sweden, Bosnia, and the Philippines who generously availed their time and shared their experiences and views.

1.1 The Terms of Reference

According to the Terms of Reference (ToR) the evaluation shall assess the following issues:

<u>Efficiency/cost-effectiveness of MO-programmes</u>

- How cost-effective are the MO-programmes when comparing impact and costs of selected projects?
- How does the added value of MOs relate to cost-effectiveness? Do the MOs contribute such added value to justify that in some projects only a minor part of the budget is managed by the local partner? What is the perspective of the local partners on this?

<u>Efficiency/cost-effectiveness of OPC's administration of MO-programmes</u>

- Is the cost for OPC's administration of the support justified in relation to the assignment and in comparison with that of other Swedish framework organisations?

<u>OPC's role to quality-assure MO-programmes</u>

- Does OPC work effectively with monitoring and capacity development support in relation to MOs?
- Does OPC work effectively with risk assessments and risk mitigation in the selection of MOs and MO-projects?

- What role do MOs play in the setup of OPC's framework cooperation? What possible other role could be foreseen that would enhance the overall effectiveness of the cooperation?

Overall quality of MO-programmes

- What is the quality of the MO-programmes, in general, based on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability in relation to the objectives set in the application to Sida?

The complete ToR are set out in Annex 2.

1.2 Methodology

The evaluation was primarily a desk study focused on reviewing written reports. However, interviews and two country visits complemented the desk study.

The document review involved an analysis of programme documents, narrative and financial reports, evaluation reports, manuals, handbooks, and other documents guiding the operations of OPC, MOs, and partner organisations (PO). The purpose of the review was to identify what overall conclusions can be drawn from a critical and parallel reading of these documents. The document review primarily focused on finding patterns and recurring observations related to cost effectiveness and quality related indicators.

The evaluators strove to examine the documents in their appropriate context. Therefore, programmatic reports were analysed using the plans and projected indicators as points of comparison. Attention was given to possible deviations from the expected results and, more importantly, to the explanation of changes from the initial objectives.

Regarding project-related reporting, intervention-related reports linking seven projects in the Philippines and three projects in Bosnia were thoroughly reviewed. Additionally, selected reports regarding projects in Belarus, Burma, Moldova, Palestine, Serbia, and South Africa were also reviewed and used as points of comparison.

To compare the cost and quality of OPC's interventions with those of other Swedish civil society organisations with framework agreements with Sida, the evaluation team studied applications for funding, assessment memoranda, and narrative and financial reports of a number of organisations, including PMU InterLife, Swedish Mission Council (SMR), Svenska handikapporganisationers internationella utvecklingssamarbete (Shia) and LO-TCO Secretariat of International Trade Union Development Co-operation (LO-TCO Secretariat).

One limitation of the desk study is that it relied on the accuracy of previous evaluations and reviews. Verification of whether the reported results are correct and accurately presented is not within the scope of this exercise.

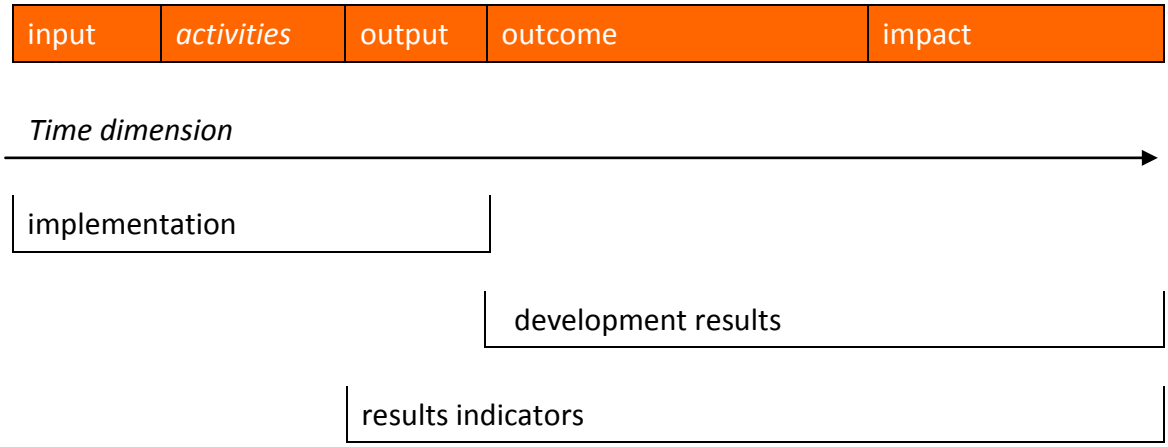
In addition to the document review, the evaluators interviewed the staff of OPC, MOs, and POs, and the relevant programme manager at Sida. During the field visits, interviews were also conducted with organisations and individuals with which the POs cooperate.

The interviews were particularly important for clarifying questions arising from the document review; obtaining additional information regarding actions resulting from recommendations made in reports; placing observations in context of the organisational development of POs; and receiving feedback on tentative conclusions. Most interviews in Sweden commenced after the document review.[1]

The evaluation team visited two countries, Bosnia and the Philippines, in August 2011. The purpose of the visits was to understand how OPC and MOs work with partner organisations. Thus interviews were conducted with representatives of the POs, as well as with other organisations and individuals benefiting from the cooperation. The evaluation team, in consultation with OPC and after receiving input from CIVSAM, chose the two countries visited.

The DAC guidelines on evaluation and results-based management were used throughout the evaluation. The evaluation team used the terminology recommended by the DAC, which appear in the figure below, to describe results and project logic.

RESULTS CHAIN



The difference between output and outcome as defined by OEDC/DAC, and shown in this figure, should be noted.[2] In this terminology, output represents the tangible and immediate consequences of actions taken, such as number of people trained or number of papers distributed.

Outcome, on the other hand, represents the short- or medium-term effects of output, such as level of political participation or organisations adopting transparent or democratic practices, on beneficiaries such as organisations or individuals.

It is finally worth noting that outputs and outcomes come about both in response to project activities, but also and foremost in response to development processes in society. In a typical OPC/MO context, *female political participation/influence* is a political development pattern that a project aims to influence, and which can be described both as a general characteristic of society, and in terms of project influence on that characteristic.

1 Annex 1 features a complete list of people interviewed and consulted during the evaluation.
2 See OECD/DAC; Glossary of key terms in Evaluation and Results-Based Management, 2002, and OECD/DAC; DAC Guidelines and Reference Series – Harmonising Donor Practices for Effective Aid Delivery Volume 2: Budget support, sector wide approaches and capacity development in public financial management, 2005.

2. Background and context

2.1 Sweden's civil society policy

Sweden's current Policy for Support to Civil Society in Developing Countries states that the objective of Sweden's support is "a vibrant and pluralistic civil society in developing countries that, using a rights-based approach, contributes effectively to reducing poverty in all its dimensions."[3] Sweden will therefore "promote representative, legitimate and independent civil society actors who contribute to poverty reduction, based on their role as collective voices and organisers of services." Support to enhance the capacity of the organisations should be based on their own priorities. Issues of internal democracy, independence and actual performance deserve high regard. The policy further clarifies that Sweden supports civil society organisations as part of achieving the Swedish geographical and non-geographic cooperation strategies.

2.2 Strategy for support through Swedish civil society organisations

Based on the civil society policy, the Swedish government adopted a strategy regulating the support that Sida channels through Swedish civil society organisations to civil society actors in the developing world.[4] The strategy outlines two specific objectives for support:

- Enhanced capacity of civil society actors in developing countries to apply a rights-based approach in their roles as collective voices and organisers of services.
- Enhanced democratisation and increased respect for the human rights of poor and discriminated people.

The strategy states that Sida is to demand that Swedish civil society organisations conduct thorough risk assessments and use well-functioning systems for guidance, monitoring, and follow-up. The strategy also underlines the importance of aid effectiveness principles and striving for donor harmonisation and increased programme support. The strategy applies to 2010–2014.

2.3 Sida's instructions for civil society grants

Sida issued instructions governing the provision of grants to organisations with which Sida has entered into an agreement concerning a framework grant.5 The instructions state that "the fundamental preconditions for all grants … are that the development co-operation be delimited to developing countries in accordance with the OECD-DAC classification, that the development co-operation be carried out by civil society organisations, and that the parties to the co-operation work for societal development on a democratic basis as well as based upon the equality and rights of all individuals as expressed in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

3 Government Offices of Sweden, Pluralism: Policy for Support to Civil Society in Developing Countries within Swedish Development Cooperation, 2009.

4 Regeringen, Strategi för stöd genom svenska organisationer i det civila samhället 2010-2014, 2009-09-10.

[5] Sida, Sida's Instructions for Grants from the Appropriation Item Support via Swedish Civil Society Organizations, March 2010 (with corrections July 2010).

The instructions further state that “the cornerstone of development work … is that there are local co-operation partners in developing countries that are contractual partners with a Swedish CSO, or an international CSO with which a Swedish organisation has a contractual relationship. All interventions that receive grants from Sida must be based upon the needs and priorities defined by local co-operation partners.”

2.4 The Olof Palme International Center

OPC is one of 15 organisations currently entered into a framework agreement with Sida and receiving funding under the appropriation item Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations. OPC’s purpose is, according to its statutes, the following:

“The Olof Palme International Center works in the spirit of Olof Palme for democracy, human rights and peace. The Center is a cooperative body active in international issues on behalf of the Swedish labour movement.”

OPC helps people throughout the world gain the power to shape the societies in which they live, and to thereby shape their own lives. The organisation works in two areas to achieve this goal:

- International development cooperation.
- Communication and public debate.

Presently, OPC contains 26 member organisations. Most of them are associations directly comprised of individual members, while others comprise member organisations, which are, in turn, made up of individual members.

Because OPC’s MOs represent a large share of the Swedish population, as well as the values and long-standing international involvement of the Swedish labour movement, MOs are considered the foundation of the organisation’s contribution to international solidarity efforts.

OPC cooperates closely with Swedish, European, and international labour movements, as well as with other popular movements and organisations in the countries in which it operates.

OPC performs two separate roles as a framework organisation. First, OPC maintains quality assurance in assisting its MOs with their development cooperation work. Second, OPC cooperates directly with developing country POs and manages its own activities and projects.

2.4.1 Funding applications

At the time of writing, OPC is completing its application for support from Sida’s grant for civil society organisations for 2012–2014. The total amount requested will likely be slightly higher than recent years and the total number of projects somewhat lower.

For the past three years, OPC has applied for roughly 60 MSEK annually from Sida, and received just over 50 MSEK. Approximately one-fifth of this amount concerned support to reform efforts in Central and Eastern Europe (Ö-ramen) and the remaining four-fifths was received to support developing nations outside of Europe (U-ramen).

The number of projects for which funding has been sought has lessened over the past few years; the application concerned 128 projects in 2009, 122 projects in 2010, and 113 projects in 2011. Additionally, roughly 5 MSEK was applied for annually for several communication projects in 2009 and 2010.

According to OPC's application to Sida for 2009–2010, approximately 60 percent of the operational costs pertained to the projects and programmes managed by the MOs, while the remaining 40 percent related to projects directly and centrally implemented by OPC. However, because OPC did not receive the full amount applied for, the share relating to the centrally implemented projects was considerably higher. According to OPC staff, this trend towards more centrally implemented projects is continuing and will affect the 2012–2014 application.

2.4.2 Sida's concerns

For some time, Sida has expressed concerns regarding weaknesses in OPC's development cooperation work. However, Sida has also recognised that over the past few years OPC has worked intensively to introduce new practices and tools to address shortcomings. According to Sida, this new approach has resulted in significant improvement; yet numerous challenges remain. These challenges especially concern the principles for aid effectiveness, for which the organisation was criticised for having limited knowledge and problems implementing.[6] Sida's assessment memorandum regarding OPC's 2011 application stated that an overarching challenge for OPC will be to ensure that its new handbooks, results matrices, and other guiding documents are implemented.

6 See, for example, Sida, Bedömningspromemoria: Bedömning av Olof Plame International Centers (OPC) ansökan om rambidrag för verksamhet 2011, 22 December 2010.

3. Management

This section reviews the management roles and behaviours of the key actors (OPC, MOs, and POs) in the CSO portfolio. The objective is to identify strengths, weaknesses, and changes to improve the efficiency and purposefulness of these relationships in the cooperation.

In this endeavour, the option to terminate or replace MO directed projects has not been ruled out. In fact, the evaluators are charged by the ToR to explore alternatives and to contrast MO projects with OPC directed projects.

Nevertheless, OPC is a membership organisation bringing together 26 MOs. Accordingly, working with and through the MO is a natural condition of OPC.

This section is guided by seeking ways to optimise the partnership through an identification of the comparative advantages of respective actors. Implementing this strategy from a management perspective was deemed appropriate because it defines many of the key aspects separating MO projects from other approaches (such as OPC directed projects).

3.1 Member organisations (MO)

MO involvement in the cooperation is achieved primarily by identifying a smaller group of people to engage in cooperation (a project) with a civil society organisation. The choice of partner or country is usually made by OPC through an informal dialogue with potential MO and partners.

OPC performing this identification or matching function, rather than the MO, was deemed appropriate because of OPC's overview and the strong element of mutual interest and relevance, as attested by MO and PO partners. Once the cooperation partners have been identified, the MO and its partner organisation draft a project proposal. OPC acts as a consultant aiding the proposal development to some degree.

This arrangement is underpinned by the MO's strength in developing working approaches with local organisations on subjects and themes of mutual interest. The MO also introduces new and innovative approaches to the environment in question.

In depth reviews of the MO's management performance based on reports and PO interviews reveals that MO suitability is strong in project planning. On this level of organisation and management, MOs have a unique advantage from concrete work, experience, and approaches to organisational development, activities, and target groups. Particularly in the early stages of cooperation, MOs function as a dialogue partner and initiator—by example if not by inspiration—that puts partners on "the right track," as several representatives of the POs have stated.

POs also described MOs as sensitive to local conditions, which allows for a profound contextualisation and adaptation of the project approach to local situations. PO representatives view this aspect as especially welcome—partly due to mutual interest and respect, and partly due to a healthy MO inexperience with and openness to the development context.

As the partnership progresses, the role of the MO evolves. At one end of the spectrum, the MO continues to work closely with its partner throughout implementation by contributing both to content in various stages of development and to real implementation capacity. In these cases, the partner is usually small and with limited administrative capacity, while cooperation content reflects a strong mutual interest (such as union work or counteracting domestic violence).

At the other end of the spectrum, the MO is rapidly withdrawing from its initial role and develops into a sporadic dialogue partner and monitor of progress. OPC, backed by a review of currently active MO projects, testified that in such cases the partner is usually organisationally strong, well established in the local context, and funded by multiple sources.

Different degrees of development exist between these two paths. But in common to all, the MO role diminishes eventually through a gradual withdrawal or phase-out from planning and implementation.

MO input on reporting, the reverse side of the planning process, is weaker. Reporting content weakens follow-up and often has too little influence on planning. Main aspects include:

a. The initial results framework introduced in planning is weak, mainly on expected outcomes but also on the expected relationships between output and outcome, making follow-up difficult.
b. Reporting and follow-up are often communicated as a requirement (of the financier) rather than as an input to planning, thus diminishing the contribution.
c. LFA practice, normally directed by OPC, introduces equal numbers of pros and cons. The latter include a deepening of a "project mode perspective," which means keeping partner's eyes on project internal life rather than its environment. The practice is sometimes perceived as a control mechanism with little operational value.
d. No systematic approach to how reporting fits into project planning has been identified.

The typical MO struggles to fill out the OPC reporting format, which is either a reference to the report(s) of the local partner or a translation of local reports or events into responses to the format questions. In both cases, the format is treated as a rote requirement, which is worrisome. With few exceptions, MOs and partners testify in interviews that neither OPC nor Sida uses the reported information for planning or strategic choices. Thus, if the reporter of performance information suspects the information will not be used, the quality of information is likely to deteriorate over time.

In summary, MO management strength lies in implementation planning and support. Their weakness is foremost in results reporting and providing OPC with a basis for planning. The main operational consequence is that OPC is assuming the role of assisting in monitoring, in varying degrees, and thus overlapping the role of the MOs in this capacity.

3.2 Partner organisations (PO)

The role of the partner organisations vary greatly from a management view-point. The differences are especially apparent concerning the size of the organisations.

MOs are less involved in planning for larger partners and more involved in planning for smaller partners. Similarly, larger projects and partners tend to be more structured in using reporting information as a basis for planning, meaning that the planning and reporting cycles converge, as expected, in results management. Smaller partner that are consequently more dependent on OPC funding, tend to be more disconnected from planning and reporting. Yet examples to the contrary exist.

Charging just one or a few people to manage a partner organisation and the project reflects an obvious management risk.

Partner organisations have a critical and successful role in adapting concepts and approaches to a local context. This aspect stands out throughout the portfolio and reinforces the impression of successful project start-up phases.

On a weaker note, the "project mode" of cooperation often leads local partners to portray the project as unfailing. In management terms, field interviews reflect a heavy focus on the inner life of projects. The downsides include too little time spent on results analyses, fostering relations with potential (reinforcing) local partners, and developing future funding strategies.

3.3 OPC

Unlike many of their partners, OPC is a strong actor with well-honed management practices for cooperation development. OPC makes good use of its capacity.

In the cooperation with MOs and their POs, OPC is regarded as successfully maintaining a strong matching capacity that identifies actors and processes in partner countries to work with one or more MOs and their associated experiences. In the initiating stages, and in the cooperation, both MOs and POs feel that OPC provides relevant methods support and can act with confidence as a dialogue partner to MOs that are generally inexperienced in development cooperation.

OPC prioritises these abilities in its management practices. Clearly, available instruments (such as handbooks and guidelines) underscore this enabling approach. Generally, this ability reflects a conducive organisational culture that goes beyond handbooks and is likely linked to a positive and dynamic leadership.

Management weaknesses are less pronounced. Nevertheless, this review illuminates aspects where management practices created some of the drawbacks identified by Sida, MOs, POs, and indeed OPC itself.

The most frequently voiced concern involved a tendency to "projectify" the MO portfolio, contrary to the aid effectiveness agenda.[7] Results include fragmentation with low levels of interaction between partners in the same area and field, and sometimes parallel monitoring functions performed by OPC and MOs with the same partner. OPC is aware of these aspects and has taken steps to rectify the situation. Recent initiatives are discussed in section 5.3 below.

7 Sida assessment memos and external evaluations are the most frequent sources of this view, which, with the occasional exception, was not the case with MOs or POs

A second aspect regards ambiguity around decision criteria. What type of developments contribute to decisions to continue or discontinue a project and why? What type of developments contribute to decisions to scale up or scale down a project? Of course, judgements of this kind cannot be put into standard frameworks. And interpreting this feature as a lack of ideas concerning relevance, sustainability, or results achievement on the part of OPC would be a mistake. However, the evaluators believe that uncertainties regarding the expectations formulated at the onset of activities linger on during project life and result in unnecessary ambiguity around later decisions. These ambiguities mainly concern results and sustainability expectations. They will be discussed further in the report.

3.4 Overall management

Overall, MO projects are sensibility managed. With the exception of the MO role in reporting and monitoring, the general division of labour and responsibilities between the main actors are reasonably based on perceived strengths.

Unnecessary fragmentation is a prominent management feature among the group of actors (OPC, MOs, and POs). The multitude of projects and small interventions spread management capacities thin and work against the aid effectiveness agenda.

While OPC is aware of this issue, and have recently initiated several measures to counteract fragmentation (see section 5.3), the situation still begs several questions: Why so many smaller projects? Why in the same area? If individual projects can reach civil society objectives, then keeping individual projects small and separated, especially over long periods of time, makes little sense. Of course, exceptions may exist. Generally, however, larger projects or greater integration with mutually reinforcing action between actors should be considered.

MO projects often have a range of close resemblances—overall objectives, target groups, training approaches and content, planning, and reporting cycles. Yet little coordination exists between these elements. Stronger efforts to integrate and coordinate projects in a geographical area would have several benefits:

- Joint learning on what does and does not work towards overall objectives.
- Enriched training modules and communication approaches from comparisons.
- Solutions to similar implementation obstacles.
- Exchange on what results achievement on outcome level means.
- Pooling of networking resources, for example, in mobilising target groups.
- Sharing of ideas on what local financing strategies are available.

Also, local partner coordination need not be confined to funded counterparts, but can easily extend to partners and sister organisations that would stand to gain from coordination and mutually reinforcing action. Low-level coordination works against efficiency and sustainability. From a management perspective, OPC seems ideally suited for a coordinating role.

4. Results

The evaluation team has reviewed reports, external evaluations, and OPC assessments to create an image of project results in the MO portfolio. Additionally, the team conducted two field missions with in-depth interviews of representatives from partner organisations. Only occasionally, were the evaluators in a position to discuss results directly with the beneficiary groups. Yet some external evaluations the team consulted had been able to do so. This limitation should be further explained.
First, substantial results from the CSO portfolio projects are not lacking. Output level results are impressive. A cautious assessment estimates the results as above expectations in 15-20 percent of the projects.

From a project perspective, anything less would likely surprise all involved, including the evaluators. One reason is OPC's ability, as noted in assessments and evaluations throughout the past decade and confirmed in this evaluation, to identify projects and match partners of importance and relevance.[8] With rare exceptions, pairing with a strong MO capacity to support partners in implementation planning allows for an output delivery in line with or above expectation.

The situation is less clear with the outcome level. With outcome, qualitative changes occur, according to the DAC definition, on the beneficiary level as a result of output. Outcomes can be described unrelated to project activities as development patterns. These patterns can explain qualitative beneficiary level developments over time, such as how the level of political participation changes over time in a group, or in society as a whole.[9]

In some areas observed, outcome changes attributed to project output are substantial—sometimes because they appear in environments where they are new, unexpected, and breaking new ground by introducing new working approaches to reach identified outcome objectives. In other cases, the MO projects produce outcomes because of the boost they provide for local partners and their ability to act towards their (outcome level) objectives.

But two problems with outcomes keep reappearing throughout the MO portfolio:

- Original expectations are unclear or lacking.
- Reporting is scant.

Partners (OPC, MOs, and partner organisations) seem unable to express results systematically in terms of outcome, that is, qualitative consequences of output on a beneficiary level, whether they appear as changes in organisational or individual and group behaviour. The focus on activities and output in project reporting also results in focusing on the latest events. When outcome changes are reported (either written or in interviews), they often reflect the latest events and even events soon to be expected.

8 Example of references to follow.
9 The DAC definitions identify outcomes as impact when are described on the national or societal level.

On the other hand, according to interviews with POs, expected and real project outcomes form one important basis in project planning, regardless of the level of actual MO participation in planning—which is sometimes high, at other times minimal. An advantage of this approach is a planning process usually embedded in local conditions and context. Moreover, the approach yields a level of results management in project planning, which is encouraging.[10]

What is less encouraging, however, is that these outcome considerations seldom inform the project applications or overall MO reporting to OPC, nor are they revealed in OPC overall reporting and regional and national planning. A disconnect persists somewhere between the project planning and implementation level, and overall reporting back to the financier (Sida). Reporting in the MO portfolio is a four stage process: beneficiary-to-partner, partner-to-MO, MO-to-OPC, OPC-to-Sida. When MOs translate partner reports into the OPC format, some information is probably lost. A combination of the format and the interpretation is likely the culprit.

This disconnect reflects the capacities of the key actors. OPC is engaged in constant efforts to stimulate an MO capacity to report project logic. Reporting formats are refined, seminars are held, and discussions are ongoing. Yet the disconnect remains. In conclusion, development related project logic and reporting are not among the comparative advantages of the MOs. An observed increasing OPC involvement over time in project monitoring and follow-up is one consequence of this feature.

10 Meaning, simply, that to a certain degree the analytical point of departure in planning is on outcome level changes, which is later reflected in implementation particulars.

5. Cost-effectiveness

Cost-effectiveness can be analysed in several ways. From the specific to the general, these approaches include:

a) The cost-relationships between activities and output.
b) The cost-relationships between implementation (activities and output) and outcomes.
c) The cost-effectiveness of outcomes as compared to alternative means of achievement.

The scope of this evaluation and the materials available make it difficult to assess costs moving from a) to c) on this scale.

The review at hand makes clear that cost-effectiveness regarding activities-to-output in this particular form of cooperation increases as cooperation begins. Evidence suggest that projects are often breaking new ground in approaches and target groups, which, in turn, increases turn-out. The Philippines and Bosnia, where additional information has been collected, confirm this indication.

As expected, returns diminish as projects move on. Depending on the level of MO involvement in planning and implementation, however, cost-effectiveness activities-to-output remains strong for a longer period if involvement is high—particularly if the partner organisation is relatively small and mutual topical interest is high.[11] The extra working-hours input of Swedish and local partners over and above what reimbursement levels would suggest is staggering at times.

This judgement is strongly supported by project budget execution. Generally, accounts are meticulously kept and excessive spending is rare.

A decrease in cost-effectiveness related to activities-to-output over time was noted when MO involvement in planning and implementation has been reduced to a minimum, especially when the partner is stronger or larger. The added value of MOs mainly involved in monitoring missions seems less cost-effective. In the Philippines, for example, two MOs working with the same organisation conducted multiple, uncoordinated missions.

The success implied by the growth and size of a partner is matched by their outreach, or the sheer number of beneficiaries, which speaks in favour of a high cost-effectiveness in activities-to-output throughout the life-span of the projects.

The reporting situation has hindered judging the relationships between implementation and outcomes (b). Reports do not supply enough information on outcomes to support a clear cost-effectiveness assessment regarding implementation-to-outcome (see also section 3.1 and 4 on results reporting).

11 At the same time, with limited size comes vulnerability. Thus, relative cost-effectiveness comes with a high level of risk. A potential disruption, and associated cost-inefficiency, lies close in one or two person operation.

What follows is an informed guess. When asked to explain outcome developments during the field missions, partners explained the mechanics of how output turns, or does not turn, into outcomes. This assessment concludes, project by project, that given the "project" mode set-up and conditions under which the partners operate, implementation-to-outcome cost-effectiveness is reasonable.

5.1 Opportunity costs

Cost-effectiveness changes when real alternatives to an implementation approach are being discussed and strategic choice (c) becomes an issue.

A favourite economic concept is that of opportunity costs. It is admittedly a very useful concept because it quickly puts what you are doing into perspective. But it is also a somewhat difficult concept because in order to be able to compare alternatives, good information is required, which is not always abundant.

Available OPC documentation does not provide enough information to assess outcomes compared to alternative means of achievement. Instead, this evaluation relies on the comparative analysis required by the ToR. Findings were compared with other organisations using a similar project set-up, and with projects directly funded by OPC (see section 5.2).

Finally, a comment on alternative means for OPC and MO to achieve their objectives. OPC, MOs, and their partners do not discuss opportunity costs. In one sense, this reluctance protects against vulnerability. At the same time, questioning existing approaches remains one of the most effective means of improvement.

Although OPC project documentation provides elaborate "problem analyses," a curious limitation exists across these analyses; they lack references on how other actors address similar problems. This lack of external references is a lost opportunity for two critical reasons. First, OPC and MOs miss a learning opportunity. Second, the partnerships miss an opportunity for mutually reinforcing action with developments and organisations working in similar areas.

Management comments on the virtues of coordination will not be repeated here. But OPC should consider some practical means to view operations in a larger context. Suggestions include:

In problem identification: Expand the problem analysis to include how other actors and stakeholders address the problem.

In results analyses: Routinely compare expected and achieved outputs and outcomes with the outputs and outcomes of others in the same field.

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In problem identification:	*Expand the problem analysis with an analysis of how other actors and stakeholders deal with it*.
In results analyses:	*Routinely compare expected and achieved outputs and outcomes with those of others in the same field*.

5.3 Comparative remarks

Concerns regarding the cost effectiveness of OPC's operations, indicating that:

- The share of OPC's total budget that is transferred to organisations in developing countries, and, in particular, to Central and Eastern Europe, is low.
- In some projects, the high costs pertaining to the Swedish MOs can not be easily justified.
- OPC's costs for sub-granting are high.

5.3.1 Transfer of funds to POs

Generally, in line with the principles of aid effectiveness, the greatest portion of funds possible that a framework organisation receives from Sida should be channeled to local POs. According to Sida's assessment memorandum relating OPC's 2011 application, 64 percent of OPC's planned costs were to be channeled to POs.

Methodological differences make comparisons across organisations challenging. Yet analysing other Swedish framework organisations that are, or recently have been, channeling funds to MOs would be helpful.

The LO-TCO Secretariat is one of these Swedish framework organisations. According to Sida's assessment memorandum regarding its application for 2010–2012, 61 percent of the total budget would be transferred to the POs. However, Sida noted that the budget had been miscalculated; the correct figure was somewhat higher. Nevertheless, Sida concluded that "allowing more of the funds to reach the field-operations could be more effective in terms of impact."

PMU InterLife, in comparison with OPC, transfers a larger share of its total budget to the POs. In its application for 2011-2013, 70 percent of the budget relate to the PO operations. However, Sida expressed in its assessment memorandum of January 2011 some concern that the budget-share regarding the Swedish organisation was high.

Of the organisations reviewed, Shia had the lowest percentage of its budget transferred to the POs. Sida estimated in its assessment memorandum for 2011–2013 that the share of the operational costs that related to direct project costs pertaining to the POs was planned to be between 46 and 48 percent. As Sida concluded that this share was insufficient, the agency asked Shia to develop a plan for how the share could be increased.[12]

An important difference exists between OPC's projects in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America, on the one hand, and those concerning Central and Eastern Europe, on the other. Only approximately 46 percent of the total planned costs of the latter for 2011 were to be transferred to the POs.

5.3.2 MO costs

The costs pertaining to the Swedish MOs vary significantly between different projects. In some projects, the entire amount the MO receives from OPC is transferred directly to the PO and the expenditures relating to the Swedish organisation are in their entirety covered by the MOs own contribution, which is approximately 10 percent. Sometimes the MOs carry significant costs that are not included in the project budgets, even though they are directly or indirectly linked to the projects. Such costs may, for instance, fund the organisation of conferences, or expert or exchange visits.

However, in a few cases more than half of the total project budget has remained with the Swedish organisation. This happens because the projects have been designed as capacity building projects in which the MOs and their members were used as trainers and resource persons. Frequent travel to PO countries is required. Sometimes these trips can involve fairly large delegations.

12 However, the figures listed for Shia include a specific budget post regarding the increased costs for the organization's staff for travel and follow up. If this budget post is not taken into account, the share transferred to the POs increases significantly.

In other cases, the POs have been reluctant or unable, due to national legislation or the absence of a banking system, to receive and handle large sums of money. In some instances, the MOs have been unwilling to transfer funds due to the risk, real or perceived, of corruption. In recent years, OPC has taken a more restrictive approach to these projects and several MOs have cut their costs significantly. This cost reduction was reflected in their applications for 2011 and, according to OPC staff, will also be reflected in OPC's upcoming application to Sida.

While OPC needed to ensure reductions in MO-related costs in some projects, Sida maintains that when an organisation is weak and has poor financial management, the MO should focus on capacity development rather than transfer funds for operations and activities. This capacity development should be based, as much as possible, on the POs own priorities. Sida has also affirmed that in such cases a clear intention to increase the amount transferred to the PO as soon as its capacity has been developed should be maintained.

The average costs associated with the Swedish MOs over the past few years, have been fairly high. According to OPC's financial report for 2010, under the U-frame, a total of 14.5 MSEK was channeled from OPC to the MOs. Of this amount, 10.8 MSEK was transferred to POs in developing countries, while 3.8 MSEK related to the MOs own expenditures. Additionally, the MOs received roughly 0.4 MSEK to cover administrative costs. These figures translate into an average of 28 percent of the amount allocated for the MOs related to costs in Sweden. Under the Ö-frame, the share pertaining to the MOs' costs in Sweden was slightly higher, reaching 33 percent in 2010. As a point of comparison, Forum Syd maintains in its cost efficiency assessments that the costs pertaining to the Swedish organisation (staff in Sweden, field staff, office costs, follow-up, etc.) should not exceed 20 percent. However, Forum Syd has occasionally accepted a higher percentage.[13]

The evaluators have not found the MOs actual costs for particular items and activities, including travel and accommodation, excessive in any way.

5.3.3 OPC's cost for sub-granting

In 2009 and 2010, OPC sub-granted 57.5 MSEK to its MOs, according to its application to Sida. The cost for the sub-granting assignment, including quality assurance and administration, for the same period equaled 16.5 MSEK. In total, the cost for the assignment and the actual amount to be sub-granted thus reached 74 MSEK. The sub-granting cost was 22 percent of the total amount.

However, the actual sum OPC received from Sida and sub-granted to the MOs was lower than what was set out in the application, and the sub-granting cost in terms of percentage was higher. For 2010, the sub-granting percentage reached 26 percent for U-frame and roughly the same for Ö-frame.

As a point of comparison, the equivalent figures for the Swedish Mission Council (SMR) in 2010 amounted to a sub-grant total of 111 MSEK at a cost of 9.9 MSEK, or approximately 8.9 percent. For Forum Syd, the equivalent figure was 16 percent according to the organisation's budget for 2010. In its application to Sida for 2010–2012, LO-TCO's costs for the sub-granting assignment,

13 AKTSAM/CIVSAM, Assessment of Forum Syd's Proposal for Fiscal Years 2010-2012, January 14, 2010.

including quality assurance and administration, was 12.6 percent of the total budget. In its assessment memorandum, Sida found this figure to be reasonable.

The funding OPC receives for quality assurance is used for monitoring, general project management, controlling, methodology development, education and training, and network meetings in which the MOs meet and discuss issues of common relevance. A likely and partial reason why OPC's sub-granting costs are comparatively high is explained by the organisation's close contact with the POs even though it does not have a contractual relationship with them.

OPC has also noted that the average size of the projects it supports is small in terms of funding. While the evaluators have not been able to obtain sufficiently comparable data, the average project supported by Forum Syd and SMR is approximately twice the size of the average OPC project in terms of budget. Sida, in its comments to Forum Syd's most recent application for funding, stated that the "sub-granting set-up, with a large number of actors, each of them attributed relatively limited contributions, may be questioned from a cost efficiency perspective." At the same time, Sida mentioned that Forum Syd's sub-granting mechanism "enables a pluralism of actors who can contribute to poverty reduction within a consolidated framework."[14]

Several explanations can account for the large differences in cost between Swedish sub-granting organisations, including the geographical spread of the projects, the capacity of the MOs, and, of course, the merit of the quality assurance work carried out. Organisational needs for methodological development and steering documents, which OPC has recognised in recent years, will also affect costs. Some organisations, but not others, apply for and receive separate funding for studies and other initiatives that could be regarded as sub-granting costs.

In any case, the amounts requested by OPC appear to be high, and sometimes higher than what the organisation under other agreements with Sida have received to distribute funds to developing country cooperation partners.

5.3.4 OPC's costs for directly funded projects

In the application to Sida for 2011, OPC claimed that the project management costs for the central OPC projects constituted only 12 percent of OPC's total funding application. However, this figure is not illustrative of the fact that 25 percent of the projects under the U-frame and 63 percent of the projects under the Ö-frame are managed by the MOs rather than by OPC centrally.

According to OPC's financial report for 2010, under the U-frame OPC paid 20.1 MSEK to local POs and used 8.8 MSEK for its own operations and administration related to these financial transfers. 30 percent of the total costs relating to the PO projects thus pertained to OPC's own operations.

For the MO-projects, the costs pertaining to the Swedish side of the projects were considerably higher according to OPC's financial report for 2010. While a total of 10.7 MSEK was paid to the

14 AKTSAM/CIVSAM, Assessment of Forum Syd's Proposal for Fiscal Years 2010-2012, January 14, 2010.

POs, the cost relating to the MOs was approximately 4.2 MSEK and to OPC 5.7 MSEK. Thus, roughly 47 percent of the total costs of the MO-projects pertained to the Swedish organisations.

Neither in the application to Sida for 2009–2010, nor in the application for 2011 does OPC discuss in any comprehensive manner the costs of directly funded projects and how these compare to the costs of the MO projects. Such a comparison seems warranted considering the significant difference in terms of money actually transferred to the partner countries.

5.4 Reform initiatives

In order to increase the quality of its operations, and generally respond to the aid effectiveness agenda and the demands and concerns of its MOs and Sida, OPC has, over the past few years, initiated cost-effectiveness reforms. Among these are:

- A reduction in the number of programme and project countries.
- Improved coordination between OPC's and the MOs' interventions within each country.
- Pilot type interventions for core support to five different POs.
- Increased local level presence of OPC staff, which among other things is considered to mitigate the risks for corruption.
- Training sessions for MOs and POs on LFA and financial management.

OPC has also worked intensively to develop a number of new tools, guidelines and procedures for quality assurance and cost effectiveness, including:

- A handbook for programme managers.
- A controller handbook.
- An anti-corruption handbook.
- A tool for monitoring the POs' administrative systems and attainment of results.
- A tool for monitoring executed by staff employed in the programme countries.
- A format for project assessment memoranda written by the programme managers.
- A new audit instruction.
- A new risk assessment strategy.
- A new budget programme, which requires a higher degree of specification and explanation of expenditures.

Even though the evaluation team did not thoroughly assess the tools listed, the team has concluded from interviews with OPC staff that the tools will be appropriate for their intended purposes.

OPC programme managers claim that they have increasingly become involved in discussions related to individual budget posts with the MOs. These managers began applying a stricter approach in recent years to ensure that each individual expenditure is well motivated. This stricter approach resulted in less travel from Sweden to the programme countries in question today.

OPC also expects the MOs to have better developed capacity building components linked to their visits to the POs in the future. In the past, visits have not always included such a component, but mainly had a project monitoring focus. Occasionally these monitoring visits were unstructured.

OPC staff also have begun applying a more restrictive approach to the continuation of old projects. Consequently, old projects require a new analysis and needs assessment prior to the start of a new project period.

6. Sustainability

The concept of sustainability concerns the likelihood that the benefits of a development intervention will remain after the donor support ends. Generally, a development intervention is most sustainable if it reflects the PO's own needs and priorities; participation is promoted and a high degree of local ownership achieved; the intervention is in line with local norms and customs; future funding can be secured; and the PO has a democratic and transparent management structure.

OPC's direct interventions and the projects implemented through the MOs are based on the POs priorities and broader social norms and needs. They are also characterised by a high degree of local ownership, which often emanates from the involvement of relevant stakeholders in design, implementation, and follow-up. The type of civil society organisations that OPC and its MOs work with may vary, but they include educational association, unions, and other forms of social movements as well as much smaller non-governmental organisations. Regardless of the type of organisation, OPC strives to work with those possessing a democratic structure.

Most evaluations performed over the past few years have found that the sustainability of results of the OPC projects has been a significant concern. These concerns were often expressed regarding the institutional sustainability of the POs. Yet, as with most donor supported civil society interventions, the issue of the long-term financial viability of the POs is a particular challenge. At the same time, in some contexts the POs have established systems through which they raise funds from their members and affiliated organisations, and that the Swedish MOs have been instrumental in encouraging and assisting in implementing such systems.

However, in some cases the organisations supported are one or two person operations that are vulnerable and risk rapidly losing repute and foothold for reasons beyond programme control, including illness, poor performance by staff members, and sudden loss of key funding. A management tendency to streamline budgets by limiting management capacity with local partners, even after years of partnership, persists. Such an approach could work against sustainability and implementation efficiency.

7. Conclusions

Assessing the MO portfolio has been a multi-task effort because each project is unique and, because of their numbers and relatively small size, highly dependent on individuals and circumstances.

Four broad areas of importance to the partners turn up through assessment, interviews and documentation, and conclusions drawn. First, the OPC-MO interaction lies at the heart of the cooperation. Second and third, results orientation and coordination, are the key issues of concern in the aid effectiveness agenda today, and have continuously been of concern to Sida and all other involved parties over the past 3–5 years. Finally, the issues of cost-effectiveness brought up in the report are concluded.

7.1 The OPC-MO relationship

In the OPC-MO relationship the MO's added value reflects the professional expertise the MO brings to projects and programmes, and thus contributes to planning and content. On the other hand, OPC has the overview, development experience, and potential for results analysis necessary for its role as coordinator.

As such, the evaluation concludes that the comparative advantages of the respective partners are, on the whole, revealed in the cooperation.

However, questions have been raised concerning MO reporting capacities, the OPC reporting format, a lack of clear expectations regarding outcomes introduced at the onset of project, and the sustainability of PO capacity development.

OPC itself is probably best suited to assume responsibility and address these issues. In many respects, OPC is already introducing solutions in the areas identified. But OPC should not merely address these issues by way of demands on their partners. Rather OPC must take concrete action, which will be elaborated further in the next section.

OPC should also consider a more structured assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of OPC directly funded projects and MO projects regarding a particular setting and its objectives. This review has encountered difficulty assessing the criteria or motivations underscoring why a particular project is funded directly, or through an MO.

7.2 Results orientation

The evaluation concludes that results orientation is probably not primary for the partners in the CSO portfolio. A relative absence of formulated expectation and recorded progress on outcome level may account for this low level of concern for results orientation. Outcome level considerations form an implicit part of project planning, but this concern is seldom put in writing—neither outcome level information, nor the priorities made or conclusions drawn from them.

Rather, how country or regional level priorities made by OPC were influenced by performance information should be shown. Both in-country development patterns and project level outcome

results should be evidenced. Aligning such priorities against a backdrop of information of what others in the same field are doing would be especially useful.

The evaluation concludes that the portfolio would probably benefit from increased clarity regarding overall priorities and expectations, and their relationships with a more comprehensive performance and context analysis.

The results management tool chosen by OPC in 2009, LFA, is outdated from the point of view of the aid effectiveness agenda and the Swedish PGU. Both require more comprehensive results management practices (namely results-based management, or RBM) compared with LFA, which is an explicitly project-oriented tool, which means it does not address organisational management or entire planning frameworks.

7.3 Co-ordination

The call for better coordination across projects on country (or regional) level is the one area where all involved actors are in harmonious agreement. Coordination may be desired for different reasons, but the aim is mutual and the evaluators agree—wondrous things can emerge from coordination. Of course, coordination must mean joint work in planning and reporting that extends beyond information sharing.

The main conclusion is that in bringing local project managers together in actual project work lies a potential to:

- Learn from a joint base of experience in dealing with similar target groups, similar training modules while attempting to achieve similar outcome level objectives.
- Speed up the adaptation of new approaches (such as the study circle approach) to local conditions.
- Develop training and other working materials and guidelines through interaction to avoid unnecessary duplication and omission.
- Learn jointly and more quickly new management approaches and methods introduced through development cooperation (such as results-based management).

Local partner cooperation can release considerable working capacity that widen target groups and activity coverage.Coordination can strengthen sustainability beyond project support through more comprehensive (perhaps even collective) financing strategies.

Accordingly, the evaluation concludes that OPC itself is the only actor in the partnership with a potential to guide the process towards greater co-ordination.

Efforts to align OPC and MO requirements, when reporting for instance, with the systems and schedules of the POs are encouraged. Equally, efforts to reduce the administrative burden of the POs by coordinating reporting demands and project visits with other donors are encouraged.

Finally, because of the limited extent to which OPC has aligned its own demands with the working process and systems of the PO in the past, that OPC from 2012 intends to start providing core support to a number of organisations is quite welcomed.

7.4 Cost-effectiveness

The costs relating to OPC's sub-granting assignment have been, at least in comparison with some other framework organisations, fairly high. The reasons for this may be many and varied, but are generally related to the fact that many of the MOs, as well as their POs, are in need of substantial support to execute this kind of cooperation. Another explanation is that the average MO-supported project is small in terms of budget.

The project costs of the Swedish MOs have varied significantly from one organisation to the other. While some transfer 90 percent of the funding they receive to their POs, others have handed over less than 50 percent. The differences found are closely related to the extent to which the MOs and their members are engaged in and conduct capacity development activities for the POs. However, during the past year, OPC has applied a more restrictive attitude and ensured that MOs with particularly high costs pertaining to their own organisation reduced these costs.

OPC has initiated a range of reforms over the past few years that have enhanced cost effectiveness and are expected to continue to do so once fully implemented. However, considering the substantial differences between the directly funded OPC projects and the MO-projects in terms of funding actually transferred to the POs, more comprehensive assessments of whether or not these differences are well motivated is warranted.

8. Recommendations

Against this background, the evaluation recommends that:

1. OPC and the MOs, as a general rule, work to create a division of labour under which OPC assumes the overall project management and monitoring role and the MOs rely on their professional subject matter competence by focusing on the content of the project and the planning process. Responsibility for reporting to OPC should rest primarily with the POs.

2. OPC elaborates, based on the handbook, a clear framework for results analyses based on:
   - A more comprehensive context analysis (including other actors and results).
   - Initial outcome expectations.
   - A simple results chain illustration (separating objectives and indicators).

3. OPC considers introducing a results-management approach more in line with the aid effectiveness agenda. With such an approach, the primary purpose of reporting should not be accountability or control, but an input to planning.

4. OPC considers a more comprehensive effort to coordinate local partners. Thus, OPC should continue to ensure coordination between projects in order to achieve synergies with a focus on funding strategies, results analyses, and mutually reinforcing strategies from the onset of projects.

5. Where relevant, OPC brings local project managers together in project implementation for the purposes of:
   - Promoting learning from a joint base of experience.
   - Facilitating the adaptation of new approaches.
   - Coordinating development of training and other working materials.
   - Reviewing and introducing new management approaches and methods more effectively.

6. OPC continues to move towards enhanced coordination with other donors, stronger alignment with the systems and processes of the POs, and a higher degree of core support.

7. OPC considers these recommendations to ensure better cost-effectiveness. Particularly, MOs should be given a more technical advisory role, ongoing restructuring towards larger projects and programmes should be continuing, longer planning horizons should be introduced, and an adherence to a more structured and informative planning process should be maintained. OPC should regularly compare its sub-granting costs with those of other sub-granting framework organisations, and strive to achieve a cost for the assignment that is more in line with that of other organisations.

Annex 1 – People met and consulted

ABF-Busovaca
Irfan Rizvic
Elma Mekic

Akbayan
Percival Cendana

Aleco Labor and Employees Organization
Noel Cantal
Reynando Revenanje
Ephraim De Vera

APL
Josua Mata
Edwin Bustillos
Ann Garcia
Dave Batac
Fernando Turiano
Lopito Mendoza
Jun Unam

APL Batangas
Rezely Joy Marianan
Mary Grace
Noel De Mercado
Renie Calingasa
Elmer Garcia
Edil Hernandez
Rezely Joy Maranan
Jimmy Garcia

Bonifacio Day Care Centre
Laura Delgado
Judeflyn Gumapon
Sharon Quina
Ladylyn Cantura
Trinidad Canelas
Reunion Lazarra
Jocelyn Costales
Himaya Merama

FEDCO
Ray Fajardo

Handels Avdelning 27
Elisabeth Hjort

Interactive
Aleksandra Letic
Tanja Damjanovic

Lagarista Jeepney Operators' and Drivers' Association
Eduardo Revidizo
Reynaldo Galerio
Dionisio Meneta
Alberto Alcebar

LEARN
Reynaldo Rasing
Marlene Sindayen
Ferdie Leonor
Ceasar Juaban

Lipa San Juan Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association
Benny Abu

LIVS
Margareta Bruhn

MARINO
Milton Unso
Roger Cordero
Zosimo Vargas
Pablo Sverte
Darid Radaza
Pedro Jimenez
Alexander Postrano
Ramon Arizo
Cesar Dimabosa
Clarence Regil
Jessie Baldesimo
Renato Salon
Dy Rodel
Escalera David
Millana Adrian
Ringo Alomia

NCTU
Ernesto Cruz
James Aguilar

OPC
Johan Moström
Christina Bergman
Johanna Leander
Lisa Sjöblom
Fredrik Lindahl
Elsa Anderman
Anita Fagerberg

SEKO
Lennart Johnsson

Sindicat Radinka Trgovine (STBiH)
Mersiha Besirovic

Annex 2 – Terms of Reference

Evaluation of Olof Palme International Center (OPC)

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 General information

The evaluation is commissioned by Sida's Civil Society Unit (CIVSAM), in agreement with Olof Palme International Center (OPC). The aim of the evaluation is to contribute to OPC's capacity development and Sida's assessment of OPC, in particular in relation to OPC's upcoming framework application for 2012-2014, which is due on 1 October 2011.

In the agreement for support for 2010 between Sida CIVSAM and OPC it was stipulated that an external evaluation of OPC were to be carried out during 2010. The evaluation would focus on the quality and cost connected with OPC's role to channel funds through intermediary member organisations. However, the evaluation was not initiated, partly because of the organisational restructuring process that Sida underwent in 2010. On 17 February 2011, Sida and OPC agreed that the evaluation instead be undertaken during 2011.

A consultant with framework agreement with Sida will be called-off to complete the evaluation. The consultant shall have the support of relevant contact persons at OPC and Sida. Contact person at Sida is Joacim Carlson, Programme Manager at CIVSAM.

1.2 Contribution subject to evaluation

In 2009, the Government decided on a *Policy for support to CSOs in developing countries,* a normative framework for all direct and indirect Swedish support to CSOs in developing countries. Also in 2009, the Government decided on a S*trategy for support via Swedish civil society organisations 2010-2014*. The strategy directs Sida's support via Swedish CSOs and, where applicable, Reform Cooperation in Eastern Europe. Sida is responsible for the implementation, follow-up and evaluation of such operations. On the basis of the strategy, Sida CIVSAM has developed *Sida's Instructions for Grants from the Appropriation Item Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations*. The Instructions, which have been iimplemented since March 2010, are an integral part of the framework agreements that Sida enters into with selected so called framework organisations.

OPC has been a framework organisation since the organisation was established in 1992. OPC has 26 member organisations (MOs), a head office in Stockholm and 7 national and regional offices in programme countries. OPC's main focus areas are international development projects, party-oriented democracy support, and knowledge and debate about democracy, human rights and peace.

During the financial year 2011, OPC's framework agreement for the CSO-appropriation amounts to 51 350 000 SEK. According to the recently submitted financial report for 2010, about 2/3 of the budget for projects in programme countries was direct support from OPC to local partners. The remaining 1/3 was managed by MOs who in turn provided support to local partners.

2 ASSIGNMENT

2.1 Scope of work

The evaluation will assess the share of OPC's framework agreement portfolio that is sub-granted through its member organizations (hereinafter MO-programmes). It will consider the quality and the cost of the MO-programmes. Throughout the assessment, the MO-programmes are to be contrasted with OPC's own cooperation with local partners (hereinafter OPC-programmes).

The assessment will include, but not be limited to, the following aspects:

Efficiency/cost-effectiveness of MO-programmes

- How cost-effective are the MO-programmes when comparing impact and costs of selected projects?
- How does the added value of MOs relate to cost-effectiveness? Do the MOs contribute such added value to justify that in some projects only a minor part of the budget is managed by the local partner? What is the perspective of the local partners on this?

Efficiency/cost-effectiveness of OPC's administration of MO-programmes

- Is the cost for OPC's administration of the support justified in relation to the assignment and in comparison with that of other Swedish framework organisations?

OPC's role to quality-assure MO-programmes

- Does OPC work effectively with monitoring and capacity development support in relation to MOs?
- Does OPC work effectively with risk assessments and risk mitigation in the selection of MOs and MO-projects?
- What role do MOs play in the setup of OPC's framework cooperation? What possible other role could be foreseen that would enhance the overall effectiveness of the cooperation?

Overall quality of MO-programmes

- What is the quality of the MO-programmes, in general, based on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability in relation to the objectives set in the application to Sida?

2.2 Methodology

The assignment shall be performed through studies and analysis of documentation, which should be made available first and foremost by OPC and its MOs. The assignment will involve one field visit to an OPC country presence, to be proposed by the consultant. In addition, interviews shall be undertaken with staff of OPC, MOs, and Sida.

The assignment shall result in a report, not exceeding 50 pages excluding annexes, that includes recommendations on the above mentioned issues in order of priority.

The recommendations should aim to improve the set-up of the OPC framework cooperation. Each recommendation should be structured so that there is an observation, followed by analysis, followed by the recommendation.

2.3 Budget, time schedule and reporting

The consultants should take no more than seven person weeks to complete the assignment.

The objective is that the work will begin no later than 4 July 2011 and that the final report is submitted to Sida no later than 31 August 2011.

As a point of departure for the assignment, Sida will organize a meeting with the Consultant to discuss the method and time frame, whereupon the Consultant shall submit a brief inception report within one week for Sida's approval. The inception report shall elaborate a detailed plan for the assignment.

A draft report shall be presented to Sida and OPC no later than 14 august 2011. Sida and OPC will provide comments on the draft report no later than 21 August 2011, after which the Consultant shall prepare the final report within 5 working days.

The final report shall be submitted to Sida and OPC through regular post and e-mail.
After the submission of the final report, the Consultant shall organize a presentation of the results at a joint seminar with representatives from OPC and Sida.

The report shall be written in English and follow the guidelines in *Sida Evaluation Manual* (2004), including on reporting format (Annex B).

The report may be published, subject to decision by Sida, and must be presented in a way that enables publication without further editing.

2.4 Specification of requirements

The proposal from the proposed Consultant must include:

a) CVs for persons proposed for the assignment. The CVs must contain a full description of the person's theoretical qualifications and professional work experience;
b) The proposed working methods;
c) The proposed budget for the assignment, specified as fee per hour for each category of personnel, any reimbursable costs, any other costs and any discounts (all types of costs in SEK and exclusive of VAT);
d) Proposed time schedule for the assignment.

Annex 3 – References

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EVALUATION OF OLOF PALME INTERNATIONAL CENTER

The Olof Palme International Centre (OPC) is a Sida framework organisation that carries out a variety of projects in support of civil society organisations (CSO). Annual funding is in the range of 50 MSEK. This evaluation assesses the quality and cost-effectiveness of projects implemented through the 26 Member Organisations (MO) of OPC, which constitute about 40% of the CSO portfolio.

The study reviews the relationships between actors, results-orientation and learning mechanisms, and aspects of cost-effectiveness. It concludes that to a large extent, the roles and responsibilities of the actors are purposeful. OPC acts with experience and competence as a project coordinator, and the MOs perform well as conveyers of skills and experiences to civil society organisations in partner countries. At the same time, it is suggested that results-orientation and reporting, local coordination, and contextual adaptation can improve, as can certain aspects of cost-effectiveness.

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