

EVALUATION DEPARTMENT



REPORT 1/2016



Chasing civil society? Evaluation of Fredskorpset

CONTENT

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND	9
Purpose and implementation of the evaluation	9
Structure of the evaluation report.....	11
FK Norway – a brief overview	11
2: THE METHODOLOGY OF ASSESSING SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY	18
What is strengthening of civil society?	18
Theory of change, strategies and implementation	20
Supporting civil society – findings from the exchange projects.....	21
FK Norway and other Norwegian support for civil society strengthening	22
What does the literature say – lessons from scholarly work	22
3: THEORY OF CHANGE, STRATEGY AND IMPLEMENTATION	28
Theory of change	28
Implementation instruments.....	31
Conclusion	39
4: HOW DOES FK NORWAY STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY?	40
Assessing support to civil society	41
The Youth programme	45
Professional exchanges: North-South and South-South.....	48
Conclusion	52
5: FK NORWAY AND NORWEGIAN SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY	54
The Volunteer programme.....	55
The Professional programmes.....	55
Conclusion	56
6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	58
Conclusions.....	58
Recommendations	60
ANNEXES	63
LIST OF TABLES/FIGURES/BOXES	92
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	93
FORMER REPORTS FROM THE EVALUATION DEPARTMENT	94

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This report is the product of its authors,
and responsibility for the accuracy of data included
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interpretations, and conclusions presented
in this report do not necessarily reflect the views
of the Norad Evaluation Department.

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The team leader is responsible for planning and management of the evaluation. He carried out field visits to Thailand, Cambodia and South Africa and is the lead author and editor of the evaluation report. Stein-Erik Kruse conducted field visits to Thailand and Cambodia. He is responsible for drafting significant parts of the report. Johan Helland and Mari Norbakk were responsible for data collection related to Tanzania and Uganda and have provided inputs to the report. Mari Norbakk also collected data on exchange projects

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The team has attempted to address all evaluation questions in the Terms of Reference. Needless to say, any flaws and omissions are entirely ours. The team is also responsible for the views and recommendations expressed in this report.

Executive Summary

PURPOSE AND QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the overall approach of Fredskorpset, FK Norway (FK) in light of international research knowledge on how best to strengthen civil society in developing countries. The findings from the evaluation is intended to be used by FK and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in shaping and managing the organisation to improve its role and function, and as a basis for considering revision of the theory of change, mandate and policy guidelines for FK.

The evaluation focuses on FK's overall approach – including its role, function, set-up, strategic priorities, partners and theory of change - and explores if this is the optimal approach for strengthening civil society. It also looks at the comparative advantage of FK in relation to other instruments for strengthening civil society funded through the Norwegian development aid budget.

Contributing to the development and strengthening of civil society in developing countries is one of FK's three overarching mission objectives. The two other objectives –

promoting mutual exchange between organisations in Norway and developing countries, and promoting mutual learning and sharing of experiences – are not the focus for this evaluation.

METHODOLOGY

In order to respond to the key questions, the team adopted a four-step process. The first was to map lessons learned from the scholarly literature in order to identify how best to assess FK's contribution. The second was to identify FK's theory of change and to assess its strategy and its implementation mechanisms and procedures for developing policies and approaches to support civil society strengthening.

The third step was to analyse how FK in practice supported civil society strengthening. This was done through case studies of exchange projects involving civil society organisations in selected countries. Finally, the team mapped the extent of cooperation between FK's support and other Norwegian support to civil society.

Country visits were conducted to the two main case countries, Tanzania and Thailand, together

with supplementary visits to Cambodia, South Africa and Uganda. During the country visits, the team met and interviewed former and current FK staff at the regional offices for Africa and Asia, and staff of a range of current and former FK partners together with current and former participants, and staff at Norwegian Embassies, Norwegian NGOs and other stakeholders.

CONCLUSIONS

FK's strategy and approach are not optimal and sufficient as a basis for developing and strengthening civil society in developing countries. While strengthening civil society has remained an overall objective and the majority of FK-supported partners are civil society organisations, the focus for FK has been the mutual exchange. There have been increasing efforts to ensure that FK's approach is more targeted – especially through thematic priority areas – but this has not been related to civil society strengthening as an overall objective and sector.

FK's strategy documents do not define the concept of civil society. Nor do they specify what

strengthening civil society would entail. Insufficient clarity on these issues is also reflected in FK's management and instruments for translating objectives and strategies into actions.

FK's theory of change and strategy documents are also most developed at the individual level. Basically, FK's approach is a bottom up or "trickle up" strategy starting with organising individual encounters, but leading to a range of broader societal benefits. The theory of change is mainly a theory for exchanges with assumptions, or hopes, about how the participants and partners may become change agents. However, these assumptions are not sufficiently identified or critically reviewed to understand if they are likely to hold in practice. Moreover, the objectives and expected impacts are not operationalised or concretised.

FK has developed an impressive mutual exchange programme with solid operational support instruments and procedures in place. Since 2001, FK has funded more than 7000 persons on mutual exchanges between partners

in Norway and in developing countries, and between partners in the South-South exchanges. FK has made great efforts to ensure that the benefits for individuals are maximised and that partners manage the exchange well. This is particularly evident in the preparatory courses and homecoming seminars for participants, in the seminars with partners, and in procedures in place to ensure that the exchange runs as smoothly as possible for the participants.

FK's support to civil society – its third mission objective - is today mainly addressed through mutual exchange of personnel between civil society organisations under the FK Youth programme. This programme has targeted young people between the age of 18 and 25. The team found that the Youth programme is a good instrument for stimulating changes in the minds of participants. It is making a positive contribution in developing future active citizens. It is a less efficient instrument in contributing to organisational strengthening and in having a wider impact on civil society.

The mutual exchanges through the North-South and South-South programmes are found to be more efficient instruments for strengthening civil society compared to the exchanges through the Youth programme. They do contribute to changes at the individual level. Exchanges between civil society organisations in these programmes also had greater impacts on organisational development and the wider societal level compared to exchanges through the Youth programme. The results are highly uneven, but the greatest achievements were found where the purpose of the exchange was clearly formulated, when the activities were an integral part of a bigger project or programme by the partner to pursue these purposes, and by the organisational capacity of the participating partners. Selection of partners as well as participants in the exchanges are important to achieve this.

The findings illustrated the general and major dilemma that FK is facing – and which it has faced throughout its history: is the purpose of the exchange primarily to lead to benefits for the individual participants, or shall it have instrumental purposes beyond the exchange?

FK's comparative advantages in relation to other Norwegian instruments for supporting civil society lies in the mutual exchange model.

FK is in financial terms a small component of the Norwegian support to civil society in developing countries. Its portfolio of civil society partners in the South is also fairly similar to the types of organisations supported by the main Norwegian NGOs involved in Norad-funded civil society strengthening. FK does distinguish itself by bringing in a large and diverse number of Norwegian institutions and youth into partnerships and engagement with development work in the South, and in facilitating exchange of participants from the South. Furthermore, personnel exchange will also help to promote mutual learning and sharing of experiences and promote international networks between organisations in different countries and between diverse cultures.

FK's comparative advantage lies in its focus on mutual exchange of individuals and promoting cooperation between organisations in different countries. This provides added value compared to other Norwegian support to civil society in the South. The team concludes that there is a need

for further exploration of the possibility of making mutual exchange an additional component in existing Norwegian support to civil society, and that FK pays more attention to the enhancement of coordination and aid effectiveness in its civil society support.

FK's mutual exchange model has added value for civil society partners in the South.

There are some, but few examples of civil society organisations in developing countries receiving support both from FK and from other Norwegian funding sources.

The benefit of FK's programmes and approach highlighted by partners interviewed, lies primarily in three areas. The first is their operational approach to the exchange process itself. FK has become very strong in the ability to ensure that participants are prepared for the exchange and that partners provide the required support to the participants. Secondly, the exchanges are also by most partners interviewed found to be very important in promoting regional and global networks and – in some cases - have helped establish or strengthen joint programmes between

partners. Finally, the team has noted that partners generally – but with exceptions - are satisfied with the dialogue and communication with FK and that FK is perceived to be highly accommodative to needs and priorities of partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

FK has become an increasingly professional organisation, proficient in facilitating exchanges that work well for individual participants.

It has also become more purposeful in targeting selected sectors and areas of work. This is the point of departure. FK may meet the two first objectives in its mandate well – to facilitate reciprocal exchange programmes and promote mutual learning and sharing of experiences for participants in the exchanges. However, it fails to sufficiently address and operationalise its civil society objective. FK is faced with an overall strategic challenge and other more operational choices.

The evaluation concludes that the current situation is not optimal and satisfactory. Basically, the choice of direction is a strategic decision to be taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in

consultation with FK. The team suggests three alternative scenarios – all possible and logical implications of the study findings – trying to come to grips with the objective of civil society strengthening.

Future scenarios

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should in consultation with FK discuss and decide on future direction based on the three scenarios identified. The team recommends that the outcome of these discussions is reflected in a revised Government instruction for FK.

1: Leave the civil society objective but keep it as a priority sector

A possible option is to leave the civil society objective as an overall objective, but keep it as one of several priority sectors. There are two sub options:

- a) Focus on the qualities of an exchange for younger people and volunteers between civil society organisations; or

- b) Make it into a much more instrumental exchange for civil society strengthening with participants selected based on job experience and skills in relation to the purpose.

The changes from the current practice will be limited with the first option.

2: Abandon support to civil society as an objective

Another scenario would see FK abandoning its civil society objective. Instead, FK may focus solely on promoting mutual exchanges with the purpose of the exchanges being limited to mutual sharing of experiences and promotion of international cooperation, which may or may not be linked to civil society or coupled with exchanges within thematic priority areas. The changes from the current practice will be small in this scenario.

3: Keep the civil society objective as an overall objective

If it is decided to keep civil society strengthening as an overall objective, there are at least two future possible alternatives:

- a) Focus all future exchanges on exchanges between civil society organisations and emphasizing the individual benefits. This may in practice only be a theoretical alternative since it means excluding public and private sector exchanges – unless they have civil society components.
- b) Define FK as an instrument to strengthen civil society in selected countries through professional exchanges. This is a demanding alternative. This approach would require an analysis of civil society in the respective countries and an assessment of what would be FK's most effective partners. Partners and participants should be selected systematically and for specific purposes.

Subsidiary recommendations

The choice of future direction is critical and the most important. However, there are other subsidiary recommendations emerging from the findings and conclusions to be addressed mainly by FK itself in consultation with the Civil Society Department in Norad and other national and international partners:

1. FK's management and procedures is currently set up to manage individual exchange projects. There is need for further improvement of these management instruments. This includes
 - a) Review the criteria and process for selecting partners in the South;
 - b) Improve the appraisal process and further formalise the decision making process; and
 - c) Improve and expand the planning and reporting tools – in particular contextual narrative reporting.
2. Further interaction and cooperation with other Norwegian aid instruments for strengthening civil society should also be considered. FK should pay more attention to the enhancement of coordination and aid effectiveness in its civil society support. This includes exploring the possibilities of adding exchange components to other Norwegian-supported civil society strengthening. This may e.g., involve supporting exchanges between partners of Norwegian NGOs.
3. There is need for further consolidation and reduction of the fragmented nature of some of the new initiatives, especially in the South-South programme. It is difficult to see the value of supporting small number of isolated South-South exchanges – unless they are linked to broader networks, other Norwegian aid instruments or North-South exchanges.

1: Introduction and background

This chapter outlines the purpose and implementation of the evaluation, presents the structure of the evaluation report, and provides an overview of the evolution of Fredskorpset, *FK Norway (FK)*.

PURPOSE AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EVALUATION

The purpose of this study commissioned by Norad's Evaluation Department is to evaluate the overall approach of FK in light of international research knowledge on how best to develop and strengthen civil society in developing countries. The findings from the evaluation are intended to be used by FK and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in shaping and managing the organisation to improve its role and function, and as a basis for considering revision of the theory of change, the mandate and policy guidelines for FK.

The evaluation shall in accordance with the Terms of Reference focus on FK's overall approach – including its role, function, set-up, strategic priorities, partners and theory of change. The evaluation shall explore if this is the optimal approach for FK in light of international knowledge on how to best

develop and strengthen civil society. It shall also look at the comparative advantage of FK related to other means for strengthening of civil society being funded by the Norwegian development aid budget.

The four key questions identified by the Evaluation Department are reproduced in Box 1.1. The evaluation covers the 2006 – 2015 period.

FK is a government agency under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. FK's mandate is provided through a Government instruction, it is funded through the development aid budget and is governed by an allocation letter from the Ministry. The funding is coming through the budget line for "civil society and democratisation" and its annual disbursement in recent years is about NOK 160 million. An additional 45 million is provided to FK for management and administrative costs. This has been a relatively small amount – less than 5% - compared to the total disbursement to or through civil society organisations from Norway's development assistance budget.

In accordance with the overall objectives for Norwegian development assistance, the main

objective for FK is to contribute to the pursuit of the overarching objective of Norway's cooperation with developing countries. In particular, FK will work to promote basic human rights. On this basis, FK will promote contact and collaboration between individuals, organisations and institutions in Norway and developing countries, built on solidarity, equality and reciprocity. It will

BOX 1.1: KEY QUESTIONS

1. Is the current strategy and approach of FK Norway optimal when it comes to developing and strengthening civil society in developing countries?
2. What is the comparative advantage of FK's strategy, approach and work compared with other Norwegian funded means for developing and strengthening of the civil society in developing countries?
3. What are the possible future options for FK when it comes to approach, set-up, programs and partners?
4. What is the added value of FK's programs for civil society organisations, in particular for those that receive other kind of Norwegian assistance.

create broad commitment to human rights and international development issues, especially targeting young people.

FK has three mission objectives as defined in the Ministry's guidelines and in FK strategy documents.¹ They are as formulated in the *Strategy 2017* to

- 1: Facilitate reciprocal exchange programmes between a diverse range of organisations, institutions and companies in developing countries and Norway;
- 2: Promote mutual learning and sharing of experiences, while contributing to the transfer of knowledge and experience back to the FK participants' own societies; and
- 3: Contribute to the development and strengthening of civil society in developing countries.

¹ See e.g. the 2010 *Instructions for FK Norway and the Strategy 2017 FK Norway* (both are available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/en/instruction-and-strategy/>)

FK administers three types of exchange programmes targeting young professionals and volunteers. They are the *Youth* programme (volunteers), the *North-South* programme (including administration of the Norwegian participation in the European ESTHER programme in the health sector) and the *South-South* programme. FK also has several thematic priority areas. Currently (2015-2017) these are education, health and private sector development in addition to civil society. See more on this below.

The evaluation team's data collection and analysis have progressed through several distinct phases. The first inception phase was conducted in May-July 2015. This involved a first collection and processing of FK documents. Initial discussions were also held with Norad's Evaluation Department and FK as well as a meeting with the reference group in mid-June. The reference group – chaired by Norad's evaluation department – was composed of representatives from the Evaluation Department, FK, Norad's civil society department and the Section for Management of Subsidiary Agencies and Development Funds in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It has met once.

The draft inception report was submitted in late June. It was forwarded by the Evaluation Department to FK and the other members of the reference group. Following comments a final inception report was submitted and approved in Mid-July. The inception report (58 pages) outlined the team's interpretation of the Terms of Reference and approach to the evaluation, the methodology to be used, a preliminary analysis of the geographical distribution of exchanges, a summary of what previous evaluations said about civil society and finally a detailed work plan. This included selection of country cases and presentation of FK projects to be further examined.

The next phase began in August and culminated with the submission of the draft report in mid-October. This included data collection from FK documents, interviews with staff at FK in Oslo, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at Norad and at FK partners in Norway and other stakeholders. Country visits were conducted to the two main case countries, Tanzania and Thailand together with supplementary visits to Cambodia, South Africa and Uganda. During the country

visits, the team met and interviewed former and current FK staff at the regional offices for Africa and Asia, staff at a range of current and former FK partners together with current and former participants (some interviewed through focus groups), staff at Norwegian Embassies, Norwegian NGOs and other stakeholders. Following the return to Norway supplementary interviews were held with FK officials and FK partners. Provisional findings and recommendations were also discussed with the FK management before submission of the draft report. A full list of all persons interviewed are provided in Annex Two.

Norad's Evaluation Department distributed the draft report to FK, Norad and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as to FK partners and Norwegian Embassies interviewed by the team. Following the receipt of written comments as well as additional interviews with FK the team submitted its final report in December.

STRUCTURE OF THE EVALUATION REPORT

The present *Chapter One* presents the purpose of the evaluation and the implementation process.

It also contains an overview of the historical evolution of FK and its main features.

Chapter Two provides a presentation of the methodological approach together with a summary discussion of lessons from scholarly and evaluative research on support to civil society.

Chapter Three maps and analyses FK's programme theory, its policy guidelines, strategies, implementations mechanisms and procedures in relation to civil society strengthening.

Chapter Four provides an analysis and presents the team's findings of how FK supports strengthening of civil society. This also includes findings from the case studies and countries visited. The associated *Annex One* provides a profile of FK's engagement during the evaluation period in each of the countries visited.

Chapter Five analyses FK's role as instrument for civil society strengthening in relation to other Norwegian instruments. This includes lessons from partners receiving support both from FK and other Norwegian funding sources.

Chapter Six presents the team's conclusions and recommendations.

Annex Two provides a list of the literature consulted.

The list of persons interviewed for this evaluation is provided in *Annex Three*.

Annex Four provides FK Norway's comments to the report

The Terms of Reference is reproduced in *Annex Five*.

FK NORWAY – A BRIEF OVERVIEW

FK was established in 1963 as a government agency, which through a volunteer arrangement, aimed at making medium level professional skills available to developing countries, while at the same time providing idealistic young Norwegians the opportunity to engage in development work. However, there was an increasing recognition during the 1990s that this model was no longer a feasible instrument. The institution was seen by many as becoming increasingly similar to

traditional technical assistance programmes to developing countries, which were criticized as an in-effective way of transferring know-how and in the process losing much of the grassroots orientation and idealism fundamental to the original idea.²

The old Fredskorpset was discontinued in 1999. The traditional technical assistance programmes (“the Norad experts”) were also in a parallel process greatly reduced in scope and volume. The prominent role of the Norad experts was partly replaced by institutional cooperation and “twinning” between especially public institutions in Norway and similar institutions in Norway’s partner countries.³ The government decided on a different solution for FK. Closing it down was one option on the table, but in March 2000 the Cabinet decided to relaunch FK.

2 See more about the background and evolution of FK in Roy Krøvel and Kristin Skare Orgeret (red.), *Fredskorpset*, Oslo: Pax 2013. See especially the chapter by Anders Firing Lunde, “Et ineffektivt fredskorps’ endelikt. Personlig utvikling, eller utvikling i Afrika?,” pp 145-159, as well as the 2006 evaluation from Norad, John Carlsen et al., *Evaluation of Fredskorpset*, Oslo: Norad Evaluation Department 2006 (*Evaluation Report 2/2006*).

3 See the important study by Kim Forss et al., *Evaluation of the effectiveness of technical assistance personnel financed by the Nordic countries*, commissioned by Danida, Finnida, Norad and Sida (unpublished 1988).

The new FK differed fundamentally from the old model in several ways: First, it was no longer to be a volunteer programme, but a mutual exchange programme of young people between partner institutions in Norway and the South, or between partners in different South countries. Norwegian participants should work in countries in the South, and participants from the South should work in Norway, or be exchanged to other countries in the South.

Secondly, the new FK should primarily act as a facilitator and funding institution, which provided a management framework for exchange of personnel between partner institutions. The exchanges were to be organised and implemented by institutions in Norway and institutions in the South.

Legally, the new FK Norway was established as a Public Administration agency with special privileges under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The cabinet appointed a governing board, but this was disbanded in 2009. The Ministry now governs and instructs FK through a government instruction from 2010, annual

allocation letters and formal biannual meetings (“etatstyringsmøter”).

The first and original FK programme (“North-South”) was launched in 2001 and revolved around exchange of personnel between the ages of 22 and 35 between Norway and developing countries. However, FK has gradually diversified and launched three additional programmes. A South-South programme was added in 2002 focusing on exchanges between partners in the South. A senior programme between North (Norway) and developing countries was launched in 2005 targeting the 55-70 age group. The senior programme was disbanded in 2009. These programmes are today often referred to as the FK professional programmes. They target the 22-35 age group and there is some emphasis on job experience and professional qualifications in the selection of participants.⁴

4 There are some variations here. Within the ESTHER programme – which often targets more specialized participants – there is more flexibility regarding the upper age (participants are on average older than in other areas), the allowances are higher and there are also funding for short-term technical advice/resource persons. See more on this in the section on “application forms and guidelines” on the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/en/partner/forms-and-guidelines/>

In addition to these programme, FK in 2002 launched a special youth programme directed at young persons between 18 and 25 years.⁵ This programme is also referred to as the volunteer programme. In the current 2015-2017 strategy period FK has increased the upper age limit from 25 to 35 years for this programme. However, there is much less emphasis on job experience and professional qualifications compared to the professional programmes. The exchange period is often also much shorter (3-10) months rather than nearly a year, which is the norm in the professional programmes. Within the Young programme participants on exchange are now travelling in teams of two and two or more. The exchanges with the Youth programme now focuses solely on civil society organisations. There is also more emphasis in the new strategy to facilitate the retention of the volunteer by the partner organisation after the return from the exchange.

⁵ The Youth programme was also partially inherited from Norad with the responsibilities of managing the on-going Norad-supported youth exchanges through Norwegian NGOs being transferred to the new FK.

FK's mandate is provided by the Norwegian Parliament and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through Parliament's allocation and through the Government instruction and the annual allocations letters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The instruction is from 2010 and provides the three objectives listed above, of which support to civil society is one. It replaced the 2004 Statutes for FK. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs through annual allocation letters provides further guidelines on thematic priorities. They are derived from the annual state budget as approved by Parliament. These priorities have changed quite frequently since they were first mentioned in 2004. The 2004 allocation letter specified that new activities should focus on education, HIV/AIDS, trade and private sector development, sustainable development, good governance and peacebuilding. In 2005, this was expanded to include civil society, culture and the rights of vulnerable groups such as women, children, indigenous peoples and people with disabilities.

In 2006, there was some sharpening with the focus now specified to be education, HIV/AIDS,

sustainable development, private sector development/trade/agriculture, good governance and peacebuilding together with gender equality and women's rights. In 2007, it is education, HIV/AIDS, environment, private sector development, good governance and anti-corruption, peacebuilding and gender equality.

The 2008 allocation introduced the ESTHER-network. This is a European cooperation to support health institutions in developing countries and FK shall administer the Norwegian participation in this. The Norwegian FK contribution will be through a North-South mutual exchange programme. This letter also states that FK shall contribute to greater awareness on climate change and to have a focus on gender equality issues.

In 2009, only the ESTHER-network is highlighted together with the need to give high priority to FK Youth. In 2010, 2011 and 2012 the allocation letters only mentioned the ESTHER-network. The listing of thematic priorities returned in the 2013 allocation letter with an emphasis on activities and projects that enhances participation by young

people in their own societies, just redistribution, private sector development, climate, environment and health issues. Human rights shall be prioritised in the countries where these rights are weak. Mainstreaming of gender equality, environment and climate issues are emphasized.

The allocation letters for 2014 and 2015 reintroduced education as a priority together with continued priority to private sector development and health. Human rights, including gender equality, together with integration of people with disabilities shall be an integrated part of all programmes.

FK's mandate defines FK's mission statement and underlines the fundamental principles on which its activities are based. The current long-term strategy (*Strategy 2017*) builds on the previous one (2010-2014 with its 2012-2014 revision) and points out the main objectives towards 2017. The 2012 revised version of 2010-2014 strategy – developed during 2011 – provided for the reduction in the number of countries with exchange projects from 60 to 30, they began introducing a results based framework and the development of theory of change embedded describing how its

TABLE 1.1: FK PARTICIPANTS 2001 – 2014

Programmes/Themes	Participants 2001-2014
FK Professional (North-South, South-South, senior)	
Governance and human rights	994
Health	838
Business development	833
Education	761
Environment	754
Culture and sport	536
Gender equality	181
Peacebuilding	135
FK Youth	2.225
TOTAL	7 257

Source: Data derived from FK Annual Reports, an unpublished 2015 memo by Helge Espe, FK ("Fredskorpsets bidrag til oppnåelse av tusenårsmålene") and John Carlsen et al., *Evaluation of Fredskorpset*, Oslo: Norad Evaluation Department 2006 (*Evaluation Report 2/2006*). It is noted in the FK memo that the classification in thematic areas may not be very accurate but we believe that it reflects the main trend in the FK portfolio.

method of mutual exchange could promote transformation at the individual and institutional level. See more on this below and in Chapter Three.

Since 2001, a total of 7257 young persons from Norway and developing countries have participated in FK-funded exchanges. Excluding the 1805

participants in the first years up to 2005, this means that a total of 5452 persons have participated in FK exchanges in the evaluation period. The current average age of the participants is well below 30 years, while participants in the ESTHER programme targeting more specialised professionals tend to be a bit older. See Table 1.1 above.

TABLE 1.2:
PARTICIPANTS PER PROGRAMME 2012-1014

Year FK Programme	2012	2013	2013	Total
FK Youth	270	280	308	858
FK North – South (incl. ESTHER)	184	184	198	566
FK South - South	187	152	134	473
TOTAL	641	616	640	1897

Source: Derived from FK Annual Reports.

Table 1.2 provides a further breakdown of the 2012-2014 portfolio of FK projects.

The participants have come from a large number of countries. At its height, FK has supported projects in nearly 60 countries. In 2011 FK decided to reduce the number of countries to 30 by 2014. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs then decided to make further cuts in 2014 by dropping countries not on the new list of countries eligible for Norwegian development aid.

This reduced the number of FK countries to 25 by 2015. However, a few major countries dominate the exchanges. In 2014, 10 countries (excluding Norway) had 10 or more partners and 14 countries (excluding Norway) had more than 10 participants. These partners are mostly found in Eastern and Southern Africa and in South and Southeast Asia. Table 1.3 lists countries with 10 or more FK participants in 2014.

TABLE 1.3:
COUNTRIES WITH 10 OR MORE PARTICIPANTS IN 2014

Country	Participants
Norway	231
Kenya	48
Tanzania	43
Uganda	28
Malawi	26
Ethiopia	23
South Africa	20
Brazil	17
Zambia	17
India	17
Sri Lanka	14
Cambodia	13
Nepal	13
Thailand	11
Mozambique	10
Madagascar	10

Source: FK Annual Report 2014

TABLE 1.4: FK PARTICIPANTS PER PROGRAMME AND FK EXPENDITURES 2014 (IN MILLION NOK)

Programme/expenditures	Participants	Expenses
North - South programme (incl. ESTHER)	198	72.1
South - South programme	134	37.3
FK Youth programme	308	40.1
Training and other programme expenses	-	11,1
FK salaries and administration		45.2
TOTAL	640	206.2

Source: FK Annual Report 2014

Table 1.4 provides a list of participants per programme coupled with figures for FK expenditures that year (all figures from 2014).

FK has regional offices for Africa and Asia. They have played a key role in identifying South partners and in managing the South-South programme. From 2015 the management responsibility was transferred to FK in Oslo and the regional offices – or more accurately regional consultants - now focus on marketing, identification of potential partners and on logistics.

About 60% of the partners in the FK programme are classified by FK as being civil society organisations, 15% as belonging to the private sector and 25% being public or semi-public institutions. These figures seem to be have been relatively constant throughout the evaluation period.

The management and implementation of the exchanges are the responsibilities of the partner. FK has established a number of procedures to help ensure that participants are having a good stay during the exchange period. Critical here is the preparatory and homecoming seminars for

all participants and the partner seminars. The main preparatory seminars have varied in length and curriculum over time and are today running for two weeks (originally it was four weeks). Currently they take place in Bangkok, Kampala and Johannesburg once a year and are overlapping with shorter partner (2-3 days) and homecoming seminars (1-2 days).

For the FK Youth programme the training has also developed over time. Today, it is focused on shorter (3 days) biannual FK Youth camps in Norway attended by all participants. A Youth

camp is being introduced in Uganda to cater for South-South exchanges in the Youth programme. The partners in the Youth programme run their own preparatory courses for participants with guidance from FK.

For a short period, FK also brought all South partners to Norway for regular consultations and discussion of future direction. This took place in 2004, 2006 and 2008. FK also experimented with various models to bring together former participants (the alumni) in their home countries. By 2007 this included 14 countries in the South and typically a gathering took place over one or two days once or twice per year. Normally, Norwegian FK participants in the country and representatives from the Norwegian Embassy were also invited.

Additionally, FK has also experimented with bringing partners together working in the same sector. Probably the most successful of these is the health network. Thematic conferences have also been held in several countries. This was intended to inform public debate in the country concerned and to mobilise Norwegian

interest and provide a platform for the Embassies to meet with the partners. These thematic conferences have focused on *The role of media in fighting corruption* (Kenya 2004, Uganda 2004, Tanzania 2005, Malawi 2005, Zambia 2006); *Gender equality and development* (Ethiopia 2007, Uganda 2007, India 2007, Tanzania 2008, Kenya 2008); *Environment and human rights* (Cambodia 2005, Vietnam 2006, Mongolia 2009); and on *Peacebuilding* (Nepal 2006) and *Sustainable tourism* (Tanzania 2009).

From 2013, these conferences were replaced by a new concept, *Friends of Norway*. Several conferences have been organised under this new umbrella: This included *environment and water* (Nepal 2013); youth leadership (Uganda 2013, Tanzania 2014, Guatemala 2014, South Africa 2014); and *global health and education* (Malawi 2015).

FK's has engaged with a range of other volunteer agencies and institutions although FK's approach is fairly unique with its emphasis on mutual exchange. This includes active participation in the International Forum for Volunteering

in Development. FK has also engaged with the UN Volunteers programme, the International Association for Volunteer Effort, CIVICUS (The World Alliance for Civil Participation) and others. FK has also interacted with the UN Office for South-South cooperation. FK has been part of official Norwegian delegations to international conferences on global aid policies and the role of civil society.

2: The methodology of assessing support to civil society

The purpose of the study is to evaluate the overall approach of FK in light of international research knowledge on how best to develop and strengthen civil society in developing countries; and then to use the findings to identify options for future adjustments and changes in FK's policies, programmes and operations – if required.

In order to respond to the key questions in Terms of Reference (cf. Annex Four and the presentation in Chapter One), the team adopted a four-step process. The first was to map lessons learned from the scholarly literature in order to identify how best to assess FK's contribution to civil society strengthening. The second was to identify FK's programme theory and to assess its strategy and its implementation mechanisms and procedures for developing policies and approaches to contribute to the development and strengthening of civil society.

The third step was to analyse how FK in practice supported civil society strengthening. This was done through case studies of exchange projects in select countries where it was assumed that FK had provided extensive civil support over time.

Finally, the team mapped and analysed relations between support to civil society provided through FK and from other Norwegian instruments and funding sources.

The findings emerging from these four steps were then used to formulate the team's response and conclusion on each of the four key questions and to present our recommendations. Below we have summarised our approach for each of these four steps.

It is important to reemphasise that this is an evaluation of FK's contribution to strengthening civil society in developing countries – the third of FK's three overarching objectives. It is not an evaluation of the two other mission objectives or of other dimensions and aspects of FK's activities and performance unless related directly to civil society strengthening in the South.

WHAT IS STRENGTHENING OF CIVIL SOCIETY?

The literature on the role of civil society is vast, also on what civil society is as well as on how civil society in developing countries can be supported and strengthened. A particular

challenge is also that civil society rarely appears as a clear and distinctive sector that can be strengthened as opposed to strengthening of individual civil society organisations. The role of civil society also changes over time and varies greatly between countries. Strengthening civil society in Vietnam, Uganda, Egypt or South Africa in 2015 will often require very different approaches. There are also several theoretical approaches to civil society. Insights and lessons learned from the literature is summarised in a separate section at the end of this chapter. For this purpose we have identified a civil society organisation as any association or institution not belonging to the private commercial or the state and public sector.

We have deliberately adopted a broad understanding of civil society strengthening. From the literature the team identified three levels and a series of activities to help us understand the role and contribution of FK's exchange approach to civil society strengthening. This is summarised in Box 2.1 on next page. Assessments of contributions can be made both at the individual level, at the organisational level in strengthening the civil

BOX 2.1: CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING – LEVELS AND ACTIVITIES

Levels	Individual	Organisational	Wider
Activities	<i>Changing minds</i> - to what extent the exchange contributes to changing attitudes and knowledge of the participant with potential wider effects.	<i>Increasing participation</i> - to what extent participants become involved in civil activities/ organisations (voluntarism).	<i>Providing services</i> - to what extent the participants provide services to beneficiaries. <i>Strengthening networking</i> - to what extent participants contributes to national/regional networking.
	<i>Changing skills</i> - to what extent the exchange contributes to changing individual skills and behaviour.	<i>Strengthening organisational capacity</i> - to what extent participants become involved in strengthening organisational systems and procedures.	<i>Contributing to advocacy and policy development</i> – to what extent the participants contribute to a rights based organisation. <i>Monitoring policy implementation</i> – to what extent the participants are involved in monitoring the government’s policy implementation.

society organisation involved in the exchange, and at the wider level – beyond the individual and his/her organisational home.

This is intended as an analytical framework for assessing aspects of FK’s support to civil society – covering individual, organisational and societal levels. There could also be other aspects, but this is what we have included in this study. The individual level – a key focus for FK’s approach to civil society strengthening (cf. Chapter Three) – has two main types of activities. One revolves

around the contribution of the exchange experience on the individual and his/her attitudes and knowledge. The second activity is the ability of the exchange to contribute to improving his/her skills and behaviour. FK-supported exchange projects may have a focus on one or both of these activities.

The second level covers organisational dimensions. Here we want to examine to what extent and how the exchange projects contribute to the strengthening of civil society organisations in the

South (the FK partner institution). Specifically, does it address and contribute to strengthening organisational competence and capacity?

The final level is focusing on the wider role and functions of civil society in a particular country. To what extent are the selected FK partners and the focus of the exchange project also addressing one or more activities beyond the individual participant and organisation, such as service delivery, strengthening networking, advocacy and lobbying, and public policy monitoring?

Using such a framework helps us to capture various characteristics of FK's civil society strengthening. International literature defines civil society as a multi-dimensional concept and strengthening of civil society will have to be understood accordingly. There is a big difference between supporting increased voluntarism and social activism among individuals and defining civil society as a counterweight to and critical watchdog of government policies and practices (e.g. policy advocacy and budget monitoring). Civil society needs in principle to be strengthened at all levels, but there is nothing wrong operating at only one level. The relevant questions are to what extent it is done well, if the broader civil society context is recognised and understood and if the individual exchanges have intended and/or unintended effects also at the organisational and societal levels.

Finally, the literature reviewed also suggest a number of other variables critical for an evaluation of civil society strengthening through mutual exchange. Do the exchanges have a clear purpose? Do the participating partner institutions have ownership and commitment to the

purpose? Are the participants in the exchange project sufficiently qualified? Are the selected participants committed to the specific purpose of the exchange?

In applying this approach, the team also critically depends on the availability of the data. Do project documents, appraisals and decision-making papers have sufficiently formulated objectives in place in relation to civil society strengthening? Do we have monitoring data enabling us to assess progress and results in relation to objectives? And do these data enable us to address challenges in relation to attribution and to assess the role of the exchange compared to other factors which may impact on all the three levels? In most cases the team does not expect to be able to assess the results or impacts of FK's support. Our primary focus is to be able to map and analyse approach and progress to get an understanding of how and to what extent civil society strengthening is addressed in FK's exchange projects.

THEORY OF CHANGE, STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The second step was to identify and – if need be – to further develop FK's theory of change and approach to strengthening of civil society. Through FK's theory of change we expect to be able to identify how the exchange projects were intended to bring about the long-term goal of contributing to a strengthening of civil society in developing countries. After having identified the components of the strategy, we then moved to the link between this strategy and the implementation. We examined the explicit policies, rules and regulations to see how FK is “directed” to undertake specific actions in order to realise the objectives. This included the strategy document; the allocation letters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including also decisions by the government appointed board (disbanded in 2009); criteria and procedures for selecting countries and partners; internal guidelines and rules for the various programmes and planning processes; partnership and collaboration agreements; and reporting requirements.

We also reviewed possible use of incentives and encouragements to stimulate civil society strengthening within the organisation. We also intended to look at possible instruments to create understanding and motivation.

SUPPORTING CIVIL SOCIETY – FINDINGS FROM THE EXCHANGE PROJECTS

The next step was to examine actual FK-supported exchange projects to identify how and to what extent civil society strengthening were pursued and implemented. Nearly 5500 young persons from more than 60 countries have participated in FK-funded exchanges in the evaluation period. The majority of partner institutions are civil society organisations. The team therefore made a selection of countries and then of FK partnerships and exchanges. We intended to select countries and FK partners that had experienced a wide range of FK support over time.

At inception stage the team first identified all major FK countries in Africa and Asia – countries with ten or more exchanges per year and where all the three current FK programmes were

present. Then we identified all current or recently completed major exchange projects where the exchange partner in the South was a civil society organisation. A major exchange project was defined as a project that was in its third round of exchanges or had completed three rounds.

Following consultations with FK and the Norad evaluation department we then decided to select the most relevant projects in two countries – Tanzania and Thailand. Tanzania is a large FK country and a major recipient of Norwegian aid to civil society from other Norwegian support instruments (such as Norwegian NGOs and directly from the Embassy). Thailand has also been a major FK country and has been an anchor country for several of FK's major South-South projects. In addition, the team also paid shorter visits to Uganda (the home of FK's Africa office), South Africa (a large FK country that throws further light on the relations between different Norwegian instruments) and Cambodia (a partner in several South-South projects with Thailand).

In preparing for these country visits, we then did a further mapping of all FK exchanges in the country in the evaluation period and developed a profile of FK's engagement.

Data on the country and case studies was collected through interviews with past and current FK participants in the case study countries, with FK partners, with FK staff and with Norwegian Embassy staff and with FK-partners in Norway involved in the selected cases. For all projects, we collected project documents and available monitoring data, including reviews and external evaluations where available.

In addition to the case specific data, we consulted other relevant reviews and external evaluations of FK projects in other countries or regions. We also consulted FK's electronic participant and partner surveys, which provides data on perceptions by those involved.

These data sources will not provide a full picture of the variety and scope of FK's engagement in relation to strengthening of civil society.

We have selected countries and civil society organisations that have experienced more support from FK than others have. However, we do expect that the data from the selected main countries and main projects coupled with other data will enable an analysis of main features, strengths and weaknesses in FK's approach to strengthening of civil society in developing countries.

FK NORWAY AND OTHER NORWEGIAN SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING

The final step was to map and analyse relations between FK's exchange projects and other Norwegian support for strengthening of civil society. Does FK support the same or similar type of civil society organisations as other Norwegian channels and instruments of support - such as support from Norwegian NGOs or from the Norwegian Embassies? Are there any overlap or synergies between support provided? Is there a valued added in the support provided by FK compared to support provided by others? The team responds to these questions both by a mapping of total Norwegian and FK support in this area in the countries visited, through

data collection from interviews with FK partners also receiving other Norwegian support, and from interviews with Embassy staff and Norwegian NGOs.

The findings from each of these steps enabled the team to draw conclusions on each of the main questions in the Terms of reference. This paved the way for the formulation of a series of recommendations.

WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY – LESSONS FROM SCHOLARLY WORK

The literature on civil society and support to civil society in the South provides important lessons relevant to this evaluation of FK's contribution to civil society strengthening. Since the early 1990s, strengthening civil society has become a dominant feature of relationships between Northern and Southern civil society organisations, and of the growing support that different official aid agencies give to civil society organisations. This has also led to an expanding body of literature – research publications as well as project and evaluation documents – on civil society in

developing countries and how they can be supported by foreign donor agencies.⁶

What is civil society?

A first observation from this literature is that “civil society” is not a clear and distinctive sector in society that can be strengthened - without any further analysis of the concept, how it has evolved and changed over time, and how identity, role and function depend on the context in which “civil society” operates. This is very often not recognized by foreign donor agencies. Support for civil society has become an increasingly prominent part of development assistance, as a category of funding in its own right, as one dimension of democracy support, and within most mainstream sectors of development aid – not because of its clarity, but more by its attractive ambiguity.

⁶ The literature is vast. A good introduction with presentation of the state of our knowledge and overview of key issues is provided in David Lewis and Nazneen Kanji, *Non-governmental Organizations and Development*, London: Routledge 2009, Michael Edwards, *The Oxford Handbook of Civil Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011 as well as in the recent synthesis study by Norad's civil society panel, the Tracking Impact Study (Norad 2012). The 2012 Norad study also summarises and updates insights from the chapters on civil society support provided in Roger C. Riddell: *Does Foreign Aid Really Work?* Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008.

There is no consensus in international research on exactly where civil society starts and stops – that is, on which actors should be included and excluded.⁷ For some, civil society's essence is social movements and interest groups; others adhere to a wider notion of class, sectorial and professional activities. Political scientists have debated the definition of civil society for many years. In its broadest sense, civil society is defined as the sphere of non-coercive association between the individual and the state. This definition extends well beyond organised forms of voluntary associations that are instrumental to a particular policy purpose. In conceptual terms, civil society can be defined both as an intermediary space between the individual and the state, and as a set of actors with political and social functions. These are not mutually exclusive definitions, but stress different aspects of civil society's role.

There is a crucial conceptual divide in the academic literature on the concept of civil society

⁷ Richard Youngs, *Rethinking Civil Society and Support for Democracy*, Expertgruppen för bistandsanalys, Stockholm 2015, (EBA Report 01/2015). This study has inspired parts of the discussion below.

that is of practical relevance. Analysts have traditionally adopted one of two perspectives. One is the liberal concept of civil society as a check on the state and government (a view first associated with John Locke). The other is a concept of civil society as a sphere of building social identities and acting as a transmission belt between the private sphere and the state (a notion with roots in Tocqueville's idea of 'schools of democracy', and work by more modern sociologists such as Robert Putnam). The focus on social capital has often been seen as an antidote to state shortcomings in the development sphere.⁸

Civil society is a more contested concept today than it was in the moment of liberal optimism following the fall of the Berlin Wall. The division between 'old' and 'new' civil society is the subject of much debate. In recent years, a cluster of new challenges and opportunities have arisen that effect civil society support. New kinds of civic actors and protest have appeared; new forms of organisation have taken shape; and at the same time,

⁸ For a summary and further discussions of these two models see also T. Beichelt et al., *Civil Society and Democracy Promotion*, London: Palgrave Macmillan 2014.

new regime tactics have narrowed the space for civil society support in some countries.

There is today a wider variety of civil society organisations that look very different from the standard, capital-based, professionalised NGO that represents the most common type of partner for many international donors. Today, in many countries civic movements may militate for democracy, but not be especially 'liberal'. Some analysts argue that the 'newness' of today's civil society is exaggerated. But this old-new divide is an increasingly potent phenomenon with which external support for civil society stills struggles to come to terms.

An important debate in most societies is about a younger generation seeking more direct models of democracy based on digital technology and crowd sourcing, and what these demands mean for concepts of both representational and direct democracy. Today, political influence is wielded through diffuse social movements at least as much as through traditional civil society organisations. These movements offer a form of 'counter power' as they link together different

issue-based networks. They are about changing social values and sharing cognitive identities. Today's civil society is more about diffuse networks, selective participation, actions as ends in themselves, civil disobedience, and symbolism. The London School of Economics annual civil society survey notes that in recent years global civil society has shifted in its emphasis from professional NGOs to broader citizen activism.⁹

It would be short-sighted for donors not to react to or to dismiss the fluidity of today's civic spheres. Protests and new forms of civic activism have rocked a large number of very different countries. Just in the last two years, civil society revolts have been seen in Brazil, Turkey, India, Thailand, Russia, Ukraine, Bosnia, Egypt and Bahrain – to name but a few. Critical voices make a significant distinction between civil society organisations and social movements. The authors of the annual civil society reports argue that donors fund the former in a way that shuts out, contains or tames those social

⁹ See M. Kaldor et al. (eds.), *Global Civil Society 2012: ten years of critical reflection*, London, Palgrave 2012.

movements that push for more radical versions of democracy or for more far-reaching policy changes. The standard criticism is that donors have been primarily responsible for creating somewhat artificial or 'engineered' spheres of civil society. Donor activities have led to an inaccurate and unhealthy conflation of 'civil society' with a layer of professional and overtly political, advocacy NGOs. These have squeezed out the more organic growth of looser, grass-roots organisations, rather than helping the latter in their goals of effectively influencing state bodies. Research has charted the emergence of non-institutionalized, volunteer-based civic initiatives that are worryingly ambivalent or even hostile to donor's democracy support agenda.

Technical assistance, institutional cooperation and volunteers

We noted in Chapter One that the "old" Fredskorpset model of providing volunteers for development became discredited as being an ineffective way of transferring know-how and skills to partners in the South. This paved the way for the current FK and its focus on "mutual

exchange" between partners. The strong emphasis on technical assistance in Norwegian aid (the "Norad experts") was also in a similar process replaced by a stronger focus on institutional cooperation between institutions in Norway and in the South. There is limited research and evaluative studies of these new mechanisms.

Studies of the deployment of volunteers overseas and work supporting development is available but they do not really address the specific features of the FK model with its emphasis on "mutual exchange" of young persons. Some of the findings from the literature is still relevant for the FK model. A main recent evaluation (the 2014 study of Australia's volunteer service) notes the importance of voluntarism for the individuals involved, but also finds that benefits for the partner are stronger if older and more experienced persons (older than 35) are deployed. It also notes the placement of volunteers must be linked to long-term plans for capacity development of the selected organisations. Furthermore, the planned achievements of

each round of deployment should be cumulative or sequential.¹⁰

The shift from technical assistance to institutional cooperation in Norway's development aid has potentially more lessons for the "mutual" dimension of FK's approach to volunteers. The official shift of Norwegian technical assistance policy took place in the beginning of the 1990s with the publication of Norad's *Strategies for Development Cooperation. NORAD in the Nineties* and the establishment of the so-called «Norway Axis». With this shift, the main responsibility for the planning, implementation and reporting of institutional development projects rested with the cooperating institutions in Norway and the

10 See the *Evaluation of the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program*, Canberra, Office of Development Effectiveness, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australian Government 2014 (<https://dfat.gov.au/aid/how-we-measure-performance/ode/Documents/avid-report-jan-2014.pdf>). A recent good presentation of the state of knowledge of the role of volunteers in relation to personal and professional development of volunteers, for host institutions and communities, and for active citizenship is provided in the recent major evaluation of the DFID's volunteer programme. See ECORYS, *Evaluation of the International Citizen Service. Phase 1 Report*, London: DFID 2013 (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/311986/Mid-term-Eval-International-Citizen-Service.pdf). A review of some of the earlier lessons is provided by Peter Devereux, "International volunteering for development and sustainability: outdated paternalism or a radical response to globalisation?" *Development in Practice*, vol., 18, 2008, 3: 357-370.

South, with Norad at that time being responsible for funding and coordinating the efforts.

In a twinning arrangement, an organisation in a developing country is paired with an organisation with similar mandates in a developed country. In Norway, institutional cooperation included exchange of staff, formal off-job training courses, on-job training, study tours, support for equipment, long- and short term-experts. Thus, institutional cooperation contained elements of traditional training and technical assistance in addition to exchange of experience and dialogue.

The stated advantages of institutional cooperation as a method for capacity development included its ability to provide a broad range of relevant services compared to what individual advisors could offer. Similarities in professional identity and mandate would facilitate learning and exchange of technical information, as well as enhance credibility and long-term professional commitment. Finally, the possible psychological and political advantages of institutional cooperation would stimulate the emergence of a more equal partnership and a two-way exchange rela-

tionship, even in the context of severe structural imbalances between rich and poor countries. There is limited scholarly work and few comprehensive evaluations of institutional cooperation experience in Norway – and elsewhere. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned an evaluation of institutional development and institutional collaboration in the late 1990s - covering institutional cooperation between public directorates, research institutes, private sector companies and non-governmental organisations. The evaluation analysed the strengths and weaknesses with institutional cooperation and recommended a more cautious use in future Norwegian development cooperation since it was not found to be the only nor the ultimate model for capacity building.¹¹

This evaluation found that Norwegian institutions differed in experience, competence and capacity for development work. The individuals that were involved with development issues had a range

11 See *Development through institutions? Sub-studies 1-4 and Synthesis Report* (various authors). Oslo: Evaluation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998. (Evaluation Reports 1-5.98). The reports from the Nordic evaluation of capacity development is also soon forthcoming, including assessment of institutional collaboration.

of incentives for doing so, but the institutional commitment was not equally strong. Public institutions gave precedence to their responsibilities in Norway.

While most of the institutions possessed considerable professional competence, they were found to be not equally strong in pursuing Norwegian development goals and the broader objectives of institutional development.

The public institutions in the South were generally positive to the cooperation with Norwegian organisations, but were only to a limited extent familiar with the implications of the policy shift for development focus and their own role and responsibilities. The capacity of the southern institutions to absorb and use the human and technical resources accessible through the twinning agreements varied. Some were sceptical towards the inclusion of higher-level components in the cooperation such as organisational change, management and relations with external stakeholders in projects.

The understanding of institutional development and institutional cooperation was also found to be unclear. There were few operational objectives that allowed organisations to effectively target institutional development.

A notable feature of much of this literature of the impact of volunteer services and institutional cooperation is that some of the basic lessons from the history of development aid still apply. This also applies to objectives such as strengthening civil society. Lessons include the need for a clear purpose of the activity (the exchange) and an associated plan of action to reach that goal; ownership and commitment by the partner in the South; and suitable qualifications and commitment by the person deployed (the participant in the exchange). This will take us to the final section in this review of the literature: lessons from Norad support to civil society.

Norad and “tracking impact” of support

The bulk of Norwegian support for support for strengthening civil society in developing countries is provided by Norad which has developed

a set of guidelines for supporting civil society. The lesson from the support is perhaps best summarised in Norad’s *Tracking Impact Study* from 2012.¹² It reviews the different perspectives and ambiguities in support to civil society. The study followed three “streams” of support to civil society to assess impact on:

- a) improved quality of life for people and communities;
- b) strengthened organisational capacity as a result of: Strengthening individual organisations, Increasing democratic space and organisational pluralism (building civil society); and
- c) contributions to wider and long-term effects such as: Replication and scaling up of small-scale, pilot and innovative projects (horizontal effects); Pro-poor advocacy and lobbying for and contributing to policy changes (vertical effects); and Monitoring

¹² Norad’s Civil Society Panel, *Tracking Impact. An exploratory study of the wider effects of Norwegian civil society support to countries in the South*, Oslo: Norad 2012.

implementation of national policies in order to hold government more accountable (vertical effects).

The *Tracking Impact* Study found that there had been a growing focus on capacity strengthening among Norwegian civil society organisations. Individual organisations in the South overwhelmingly asserted that they had been “strengthened”, though, as expected, many of the benefits proved to be intangible, difficult to capture and on the whole poorly documented. Also, as expected, the Study was unable to find extensive evidence that could clearly trace the contribution that positive support to core capabilities of organisations had made to enabling them to achieve their central goals more efficiently or effectively.

Two issues arose that in some ways had not been anticipated in the preparation of this *Tracking Impact* study. It was clear that the bulk of capacity strengthening taking place was focused predominantly and quite narrowly on helping to build the capacities of local organisations to enable them to comply better with new reporting

requirements of Norwegian civil society organisations and, through them, reporting to Norad. Capacity building had been focused on projects which produced quick and easily measurable results and on increasing the abilities of local organisations to develop accurate ways of monitoring and measuring these. However, many, if not most, were clearly concerned that, to the extent that this approach continues to dominate the capacity-building relationship, building wider institutional capacities will at best be eclipsed and at worst ignored entirely.

The second unexpected finding concerned the relationship between strengthening civil society and strengthening particular civil-society organisations. The Study’s hypothesis was that, while Norwegian civil society organisations would probably have helped to strengthen individual organisations, they would not have helped much to strengthen civil society as a whole. A common and quite widely held assumption, especially among official donors, has been that a good way to strengthen civil society is to help create more civil society organisations. In contrast, the Study’s attention was drawn to examples (such as in

Nepal) where the view was widely held that the growth in the numbers of civil society organisations would seem to have contributed to a weakening of the overall effectiveness of civil society. Relatedly, the Report draws attention to the fact that most North-South civil society partnerships are based in some way on ‘like-mindedness’ – meaning that Northern civil society organisations select partners based on shared thematic interests (children, environment, disability) and religious/ideological frameworks (churches, labour unions). This is as would be expected and indeed intended. However, the implications are that, while certain parts of civil society are included in the support given, a range of traditional and especially more informal organisations are excluded, even if this is unintended.

Based on the above the team then developed a model enabling an analysis of FK’s support to civil society strengthening. This is presented in Box 2.1 at the beginning of this chapter. In the next chapter the team will identify and analyse FK’s approach, theory of change and implementation of its contribution to development of civil society in the South.

3: Theory of change, strategy and implementation

Support to civil society in developing countries has remained one of the main objectives of FK since its launch in 2000. The 2000 and 2004 statutes of the FK Norway made contribution to the development and strengthening of civil society in developing countries one of six objectives. Support to civil society was made an overarching objective with the new mandate provided through the 2010 Government instruction. Support to civil society was also highlighted in annual allocation letters from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in FK's strategies in the period. This also applies to the current 2015-2017 strategy, which emphasises support to civil society as one of the three overarching mission objectives. Additionally, the 2015-2017 strategy document also identifies support to civil society as a fourth priority sector alongside education, health and private sector development. The document emphasises that "all programmes shall contribute to the strengthening of civil society, irrespective of sector."¹³

¹³ See FK's 2015-2017 strategy document, *Strategy 2017, Mutual learning promotes development* (Oslo: Fredskorpset, n. d.). The strategy document and the 2010 government instruction are available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/instruks-strategi/>. The Statutes governing the work of FK prior to the 2010 instruction are no longer on the website.

There have been many changes in the thematic priorities – reflecting changing priorities from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs - but the overall purpose of strengthening civil society has remained the same. In the previous strategy period (2010 – 2014), climate and environment was one of the priorities with strengthening of civil society institutions being identified as one of the focus areas within this theme. See also Chapter One for a further discussion of evolving and changing thematic priorities in the evaluation period.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Theory of change is essentially a comprehensive description and illustration of how and why a desired change is expected to happen in a particular context. It is focused on mapping out or "filling in" what has been described as the "missing middle" between what a programme or change initiative does (its activities or interventions) and how these lead to desired goals being achieved. It does this by first identifying the desired long-term goals of the intervention and then works back from these to identify all the conditions (outcomes and influencing factors) that must be in place (and how these relate to

one another causally) for the interventions to achieve these goals.

This framework then provides the basis for identifying what type of activity or intervention will lead to the outcomes identified as preconditions for achieving the long-term goal. Through this approach the precise link between activities and the achievement of the long-term goals are expected to be more fully understood. This will potentially lead to better planning, in that activities are linked to a detailed understanding of how change actually happens.

FK does not have a theory of change along these lines. FK has however attempted to deal with these issues beginning from 2011 with the development of a result based management system. This is most developed and explicit in its current 2015-2017 strategy.¹⁴ The core of FK's approach to a theory of change is quite simple: It is based on the belief that FK will

¹⁴ See especially p. 7 in the *Strategy 2017* document (see above). The theory of change is best outlined in FK's 11-page manual for *Result management in FK* and is available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/avtale-dokumenter/2-soknad/b13-result-management.pdf> FK also has a more detailed, but unpublished memo on this, "FK Theory of Change" (12 pages + appendices, n. d.)

create change by bringing young people (professionals and volunteers) together across borders to share knowledge, learn from each other and create new values. However, not every meeting will create such change. Only when founded on reciprocity and local ownership, international exchange will strengthen relationships at the individual and subsequently collective level.

For FK, a theory of change is a description of transformation at two levels. There is change at the individual level for participants in the exchange: Young people gain new skills, experiences and attitudes through taking part in an FK exchange. The experience will also, according to FK, strengthen their social involvement and provide useful tools to participate in community and voluntary work upon returning home.

Secondly, there is also change at the institutional level: Partners involved in FK exchanges will according to FK, strengthen their institution's delivery of services and their network through long-term international partnerships. This fosters an enhanced global awareness and responsibility. In conclusion, FK then assumes that

Individuals and institutions that undergo positive change and are aware of their role in their communities can become change agents. They lead the way in improving their local communities and strengthening civil society. In doing so, they contribute to FK Norway's vision and mission.¹⁵

This is basically a bottom up or "trickle up" strategy starting with organising individual encounters, but leading to a range of broader societal benefits. Reciprocal exchange builds and strengthens social values and commitment among individuals, imparts new knowledge and skills and fosters leadership, which eventually will create positive changes in organisations, local communities, civil society and ultimately global justice.

The team has attempted to summarise FK's theory of change framework, specifying, inputs, outputs, outcomes, impacts and assumptions at each level. Our interpretation is summarised on page 30 in figure 3.1.

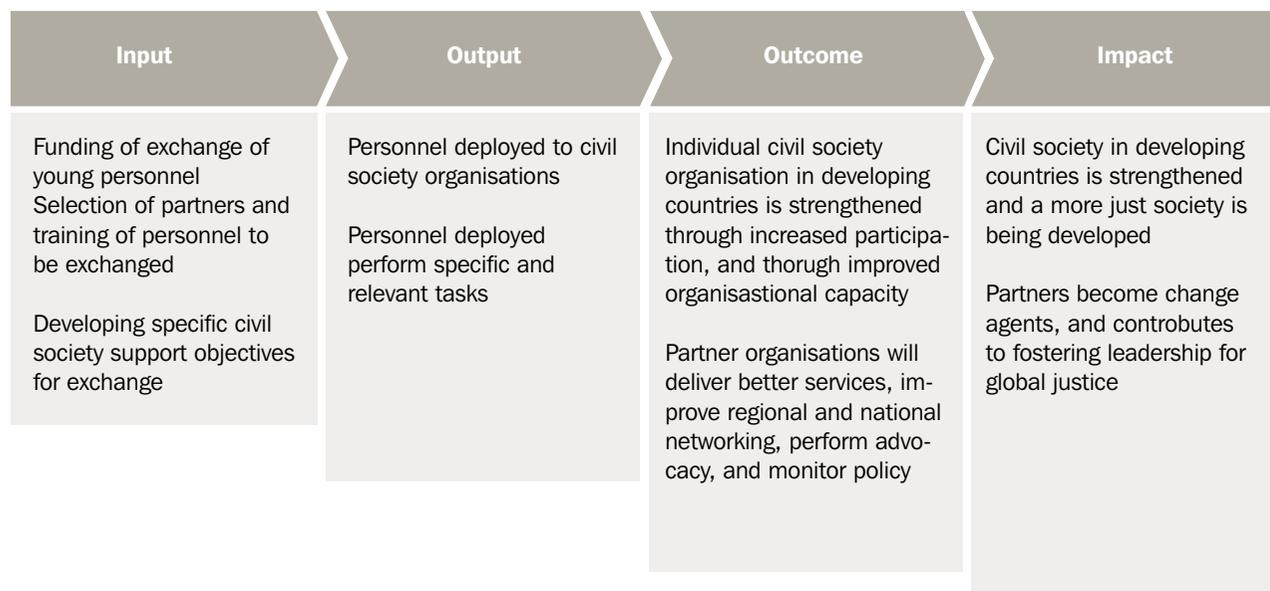
¹⁵ The quote is from p. 7 in *Strategy 2017*.

According to FK's Strategy 2017, the vision is: *Fostering leadership for global justice, creating change on the ground and in our minds.*

Main elements in this strategy as summarised on page 30 include:

- Development of FK participants and change at the individual level: Young people gain new skills, experiences, values and attitudes through taking part in an FK exchange. The exchange also strengthens their social involvement and provides useful tools to participate in community and voluntary work upon returning home;
- Development of partnerships at the institutional level: Through exchange of personnel, partners strengthen their institution's technical capacity and delivery of services and their network. This eventually fosters an enhanced global awareness and responsibility. Fostering leadership for global justice is not identical with strengthening civil society, but fighting for justice is a role of civil society;

FIGURE 3.1: FK'S THEORY OF CHANGE



Assumptions: Partner organisations are committed to strengthening civil society organisations, will select qualified personnel with a willingness to learn and commitment to use the results from the exchange to improve own work/own organisation, which receive adequate training and support, and will return to civil society organisation after exchange

Assumptions: Personnel exchanged perform relevant tasks and they are retained by civil society organisation after the return from an exchange

Assumptions: The new skills, experiences and attitudes make the exchange personnel help their organisation to deliver better services (etc.). It strengthens the personnel's social involvement, enhance their global awareness and sense of responsibility in ways so that they become change agents and are able to contribute to fostering leadership that will contribute to global justice

- As a result of the exchange, FK participants have increased knowledge, skills and social involvement and FK partners utilise FK participants' competencies during and after the exchange;
- Individuals and institutions that undergo positive change as a result of the exchange and are aware of their role in their communities can become change agents. They lead the way in strengthening civil society and in improving their local communities;
- Major assumptions in this theory of change are the selection of partners and participants. They are critical for a successful delivery of outputs and outcomes. The theory assumes that the individual participants selected are interested in learning something (output) and that they will use this new knowledge for something when they return and that this will strengthen the organisation (outcome). It is not elaborated how different types of knowledge, experiences and attitudes can influence the degree to which participants become change agents that can influence global justice. For example, there may be such differences between volunteers in kindergartens and those who aspire to become the next generations' leaders;

- It is clear that all FK programmes shall contribute to the strengthening of civil society, irrespective of sector. FK does not distinguish between different types of exchange programmes in their theory of change. It is not explained how an exchange in the private or public sector can contribute to change in civil society – outside their own domain; and
- The link between outcome and impact is not clearly elaborated. For example, it is assumed that strengthening individual organisations (partners) leads to a larger number of strong organisations that in turn implies that the civil society in the country is strengthened. However, this further assumes that strengthening of certain organisations does not lead to crowding out of others, or to weakening certain types of organisations that are not favoured. Moreover, is it likely that one person’s exchange will lead the partner organisations to deliver better services, improve regional and national networking, perform advocacy, and monitor policy?

The challenges with the logical links between the activities and the over-arching goals are also to some extent recognised by FK. The unpublished FK document about this theory of change (see above), points to the challenge of linking the long-term vision with FK’s core activities. The theory of change’ higher outcomes and long-term impact are presented more as a “world-view” and vision and “not as causal connections to be tested or documented”. It is admitted in this document that the FK contributions at all levels are small, but the ambitions and objectives have been kept high even if the efforts to translate those intentions into civil society strategies have been missing.

For the evaluation team the problem is not that contributions are small. On the contrary, small interventions are usually also expected to provide small contributions. Rather, it is the lack of a logical causal pathway between the activities and the over-arching goals that is the problem. If it is not possible to elaborate such a pathway in a plausible manner, then there is a high likelihood that the activities in fact will not have an impact on the desired goals.

FK’s theory of change is clearly more developed and “sophisticated” at the individual than at the organisational and civil society levels. The change starts from the “bottom” or from the individual agents of change. The theory of change is mainly a theory for exchanges with assumptions, or hopes, about how the participants and partners may become change agents. However, these assumptions are not sufficiently identified or critically reviewed to understand if they are likely to hold in practice. Moreover, the objectives and expected impacts are not operationalised or concretised.

IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUMENTS

How is the objective of supporting civil society then pursued and implemented by the organisation? We will now turn to the link between the mandate and strategy as an expression of policy intent and its implementation. Our interest is to discuss how and to what extent FK has translated and implemented its third objective. The analytical method used here is based on the examination of three kinds of strategy instruments:¹⁶

¹⁶ Adopted from Marie Louise Bemelmans-Videc, Ray C Rist, and Evert Vedung (eds.) (1998). *Carrots, Sticks, Sermons: Policy instruments and their evaluation*, New Brunswick, N. J.: Transaction Books (Comparative Policy Evaluation, Volume 7).

- *Sticks*, whereby FK is ‘ordered’ to implement activities by virtue of explicit policies, rules and regulations. The entire FK is ‘directed’ to undertake specific actions in order to realize the objectives of the strategy – including strengthening civil society.
- *Carrots*, where there are incentives for actors in the FK system to design interventions such as intended by the strategy. Such incentives could be access to finance or other resources, rewards that yield status and prestige, etc.
- *Sermons*, where FK staff and participants are motivated to act according to the strategy by awareness raising and through information. The philosophy behind sermons as a strategy instrument is that actors in the system will be influenced by persuasion based on information and knowledge, rather than through incentives and orders (carrots and sticks).

These are in principle the three instruments available for policy implementation and to ensure that FK pursues its objectives. The instruments operate in the relationship between

BOX 3.1: POLICY INSTRUMENTS

POLICY INSTRUMENTS	Sticks	Substance of the strategy
		Allocation letters
		Country and partner selection criteria Guidelines and rules for appraisal/assessment (selection process) Partnership/collaboration agreements
		Reporting (M&E) requirement
	Carrots	Additional financial resources
		Training/competence building
		Rewards
	Semons	Reports (from partners, annual reports)
		New knowledge
		Statements/speeches Visibility

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, FK in Oslo, FK’s regional offices in Asia and Africa, and all exchange partners in Norway and abroad. In the box below, we have listed a number of instruments. This chapter discusses the different ways that those instruments have been used, which instruments have not been utilized and why.

Sticks

Instructions, directives and regulations are the most common sticks in bureaucratic systems for enforcing policies and strategies matched with strict monitoring of and penalties and sanctions for non-compliance. The nature of the FK Strategy is different from such a formal and legal process. The strategy does not appear to have

a *legal* status and there are no sanctions for the non-implementation of one or more of the objectives.

a) Substance of the strategy

According to the 2010 Government instruction and repeated in FK's current *Strategy 2017*: strengthening of civil society in developing countries is the third objective in the global mandate. According to the strategy it is applicable to all priority sectors (health, education, private sector and civil society) and all programmes (professional and volunteers). However, except for the inclusion in the mission statement on page 4, civil society is absent and not further elaborated in the Strategy 2017 document. It is implied in the vision: "Fostering leadership for global justice. Creating change on the ground and in our minds", but the concept of "civil society" is not referred to neither is it explained what "strengthening civil society" could mean as a cross cutting objective.

Support to civil society is however, identified as a sector objective to be pursued by the Youth programme. All current partners in this programme are civil society organisations and the opera-

tional goal for the programme for the current 2015-2017 period is to ensure that a greater proportion of the participants are retained by the partner or a related organisation after the return from the exchange. However, this is only a part of what strengthening civil society could entail and only in one of the FK programmes. It is not clear what it would mean in the professional programmes or in current priority private business development, health and education sectors.

The objective of strengthening civil society is weakly linked to the other two objectives in the strategy and appears mostly as an add on – not anchored in an otherwise thoughtful document. The strategy is more like a general policy document providing overall vision and intentions.

b) Allocation letters from Ministry of Foreign Affairs and "etatsstyringsmøter"¹⁷

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' main instruments for providing strategic direction and guidance are

¹⁷ All documents referred to in this section are unpublished with the exception of the 2015 allocation letter (from 28 January 2015) which are available from the FK website - <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/tildelingsbrev/tildelingsbrev-2015.pdf>

the annual allocation letters (*Tildelingsbrev*) and the biannual *etatsstyringsmøter*. We have reviewed the allocations letters and minutes from the "etatsstyringsmøter" to examine to what extent civil society has been mentioned, discussed and prioritised.

The allocation letter for 2014 refers to Prop. 1 S (2013-2014) and informs about the budget and strategic directions ("føringer") for 2014. The objective of strengthening civil society is repeated in the introduction, but only education, private sector development and health are mentioned as thematic priorities. Other cross cutting concerns such as gender, climate, corruption and rights are also mentioned, but not civil society. Allocation letters are important because they provide strong guidance (or even requests) on the budget, sector priorities and country selection. We have not been able to find any substantive reference to civil society in any of the allocation letters in the period between 2006 and 2014 (see also Chapter One for a further presentation of these allocation letters).

We have also reviewed the minutes from the “etatsstyringsmøter” between 2005 and 2015, but the “third objective” has not been discussed in any of the meetings - neither have any directions and guidance been given.

FK had a governing-appointed board in the first half of the evaluation period. We have not found trace of any discussion of civil society in the minutes from that body which was dissolved in 2009.

In 2012 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted a review of management issues related to FK, but civil society was not addressed as an issue in this review (see more on this document in Chapter Five).

c) Country/partner selection criteria and analysis

The selection of countries and partners is relevant for planning and implementing support to civil society. Selection of the partner institution is a critical assumption in FK’s theory of change. The role and functions of civil society vary and depend on country contexts. Some organisations play a more strategic and important role than

others and some are better placed to benefit from an exchange arrangement than others.

FK is supporting exchange projects involving a particularly large number of countries. Up to 60 countries were involved in the early part of the evaluation period. This has been reduced in recent years by FK with a further reduction in 2014 instructed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The list of FK countries is now 25. The selection or exit of specific countries has not been accompanied by any analysis by FK of how civil society strengthening could be further supported by focusing on fewer countries.

FK does in the end decide on civil society partners to be supported. This selection is based on an application process where potential partners initially have to develop a feasibility study for the exchange.¹⁸ FK is active in marketing and in encouraging potential partners to apply. FK plays a very active role in assisting applicants in the process. None of the South partners interviewed in the five countries has approached FK at their own initiative. They had all

¹⁸ The rules and procedures for this are available from the FK website, <http://www.fredskorpset.no/en/partner/forms-and-deadlines/>

been “found” by FK or by their partner in Norway. The selection criteria for such partners do not include any indicators that can be important in assessments of how that particular exchange can contribute to civil society strengthening. Currently, the FK regional consultants for Africa and Asia – all interviewed by the team – are under instruction to search for potential partners (applications) in the South-South programme that can deliver results in health, education and private sector development. Civil society assessments are not part of the criteria in this search for partners.

d) Guidelines and rules

FK has a number of guidelines and rules for the various programmes and planning processes:

- Scheme regulations (“ordningsregelverk”) for FK in general and the various programmes: the Youth programme, the ESTHER health exchange programme, North–South programme, South-South programme.¹⁹

¹⁹ The regulations are available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/en/regulations-evaluations-and-surveys/>

The general rules for FK refer only to the overall objective and do not elaborate about activities or aims for strengthening civil society. The scheme regulations for the various programmes (North-South, South-South, ESTHER and Youth) break the silence and specify three subsidiary objectives – all relevant to strengthening civil society:

- > Increased capacity and competence in institutions.
- > Development of global networks and increased strategic cooperation between institutions and individuals.
- > Management training, competence building and international exposure for the FK-participants.
- > Increased understanding between different individuals, institutions and nations, bridging and peacekeeping.

The critical question is to what extent those subsidiary objectives have been used. This will be discussed later.

- Checklist for feasibility studies and risk analysis²⁰

FK has guidelines for feasibility studies, which have to be carried out by potential partners before a final decision is made. These are carried out as self-assessments - by the partners themselves, but in close informal consultations with FK project officers. More recently a risk analysis by FK has been introduced (not applicable to the Youth programme). These guidelines and the checklist for risk analysis used by FK staff does not refer to weak or missing civil society engagement as a risk.

- Appraisal and decision making

FK staff are responsible for the appraisal of new partners and exchanges. However, the appraisal process follows informal procedures. The process, findings/observations and recommendations (proposed decisions) are not summarised and present-

²⁰ Guidelines for the feasibility studies are available from the FK website - <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/avtaledokumenter/1-forundersokelse/a11-feasibility-study-application-general-information1.pdf> The risk analysis is an unpublished document – *Risk Analysis. Check-list for risk analysis* of FK projects (2 pages, n. d.)

ed in an appraisal document and/or appropriation document (“beslutningsdokument”) in which the FK approves a new partner and subsequent exchanges. The decisions are reached through consultations between the project officers and the team leader and between the team leader and Director. The decision is then communicated to the applicant. However, the grant letter (“letter of approval”) to the applicant (or the letter rejecting the application) contains the reasons for approval/rejection and serves as summary of FK’s assessments.²¹ These grant letters are essentially a brief summary of purpose and outcomes as formulated in the contract with the information that this is in line with FK priorities and the criteria for support. This is usually also contained in the introduction to the agreement between FK and coordinating partners.

- Guidelines for mid-term reviews

Monitoring in FK Norway is seen as an ongoing process by which FK and partners obtain regular feedback on the progress made towards the

²¹ The team reviewed all letters of approval related to the exchange projects examined. The current format for these letters was introduced in 2013 and only applies to the professional programmes.

realization of desired results at output level (as defined in the activity plan for each round) and the desired results at outcome level (as defined in the collaboration agreement). For all projects, a mid-term review is expected to be carried out by FK staff. This is expected to take place in the second year (the second round of the exchange) in the project (which consists of three rounds of exchanges). The mid-term review is essentially a meeting between FK and all partners in the exchange. The review reports we have seen are very brief (2-4 pages) and do not contain any analysis of civil society issues. In fact, they are not really mid-term review reports, but a short document containing observations.²²

- External reviews

FK has commissioned several external reviews and evaluations of major exchange projects and programmes. Most of the reviews were analysed as part of the team's Inception phase. They do not in general specifically address strengthen-

²² The guidelines for the mid-term review is contained in a 5-page unpublished document – *Midterm Review* (n. d.).

ing of civil society although many contain much relevant data on this.²³

e) Partnership/collaboration agreements

There is a Collaboration agreement between FK Norway and each collaborating partner, which forms the legal basis for funding. They have a standard format:²⁴

- a) General conditions;
- b) Project content;
 - > Aims of the project
 - > Objectives for each partner
 - > Participants' tasks/duties abroad and at home
- c) Responsibilities and obligations; and Budget and funding.

We have reviewed collaboration agreements for the partners in all our case countries (see also

²³ All external reviews are available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/en/regulations-evaluations-and-surveys/>. Guidelines for these evaluations are also available - http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/avtaledokumenter/etterarbeid_rapportering/b12-project-evaluation.pdf

²⁴ The guidelines are available from the FK website - <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/avtaledokumenter/soknad/b11-collaboration-agreement-general-info.pdf>.

Chapter Four). A key finding is that all agreements refer to objectives pertaining to the individual exchanges. There are also organisational objectives in some, while there is no explicit reference to strengthening civil society. In practice – strengthening of civil society is not necessarily absent, but the concept and objective of civil society strengthening has not been “on the radar” for those preparing the Agreements. Finding elements of civil society strengthening requires a concrete analysis and exploration of what the respective participants and organisations actually do. An “advanced” case is the Agreement with the Asian Women in Cooperative Development Forum (AWCF). There is a focus on the exchanges, but it is placed in a broader context: “To propel solidarity and collaboration between and amongst AWCF members and to enhance their capacity in the delivery of services.” The objectives for each partner are for example:

- a): To strengthen the capacity of staff on documentation and project proposal writing;
- b) To increase the staffs' knowledge and skills on high-tech organic agriculture to confront

climate change and protect the environment;
and

c) To improve facilitation and social mobilisation skills.

The project has a clear organisational focus, while other elements such as regional and national networking, advocacy or policy work is underreported and to some extent only implied.

f) Reporting requirements²⁵

The Annual Narrative Report follows a standard format for all exchanges:

- Number and names of participants
- Participants activities – before, during and after the exchange
- Partnership´s objectives and results:
 - > What results were achieved at participant level, at the institutional level and the added value to the organisation
 - > Unintended results

- Major deviations
- Sustainability

The focus of reporting is at the individual level and covers mostly activities and outputs, but the organisational benefits are included – in some cases. The partners may report on broader issues such as a civil society, but it is not a requirement. In summary, there is rich information on activities and benefits at individual level, much less at institutional level and hardly anything on civil society – or benefits beyond the individual and partner organisation.

Carrots

When assessing which incentives and encouragements the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided to FK and in turn FK to their partners, the evaluation tried to identify whether additional financial resources, increased staff, or other organizational carrots that would inspire FK to adopt and prioritise the third overall objective. Typical organisational carrots could be to add personnel to an area, priority to projects, or time allocation for competence building. A carrot could also be that if a staff member performed

very well s/he could be promoted or offered another more interesting/rewarding job. However, no such organisational carrots were found.

a) Increased funding

A priority sector, thematic area or objective tends to receive additional funding for a certain period of time. This has not happened.

b) Training and competence building

Competence building, systematic training and education, are also carrots (while providing information and increasing motivation, for instance through seminars and short training sessions can be seen more as sermons). We could not find any evidence that any FK staff has received any training related to civil society strengthening as part of staff development.

We have also looked at the training material and curriculum for the FK preparatory courses mandatory for all FK participants. FK gives much attention to preparatory training to participants. The format of these has varied, but is now lasting 10 days (Cf. Chapter One) for the professional programmes. These courses ad-

²⁵ The guidelines are available from the FK website - <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/avtaledokumenter/soknad/b11-collaboration-agreement-general-info.pdf>.

dress a number of topics, especially related to the challenges faced by the individual participant going on an exchange to another country. The training is slightly different for the youth programme where it revolves around a joint youth camp and with the partners themselves being responsible for training. There is no module or part of the training programme focusing on civil society or on how to strengthen civil society. Some of the anticipated learning outcomes are however relevant for an understanding of the role of civil society.

c) Rewards

Recognition is also a carrot and an incentive for performing better in a particular area. Recognition could consist of giving positive feedback to partners that achieved good results in promoting issues of civil society. Lack of feedback works in the opposite way! There is no evidence that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has recognized civil society as an operational priority. Within FK, there also seems to be decreasing emphasis on civil society as an overall objective and a focus for the professional programmes. The civil society objective is *de facto* being considered primarily as a sector objective to be handled by

the Youth programme, or as something that is addressed through the benefits for the individual participants that help them become change agents in the communities and beyond.

Sermons

Sermons are activities that try to influence through persuasion; that is, to convince FK staff and partners to adopt certain orientations or behaviour – to gain an understanding of why strengthening civil society is important and how it can be achieved. Having tried to enforce a policy or strategy through guidelines and grant letters, encouraged it via funds and staff, a third instrument would be to try and create understanding and motivation. Sermons are often speeches or other communication by top-managers or other formal/informal leaders. Sermons may also be trying to establish a set of shared norms and values in such a way that one may speak of building a culture, a feeling of togetherness through the utilization of sermons.

FK has made attempts to spread its message about how individuals and institutions through mutual exchange projects may become agents

of transformation. This is evident through e.g., social media (Facebook), seminars for participants and partners, and in various events organised in the main FK countries. In the first half of the evaluation period FK also hosted alumni meetings in main FK countries. A recent and slightly different example is the opening speech by the State Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Morten Høglund at FK's Youth Camp in August 2015.²⁶ He made reference to civil society, but more broadly to the concept of voluntarism:

A recent evaluation of FKs exchange programs concluded that participating in exchange programs strengthen young people's cultural understanding and leadership skills. It also increases civic engagement and enhances young people's skills and ability to participate in the workforce or voluntary sector after their exchange.

An important part of the civil society is the voluntary organizations. The government of

26 The State Secretary's speech is available from https://www.regjeringen.no/aktuelt/fk_ungdom/id2435058/

Norway has recently presented a Declaration on voluntary work. The Declaration is a policy statement recognizing the importance of the voluntary sector as an arena for social participation and democracy-building. Voluntary work is a significant, independent aspect of our society that benefits both volunteers and society in general. Volunteer work gives youth knowledge, experience, social identity and new skills. Voluntary work also builds a sense of community, improves the daily lives of many people and promotes social development. This Declaration on voluntary work is an expression of the government's appreciation of the voluntary sector, and a framework for productive and constructive interaction in the years ahead.

It is more important than ever to maintain a strong focus on human rights, strong and universal educational systems, stimulate entrepreneurship and cooperation with the private sector for increased job creation.

CONCLUSION

FK does not have a developed theory of change for how FK can contribute to strengthening civil society in developing countries. Moreover, there seems to be a weak theoretical causal link between the activities and the overarching goals for civil society strengthening. While such strengthening is emphasised in the mandate and the strategy documents the focus in the operationalisation of the strategy is primarily on the mutual exchange component in the mandate. This is also evident in the management and implementation instruments and guidelines. The implicit assumption appears to be that civil society strengthening will flow from mutual exchange between partners and that this will help make especially individual participants potential change agents in their communities and beyond.

The majority of exchanges supported by FK involves partnerships between civil society organisations. In the next chapters the team will present and analyse findings from country case studies and documents. How is civil society strengthening addressed in the actual exchange projects and in the different FK programmes?

4: How does FK Norway strengthen civil society?

TABLE 4.1: FK PROJECTS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS IN THAILAND, TANZANIA, CAMBODIA, SOUTH AFRICA AND UGANDA 2006 – 2015

Programme	Civil Society partner	Outside civil society	Total projects
North-South	18	45	63
South-South	33	29	62
Youth	28	3	31
Senior	2	4	6
TOTAL PROJECTS	81	81	162

This chapter presents the team's findings on FK's role in contributing to the strengthening of civil society in developing countries. It is based on data related to the two main case study countries (Thailand and Tanzania) with supplementary data also from FK-supported projects in Uganda, South Africa and Cambodia. Annex One provides a presentation of FK's portfolio of exchange projects in all these countries in the evaluation period. Additional data was collected from FK documents and comparative studies.

The first notable finding is that civil society partners account for half of the projects in the

FK portfolio in the five countries visited by the team. This is summarised in Table 4.1 above.

81 of the 162 projects are with civil society organisations in these five countries. However, the civil society component is significantly bigger than suggested by these numbers. Projects involving civil society organisations are on average longer in duration and often involve more than two partners. It is particularly dominant in the Youth programmes (today all exchanges funded through the programme are between civil society organisations) and South-South programmes while it is more uneven in the North-South

programmes. Within the North-South programme there is a much larger presence of health projects involving public or semi-public institutions (mainly hospitals). This is also the case for exchange projects within higher education and research.

A second finding from the documents available is that it is difficult to assess results in relation to objectives. The FK files and monitoring system have primarily revolved around the exchange itself and with an emphasis on activities performed by the participant. This makes it difficult to assess the contribution of the different exchange projects in the evaluation period. This does not imply that the contributions necessarily are insignificant – only that it is difficult to find sufficient data to assess this from the monitoring data collected by FK. FK has in recent years – beginning in 2011-2012 - attempted to put more emphasis on results based reporting and have introduced better reporting requirements and manuals, especially related to the professional programmes. The reporting is still primarily focused on activities and outputs, with little attention to results further along the results chain.

A major FK-project in Southeast Asia, run by the regional office of an international NGO (Help Age), argued that FK was far more focused on reporting on activities than reporting on results and narrative contextual analysis compared to other donor agencies they worked with. The reporting formats now introduced by FK allow in principle broader analysis and reporting on outcomes, but in practice most reports consulted by the team lack such information.

A last finding emerging from this mapping is that FK's partners in the South include a fairly broad and diverse spectrum of civil society organisations – from major NGOs involved in service delivery or policy advocacy to community organisations and small networks. It has involved organisations with primarily a national profile and limited regional or international engagement, and organisations with a strong international outreach. However, the formal requirements for becoming an FK partner implies that smaller and more informally structured associations cannot join an exchange project. Virtually all South partners in the countries visited appear to have been identified

and approached by FK or by Norwegian partners, and then encouraged to apply to become a partner.

ASSESSING SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY

The team identified several dimensions in order to respond to how FK contributes to strengthening civil society. In Chapter Two, we introduced a framework for analysing and assessing support to civil society strengthening. This revolved around the identification of three levels – the individual level, the organisational level and the wider sector and society level – and activities available to support objectives at each of them.

Based on the mapping of the FK portfolio in the country cases, the team selected a number of key projects for further examination. These were the main FK projects providing support to civil society in these countries. This is not a representative sample of FK-supported projects to strengthen civil society, but a sample selected because they in quantitative terms are big projects which have run for a number of years. We expected that they show the variety and spectrum of efforts by FK to support civil society strengthening. Table 4.1

provides a summary presentation of each of these projects in the two main countries – Thailand and Tanzania. Annex One provides additional data on these projects as well as data on other projects in these two countries, and in the other three countries visited by the team.

The overall impression from the list is that FK has supported exchanges covering activities at all of these levels. It has as noted above also involved a diverse set of civil society organisations. There are also great variations in the purposes of the specific exchange projects and the functions and tasks performed by the individual participants. Some participants are primarily interns learning new skills, some have been selected because they can contribute to specific organisational development efforts, and some play various roles in programme implementation. Few of the participants are directly involved in advocacy efforts. The greatest involvement by the participants seems to be found in organisations where the partners know each other, with actual and potential joint programmes, and where the purpose of the exchange is clearly formulated and owned by the partners.

TABLE 4.2: CASE STUDIES – FK SUPPORTED CIVIL SOCIETY PARTNERS IN THAILAND AND TANZANIA

Partner and location	Program and period of FK support			Other partners in projects	Profile
	Youth	North-South	South-South		
International Network of Engaged			2008 -2015	Youth Buddhist Society (India), Sewalanka Foundation (Sri Lanka), Khmer Youth Association (until 2010)	Promotes understanding, cooperation and networking among inter-Buddhist and inter-religious social action groups. Acts as an information resource related to areas of social concern.
Buddhists (Thailand)				(Cambodia), Kalyana Mitta Foundation (Myanmar) and Social Policy Ecology Research Institute (Vietnam)	Facilitates conferences, education and training that supports and strengthens socially active individuals and groups based in Buddhist values and practices. FK project focuses on youth empowerment
Asian Women in Cooperative Development Forum (Manila and, from 2013, Bangkok)			2008 -2015	Credit Union League of Thailand, Centre for Agricultural Extension Volunteers (Vietnam), Forum for Indonesian Cooperatives Movement (until 2014), Credit Union Promotion Club (Malaysia, until 2013) and Socio-Economic Development Organisation of Cambodia	This project intends to strengthen solidarity and collaboration between and amongst the network and to enhance their capacity in the delivery of services. It also aims to harness young professionals in various fields of expertise such as business development for credit unions, household economic development, agro-business and solidarity economy as tools to address gender issues and environmental concerns.
Mercy Centre (Bangkok)	2013 -2015			United World College/Red Cross, Fjaler (coordinating partner)	It is an NGO that works with poor communities mainly in Bangkok's poorest areas, but also with sea-gypsy communities in the South. It targets children and vulnerable groups, provides a range of welfare services (pre-school, legal aid, etc.) as well as empowerment initiatives.



Partner and location	Program and period of FK support			Other partners in projects	Profile
	Youth	North-South	South-South		
Help Age East Asia and Pacific Regional Office (Chiang Mai)			2010 -2015	Foundation for Older Person's Development (Thailand), Help Age Cambodia Country Office, and Vietnam Association of the Elderly	Help Age is an international NGO and is also the Secretariat for a network of organisations working in East Asia, mainly in the field of ageing and development. They seek to promote global and regional debates on combatting old age poverty, income security in old age, health community care and emergencies. They provide regional support to national programmes implemented by partners.
Asian Institute of Human Rights (Bangkok)			2010 -2015	Samata Foundation (Nepal), Centre for Human Rights Studies (Bangladesh) and Kislay (India)	AIHR sees itself as regional (Asia/Pacific), but Bangkok-based NGO. It aims to promote human rights education and to provide professional support to human rights activists.
Human Rights and Development Foundation (Bangkok)			2008 -2015	Jakarta Legal Aid Institute (Indonesia) and U Kyaw Myint Law Firm (Myanmar)	A main focus is on legal aid and access to justice, especially related to labour law and foreign migrant workers in Thailand. It is also the hub of a regional South East Asian network on legal aid.
Journalists Environmental Network of Tanzania (Dar es Salaam)			2008 – 2012	Rural Development Media Communication (Uganda), Ethiopian Environmental Journalists Association, and Vihiga Community Development Organisation (Kenya)	Information and advocacy promoting good governance and environmental management for sustainable development. Active and successful networking with documented impact on environmental policy debates in partner countries
Flame Tree Media Trust (Dar es Salaam)	2007 -2014			Fundates (Guatemala) and Friendship North/South (Norway) (Coordinating partner)	A triangular youth exchange programme for cultural learning, targeting youth with a vocational and practical background, from rural and marginal areas, ethnic minorities. The ethnic minorities dimension less important in Tanzania than in the North-South exchange between Norway and Guatemala.





Partner and location	Program and period of FK support			Other partners in projects	Profile
	Youth	North-South	South-South		
Norwegian Church Aid (Oslo)			2007 – 2013		<p>In the most recent phase of this exchange programme NCA work with staff and partners on two strategic priorities, Economic and Gender Justice. The latter will aim to increase advocacy activities and strengthen networks of NCA's partner organizations on the issues of participation of women in peace processes and in preventing gender-based violence in areas of conflict in the Great Lakes region and Southern Africa.</p> <p>The Economic Justice Network will have focus on lobbying and development of a media and communication strategy, as well as national strategies for involving the media on issues of advocacy on mining activities. The partners will challenge governments in the North and the South in order to improve the participation of affected communities in planning and implementation of activities in the extractive industries.</p> <p>Both networks aim to ensure organizational development in partner organisations and the NCA offices by strengthening their capacity and consolidate the program development work that has been done in previous rounds of exchanges.</p>
National Association of Women Economic Organisations in Uganda (Kampala)			2009 – 2015	Women's Group Coordinating Council (Tanzania), the Tanzania Association of Non-governmental Association, Zambia Non-governmental Organisations Coordinating Council and Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations	Women Empowerment Network aimed at leadership training, capacity building in human rights and gender analysis, improved governance and access to economic opportunities for women.

FK's survey data of former participants confirms the impression of high satisfaction and strong contribution to personal and professional development.²⁷ These responses are selfassessments by what would be expected to be the most satisfied participants. The survey data convey a clear message. South participants feel that the exchange was a very positive experience and contributed strongly to personal development, increased leadership skills and technical skills, better employment status and so on. The vast majority of the former South participants (67% of all South participants and 74% of the youth participants from the south) responded that the exchange was an inspiration to become more active in a voluntary organisation. In the absence of any

27 FK carried out such surveys among former participants in Norway and developing countries in 2009, 2011 and 2013. Questionnaires were distributed electronically to former participants. 1249 responded to the 2013 survey. This was 24% of all participants and 36% of all those who had completed their exchange period recently (2011 and 2012). Of these 718 were South participants in the professional programmes and 192 in the youth programme. This is not a representative sample since FK only manages to capture those participants where they still have the electronic contact details and participants with less or no commitment to the issues are more likely not to respond. Still, the findings are important and useful. Presentation of the findings from each survey are available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/regelverk-evalueringer-undersokelser/>. See especially the presentation by Øyvind Sunde (2014), "The FK Participant survey 2013. Personal development, satisfaction and career."

tracer study of former participants, we do not have hard data on this, but coupled with findings from other data sources there is no doubt that there is a positive contribution at the individual level.²⁸

FK has also a related survey based on self-assessment by partners.²⁹ This also shows a strong satisfaction in relation to organisational development and capacity building. The partners in the Youth and South-South programmes are more satisfied than partners in the North-South programme. This survey did however, not find any difference in in the response between old and new partners. Both were equally satisfied.

28 This is evident also from the external reviews of FK projects. They are available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/regelverk-evalueringer-undersokelser/>. See also the discussion in Chapter One of findings from the literature.

29 The survey was undertaken in 2009, 2011 and 2013. See a full presentation of the most recent findings in Øyvind Sunde (2014), "The FK Partner Survey 2013. Results, management and satisfaction" available from the FK website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/regelverk-evalueringer-undersokelser/>. 122 partner representatives responded to the 2013 survey. This was nearly 30% of the total number of partners. There is an overrepresentation by coordinating partners in the exchange projects and an underrepresentation by partners in Africa. 98 partners responded to the 13 specific questions regarding results related to organisational development. On average the satisfaction on results along these 13 variables varied between 52% ("improvement of information work") and 88% ("staff has developed friendships across borders"). There were however great variations between the three FK programmes. Within the North-South programme only 35% felt that leadership had improved while 71% believed so in the Youth programme.

Below we have summarised impressions and findings related to each of the FK programmes.

THE YOUTH PROGRAMME

The Youth programme is today solely focused on supporting exchanges between civil society organisations (in the past there were also a few projects involving other institutions). In the countries visited the exchange projects supported include many of the big and major projects within the Youth programme, but also a few new exchange projects, including South-South exchanges. A main current focus for the Youth programme is to ensure that the exchange participants stay on in a civil society organisation after the completion of the exchange period.

The projects and documents consulted confirm the findings from the FK surveys. The partners and the participants report high satisfaction with the exchange and it has made positive contributions at the individual level. This is definitely the case in relation to "changes in the mind" and probably also – but more uneven – in relation to improved technical skills. The data available does not allow us to be precise about the role

of the exchange in relation to other variables, but we do not doubt that the exchange has made a positive contribution. Selection of participants, tasks performed and support provided by the partner are critical factors in ensuring improvement on the technical skills dimension.

It is far more difficult to assess results in relation to organisational strengthening and the wider impact of strengthening civil society. Partly because young participants, often under the age of 25, rarely stay on in the organisation after the return, but move on to further studies and job opportunities. It is also not easy to see how a retention strategy will work towards this purpose in organisations with a loose membership structure, with a clear divide between the membership and the secretariat and with limited career opportunities in the organisation.

Project reviews also underline the relevance of the Youth programme in this respect. An important 2015 review of seven different partners and their Youth-exchange programmes in Kenya concluded that the exchange projects made an impact on the individual participants,

especially in equipping many of them with improved skills to take up positions as youth leaders. The review also noted important differences between the partner organisations depending on the professional capacity of the partner institution. It was also important that clear goals for organisational improvement was an integral part of the exchange project.³⁰ In some organisations, the participants were just “visitors” or “observers” while in others the host partner provided them with clear tasks and responsibilities.

The exchange projects studied by the team confirmed these observations. The exchange project with the Mercy Centre in Thailand is an example of a classical North-South Youth exchange. The Mercy Centre is a major NGO focusing on service delivery to the very poor, although they also do some advocacy and policy work. They have good facilities for accommodating interns from abroad. Participants from Norway (18-19

³⁰ See Elisabeth Fosseli Olsen and Ruth Mwikali Nzioki (2015), *Leadership in the FK Youth Programme: A study of how the leadership component affects participants, partners and communities*, Oslo: International Law and Policy Institute (Commissioned by FK and available from their website – <http://www.fredskorpset.no/regelverk-evalueringer-undersokelser/>).

years olds from United World College in Fjaler) are spending up to six months at the Centre and take part in various service delivery activities such as working in the kindergarten. Due in part to the preparations through FK the Norwegian FK participants were considered by the Mercy Centre to be far more disciplined and committed compared to most other interns they hosted. The participants from the Mercy Centre sent to Fjaler was a bit older and stayed there for nearly a year. The team was informed that their stay abroad had contributed to improved life skills and self-esteem. They returned to Thailand as better and stronger members of the staff (the first person to be on the exchange returned a year ago and has stayed on; the two others had just returned but informed the team that they intended to stay on).

The experiences from the Youth exchange programme in Tanzania bring out the importance of how the partner organisations are structured and how exchange participants are recruited. The triangular exchange project between Norway, Tanzania and Guatemala coordinated by ‘Vennskap Nord Sør’ (VNS) illustrates this. Of the three partners,

the organisation in Guatemala is organised as a development organisation with activities within a range of sectors, carried out by professional staff and volunteers, while VNS in Norway is a much more loosely organised structure where most activities are at the local level and within e.g., friendship groups, schools or VNS member units organised on the basis of some shared interest. The partner in Tanzania was a professional media organisation without any youth membership that could feed into the structure, but with the necessary capacity and networks to service the exchange arrangements, including the recruitment of Tanzanian participants. Young people returning from an exchange experience had no option of 'joining' the Tanzanian media organisation in any meaningful sense; Norwegian participants would return to the member units they came from in their local communities, where their exchange experiences obviously would be valued (particularly in communication and information work), but would not provide any additional or new career opportunities. This seems to have been slightly different for the partner in Guatemala, where the exchange experience often would lead to some kind of more formalised attachment, as volunteers

or regular staff, to the sending organisation. There are similar experiences from other Youth exchange projects. At the Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA), for example, which is a full-fledged development-oriented NGO that works closely with the Stromme Foundation (also in projects outside the exchange project) a clear distinction was made between what could be expected from youth volunteers and professionals respectively. There is no place (or budget) to integrate youth into the organisation on the basis of the exchange experience alone. The contrast to the professionals returning is very clear. TAHEA attempts to encourage young people to get proper training and qualifications and generally see the exchange experience as a positive platform in this context. But there are also examples that young people face problems when they return. At Hald International Centre, which is the host in Norway for the youth exchange programs of three different Norwegian organisations, there is concern about what happens to young people when they come back, in terms of social reintegration, opportunities for jobs or training as well as unrealistic expectations from relatives and the local community. All in all, organisations that

have long experience with the youth exchange programmes see the need for a more structured approach, in which the exchange experience must be put into a context which includes both the individual welfare and continued development of the participant as well as the continued relationship between the participant and the sending partner. As the situation is now, the sending partner has few opportunities, few obligations and few incentives to integrate the youth participants into the organisations when they return. In FK's new 2015-2017 strategy more emphasis is put on ensuring that partner organisations have procedures in place to ensure that a larger number of the participants are retained by the partner organisation after the return from an exchange.

The youth exchange through the Norwegian Confederation of Sports (NIS) has been running since the 1990s. It involved North-South-South exchanges with sports organisations in several Southern and East African countries and seeks to promote development through sports. This exchange is part of a programme with parallel Norwegian support – through Norad – to NIS and

the participating African partners.³¹ The participants from Norway also tend to be slightly older and have experience from related work with NIS.

A more recent development is also the use by a Norwegian NGO (SAIH) of the youth programme to add a new exchange component to top up their ongoing Norad-funded support to partners. SAIH has been supporting a small South African NGO (1in9) since 2006. The new exchange (from 2015) is triangular and involves also the SAIH-partner in Zimbabwe (Katswe Sistahood). The participants in the exchange project work together as a team and spend three months with each partner in Norway, South Africa and Zimbabwe. In contrast to the examples above from the VNS project in Tanzania, the youth participants are already involved as members and activists in partner organisations that have worked together for a long time. This makes them potentially better equipped to contribute to the host organisation and their stay may score higher on

31 An evaluation from 2011 also reviewed the Norad-funded component of this. See especially p. 106-122 in Kim Forss et al., *Evaluation of the Strategy for Norway's Culture and Sports Cooperation with Countries in the South*, Oslo: Norad Evaluation Department (Evaluation Report 3/2011). This project has not been examined by the team.

the “learning new skills” activity. The exchange project is also intended to act as an incentive for the participants to stay on with the partner.

Recently FK has also launched a few pure South-South projects within its youth programme. This includes an exchange between the girls’ guides and scouts movement in Uganda, South Africa, Burundi and Kenya as well as the Youth for Peace project between Nepal and India. FK also seeks to increase the upper age limit for participants from 25 to 35, particularly to accommodate the often slightly older participants from the South (although the team observed that several projects include participants in the 25-30 age group. This includes the exchanges through the Norwegian Confederation of Sports (with an upper age limit of 28), SAIH (27) and TVIBIT (30).

A main overall finding from the assessment of the Youth programme is that it has become a good instrument for stimulating changes in the minds of participants, and in some cases – but the evidence is less conclusive on this - also in contributing to the development of technical skills.

This may also have positive implications for the development of future youth leaders and active citizens, but in the absence of any proper tracer study of former participants we have no hard evidence of to what extent this has happened.

The main challenge for the Youth programme is its ability to contribute to organisational strengthening and wider strengthening of civil society. The team found results here, but they are modest and uneven. Again, they are strongest with exchanges involving strong partners dedicated to make use of the participants for programme purposes. This is illustrated by the sports project implemented through the Norwegian Confederation of Sport. On the other the many participants working in e.g., kindergarten and childcare facilities, may have limited impact on the strengthening of civil society – although they may have a high score on personal development.

PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGES: NORTH-SOUTH AND SOUTH-SOUTH

The professional programmes - North-South and South-South – involves a diverse range of partners. The participants in these exchange

projects tend on average to be older (the upper age limit is 35) and have a professional background where job experience and skills play a stronger role in the selection. However, in some projects (such as the International Network of Engaged Buddhists) we found the background of some participants to be close to the Youth programme. The participants in the professional programmes will typically also stay for nearly a year compared to the often much shorter exchanges in the Youth programme.

The vast majority of the partner organisations in the countries visited are also civil society organisations. The main exception is the many partners in the health sector in Africa in the North-South programme. Most of these are public/semi-public institutions (mainly hospitals) funded through FK as part of the European ESTHER programme.

The partners in these exchange programmes cover a diverse range of civil society organisations. Some are strong and professionally run NGOs while others are more loosely organised movements. Some are primarily involved in advocacy

and policy work, some in service delivery. Some partners are involved in joint programmes with the exchange component being linked to this, for others the exchange is the only relation between the partners involved. The focus for the exchange project also differs. It has addressed skill shortages in management, promoted implementation of joint programmes, facilitated regional networks and more.

The focus for the exchange projects in the professional programmes is increasingly on achieving results in relation to thematic priorities. These thematic priorities have changed quite frequently in the evaluation period (cf. the presentation in Chapter One). They have included areas where civil society partners have been particularly dominant (this includes the governance and human rights sector which has seen the largest number of participants in the evaluation period), but the trend is towards decreasing reference to civil society in these programmes. With the current thematic priorities (health, education and private sector development) coupled with an emphasis on achieving results in relation to defined priorities (providing voca-

tional education, primary health care services, and addressing social responsibility in business) attention to civil society strengthening may have been further weakened. FK's regional consultants in Africa and Asia instructed by FK to help identify potential South partners informed the team that they were looking for partners able to produce quantitative outputs in the three priority areas and were not specifically searching for civil society organisations. However, the team noted that some strong partner organisations in former thematic priority areas such as governance or culture have been retained with their focus being slightly amended to fit new priority sectors.

While there is no specific civil society focus in the professional programmes, the majority of the partners here are civil society organisations and the purpose of the exchange projects goes well beyond benefits for individual participants. Organisational strengthening and improved performance is also key issues in project agreements.

The team noted important lessons regarding retention of participants. Some partners have a solid track record in retaining all or most partici-

pants. They are typically relatively professionally run organisations (NGOs) with a large salaried staff/secretariat. This included big projects such as those implemented by Help Age in Southeast Asia. The Cambodian School for Prosthetics and Orthotics (CSPO) also has a strong track record, even including a two-year bonding contract for all staff participating in exchanges. The exchanges coordinated by the Thailand-based Integrated Network of Engaged Buddhists (INEB) have not retained many (this project seeks to empower potential youth leaders who are expected to move on to play a role in society). For the former INEB partner in Cambodia (Khmer Youth Association) all former participants have left, but nearly all were – the team was informed – active in related organisations.

For some major multi-country projects, there are also great variations between partners in the exchange. Within the Asian Women in Cooperative Development Forum stronger partners such as the Credit Union League in Thailand appears to have retained nearly all participants. Weaker partners in the Forum (such as the Socio Economic Development Organisation of Cambodia) have often seen participants moving on.

The organisations supported by FK use the opportunities offered by FK in different ways. The Tanzania Association of NGOs (TANGO) in Tanzania, for instance, used the exchange programme that they took part in to offer members of their own secretariat the opportunity to gain new experiences and international exposure. While the exchange project as such was successful, the contribution to the TANGO secretariat was mixed: one of the participants used the experience to move on to a more senior position in another organisation, while another one was able to bring back new ideas from his host organisation (a better database and improved accountability). Another project (JET-Journalists' Environmental Association of Tanzania), where the participants were drawn from the membership, has been able to strengthen the networks and exchanges between the members, to create a stronger organisation on the basis of a more active membership rather than a stronger secretariat.

A slightly different model is found within the National Association of Women's Associations - NAWOU in Uganda, where the exchange participants are recruited from NAWOU

member organisations. Although, there is no direct relationship between exchange participation and a career in any of the organisations, a number of participants end up working for the member organisations. The exchange experience for young professionals helps build CVs and motivate them for continued involvement; many offer their services as volunteers to the sending organisation, which in turn may offer opportunities for paid positions and careers that may extend beyond the organisation, e.g. into large international NGOs or the UN system.

For some projects, the exchanges have been integral parts of programmes to organisational strengthening of partners. A strong example of this is the Help Age project in Southeast Asia where the regional Thailand-based office of an international NGO (Help Age) has used the exchange to help strengthen the organisational capacity of national partners (national NGOs promoting the rights and interests of old age people).

Exchange projects have also been used to develop joint programmes that have benefitted

both partners in an exchange. The Human Rights and Development Foundation in Thailand used the exchange to develop joint programmes with their partner in Myanmar. Through the exchange of young lawyers, the partner in Myanmar was assisted in establishing a legal aid clinic and make inputs into the development of the country's new labour law legislation. The partner in Thailand was able through the exchange to further develop its work related to the rights of foreign migrant workers in Thailand (mainly from Myanmar).

The North-South project run by the Norwegian Church Aid – a triangular project involving both the head office in Oslo, country offices and partners in the South - is an example of a project which has attempted to address both organisational development and joint programme implementation. The opportunities offered by FK were - after an initial period of poor focus - used more strategically to achieve this.³² Another

³² Norwegian Church Aid has run FK-supported North-South-South exchanges since 2002. They have all come to an end. Some exchanges involved the head office in Oslo and regional offices focusing on programme staff, others involved partners. In the last few years (especially after 2010) the programmes were used more strategically to strengthen joint programmes in priority areas as well as to build individual skills related to this.

Norwegian NGO – the Stromme Foundation – run a South-South exchange projects between regional offices and partners in Africa (and adding South Asia in the current phase) with a main focus on capacity building through transfer of knowledge between partners.

In South Africa, the Field Band Foundation has successfully managed to use the exchange to further develop and expand their work.³³ Among the projects studied by the team, it is possibly the strongest case of a project with an ability, after an initial period of “trial and error”, to develop a long-term plan for the organisation and then being able to use the exchange in a strategic and cumulative way to build their capacity and expand their outreach. One of the main components, the establishment of a training academy, led to significant outputs, but the project was poorly planned. Supplementary funding from the Norwegian Embassy was required to help address sustainability issues.

³³ See also the review commissioned by FK, Elling N. Tjønneland, *Bands Crossing Borders. A review of the cooperation between South Africa's Field Band Foundation and Norges Musikkorpsforbund, Bergen: CMI 2013* (also available from <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/evalueringer/bcb-review-2013.pdf>)

This project was originally classified as belonging to the “culture” theme, but when the theme was dropped the project – like many others – was refocussed to fit with one of the new thematic priorities. The Field Band project was reclassified as a “health” project by addressing the use of music to integrate people with disabilities in the local field bands.

There are numerous examples of how exchange participants have been able to use their respective individual experiences to build quite impressive careers, often related to further development of the sector from which they were recruited. Furthermore, there is no doubt that an organisation staffed with people with a level of exposure to other countries, different cultures and an international environment, will be more attractive as development partners to the funding organisations.

A recent positive review of two South-South exchange projects (Media Women's Association and the African Network for the Prevention and Protection of Child Abuse and Neglect – both involving Tanzania and Uganda) speaks highly of

results in relation to changes in individual minds and skills, as well in building organisational capacity and strengthening regional networks. However, it also notes that most participants leave the organisations and move on.³⁴

The team also had the opportunity to observe how FK has addressed termination and exit of partnerships. The current year (2015) was Thailand's last year as an FK country following a decision by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to reduce the number of countries eligible for Norwegian aid. In recent years, other South-east Asian countries with stronger civil society partners (Philippines and Indonesia) have also been dropped from the list, but then as a result of FK's own decision to concentrate on fewer countries. The team noted from interviews with affected partners, that the process of terminating exchange projects, particularly the South-South projects coordinated from organisations in Thailand or other "strong" countries, has

³⁴ Cf. Mentor Consult, Review of the FK Norway Exchange projects of Media Women's Associations and the African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect, unpublished October 2012 (also available from <http://www.fredskorpset.no/globalassets/evalueringer/fk-exchange-project-evaluation.pdf>).

led to many frustrations. It was felt that there was insufficient communication and efforts to address the implication of termination, particularly for remaining partners in the exchange. Nor were there any efforts, according to several of those interviewed, to learn from the projects, its failures and successes. The change and frequent cut in countries also affect and weaken the regional profile and portfolio. Established high profile NGOs are left out and there is a search for new partners in a few countries (Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia) with weaker civil society. These perceptions were probably aggravated by the parallel restructuring of FK's Asia office with new staff coming in.

There are several main findings from our assessments of the North-South and South-South programmes. The projects examined appears highly successful in contributing to changes at the individual level. Contributions to organisational development and strengthening of civil society are also evident, but uneven. These selected projects are however, projects where results would be expected to be more evident compared to projects of e.g., shorter duration.

The sample does not allow us to identify any important differences from comparing North-South and South-South programmes in their ability to contribute to civil society strengthening. South-South projects – or triangular North-South-South projects in the North-South programme – appears however to bring together partners with greater similarities, joint programmes and they more easily build and sustain regional cross-border networks.

Another important finding is that results at the organisational and wider levels are greater if they are properly planned for and owned by the institutions involved. Projects where the contribution of the participants are cumulative and sequential have much greater impact and make stronger contribution.

CONCLUSION

In Chapter Three we found that FK does not have a sufficient theory of change and operational strategy for how civil society can be strengthened through mutual exchanges. FK have become very professional and effective in facilitating mutual exchanges in a range of

different thematic areas and between diverse institutions and organisations. FK's main approach to this is to ensure that the exchanges shall unfold in a safe and well-organised manner, that the partners shall make use of the support services (preparatory and homecoming seminars, partner meetings and so on), and that the partners have appropriate procedures for reporting and accounting for funds. FK's criteria for selecting partners and participants does not directly address the issue of strengthening civil society. FK's assumption or hope is that by taking part in mutual exchange projects partner institutions and participants may become change agents in their communities and societies.

FK does not pursue contributions to strengthening of civil society as an overall objective, but is partly addressing this as a sector objective managed through the Youth programme. It has become a distant and at best implicit objective in the professional programmes. However, the team – through the country case studies – found stronger evidence of civil society strengthening in the professional programmes compared to the

Youth programme. A main reason for this is the age and professional background of the participants; they are younger and do not have much – if any – job experience compared to participants in the professional programmes. The Youth programme may have a high score in its contribution to “changing the minds” of individual participants and promoting global citizens, but the ability of the partners in the project to attract and retain participants after the exchange is far more limited compared to partners in the professional programmes. This will also limit the contribution to organisational development and wider impact on the civil society.

The team found in the professional programmes stronger results in relation to both organisational and wider levels. Achievements crucially depend on the extent to which these purposes are identified as central to the exchange, to what extent they are an integral part of a bigger programme/project by the partner to pursue these purposes, and the organisational strength and capacity of the participating partners. Exchanges alone will rarely move beyond benefits at the individual

level. Selection of partners and participants is important to achieve this.

The findings in this chapter illustrate the general and major dilemma that FK is facing – and which it has faced throughout its history: is the purpose of the exchange primarily to provide benefits for the individual participants, or shall it have instrumental purposes beyond the exchange?

Supporting mutual exchange is the only instrument that FK has at its disposal. In the next chapter, we examine the relation between the FK's exchange model and other Norwegian instruments for strengthening civil society.

5: FK Norway and Norwegian support to civil society

FK is in financial terms a small component in Norwegian development aid to civil society in the South. Its funding is less than 10% of the Norwegian support to civil society disbursed through Norad's civil society department and less than 5% of the total if we compare it to all Norwegian aid to or through civil society organisations. FK's distinct profile, and potential comparative advantage, is its focus on mutual exchange. This is also the only instrument available for FK. How does this instrument relate to other Norwegian instruments for supporting civil society? Are there any efforts to coordinate or harmonise support to civil society? Are there complementarities between the various Norwegian instruments? What are the impressions of those receiving support both from FK and through other Norwegian channels? And how is FK perceived by Norwegian Embassies and by Norwegian NGOs channelling support to civil society organisations?

FK's strategy and policy documents do not really address relations with other Norwegian instruments, or the potential – if any – of harmonisation or holistic Norwegian approaches to

supporting civil society. However, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' 2012 Review of management issues at FK does address some of these issues.³⁵ It notes that there are some overlap in the selection of South-partners (e.g. in the "culture" and "climate and forest" sectors) and calls for improved coordination. It is also mentioned that professional competence at Norad may play a role in assisting FK. The importance of ensuring that the Norwegian Embassies are informed about FK's exchange projects in the countries concerned is also emphasized.

The Foreign Ministry's allocation letters for 2013, 2014 and 2015 have also made stronger reference to the need for appropriate interaction and communication with Norad and the Embassies. This includes reference to the need for the best possible utilisation of Norwegian resources.

The strongest manifestation of coordination within Norway is found in the ESTHER programme. ESTHER is a European programme and FK has

³⁵ See the unpublished document from the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, «Gjennomgang av oppgavene til forvaltningsorganet (FK). Mai 2012".

been instructed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to manage this by supporting exchange of health personnel and implemented by Norwegian hospitals (cf. Chapter One). It is a component of FK's North-South programme. This also led to a formalised interaction and professional dialogue with Norad's Global Health Section which goes beyond the ESTHER programme. The overall coordination of this is also assisted by a part-time health coordinator based at Oslo University Hospital that interacts with FK's health programme.

The team's first finding from the FK countries visited is the limited harmonisation of Norwegian support to civil society, and often lack of knowledge between the different Norwegian instruments about what they do in the country concerned. In all the countries visited, we noted that the Embassies – although aware of FK and its purpose - were generally not well informed about specific FK projects in the country. They were aware of FK's activities and were invited to ceremonies linked to the homecoming and preparatory seminars and other events, but in general the Embassies did not appear very familiar or knowledgeable about

the portfolio of FK supported exchanges in the country. We noted (cf. Chapter One) that FK has held various types of conferences and workshops in the partner country to raise awareness and involve Norwegian Embassies and NGOs (most recently through the “Friends of Norway” umbrella), and also that the FK management also have meetings with the Embassies when they visit the country.

The other side to this is to what extent FK seeks to identify what other Norwegian channels and instruments for civil society support (Norad, Norwegian NGOs and Embassies) are doing in the countries where FK is supporting exchange projects. We found little evidence of efforts to collect data on this. We also noted that FK’s South representatives/offices in Africa and Asia – which plays a key role in identifying potential South partners – paid limited or no attention to other Norwegian civil society support when searching for potential partners.³⁶

³⁶ FK’s South representatives in Africa and Asia play a key role in identifying potential partners. In interviews with the team, the Asia office said they did not look into this and were unaware of any related Norwegian support. Nor is this addressed in the formal FK instruction to the Asia office regarding identification of potential partners.

One ambassador interviewed also suggested that the FK should make more use of Embassies in identifying potential partners.

While there appears to be insufficient communication flows between Norwegian funding instruments and lack of knowledge of what each is supporting, there is still some specific collaboration at the project level.

THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

There are few examples of civil society organisations in the South receiving support both from FK’s *Youth programme* and other Norwegian channels. There are however, some cases. In the Youth programme, there has for a long time been support from both Norad and FK to the Norwegian Confederation of Sports’ “sports for development” project with partners in Africa. This is also an example of a project with synergies between the funding and where a mutual beneficial division of labour has emerged. Another example is SAIH’s support to a South African NGO partner (1in 9) which recently was supplemented by an additional small component from the Youth programme with SAIH expecting

synergies to emerge between the traditional financial support and the youth exchange.

Two of the large Norwegian NGOs with major Norad-support for support to civil society have added a FK Youth component to their programme. These are the Stromme Foundation’s “Act Now” project and the “Communication for Change” programme implemented jointly by the Norwegian Church Aid and YMCA-YWCA of Norway and their partners. These exchanges appear in most cases not to have been integrated with the regular Norad-funded programme.

We found no such examples from the current Youth programme in Thailand or Cambodia.

THE PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMMES

There are also a few examples of similar arrangements in the *North-South* and the *South-South* programmes. One case is the Norwegian Embassy in South Africa, which provides additional funding in the 2014-2016 period for the North-South cooperation between the Field Band Foundation and the Norwegian Band Federation. The supplementary funding is intended to make

the outcome from the original FK support (a training academy) more sustainable.

The role of the major Norwegian NGOs involved in channelling Norad support to civil society must be highlighted here. They are in financial terms the main Norwegian providers of support for civil society strengthening in the South. They also have budgets and funding from the development aid budget, which far exceeds what is disbursed through FK. There is limited engagement between FK and these organisations. The main exceptions in the countries visited are the Stromme Foundation and the Norwegian Church Aid (NCA). The Stromme Foundation has for a number of years received additional funding – through the South-South programme – for co-operation in Africa between their regional offices and partners, and between partners. This was focused on capacity building of staff, first involving partners in education, and later microfinance and women's empowerment. Since 2013, Asian partners have also been brought into this.

NCA has received funding for exchange projects from the North-South programme even prior to

the current evaluation period, but until about 2009, these exchange projects were fragmented, isolated and not well integrated with the normal work. This began to change in 2010. The emphasis was on North-South-South exchanges involving local programme staff at regional offices, programme staff at partner organisations as well as staff in Oslo. The exchanges were linked to joint programmes (mainly advocacy related to thematic areas such as extractive industries, natural resources management and economic justice), but also organisational development. The programme ended with the completion of the final exchange round in 2013.

Other examples are few. Recently some new projects have been launched. This includes SAIH that has added (from 2015) a new North-South exchange on top of their long support to their partner in Zimbabwe.

There are a few examples of parallel support from Norwegian sources to partners in the South that are unrelated to the FK exchange. On a modest scale, we have funding from the Bangkok Embassy's small grants facility to human

rights organisations also involved in FK exchange projects. In South Africa, we learned that the Centre for Biosafety in Tromsø also received much support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Oslo while also participating in an exchange project (with North West University). In East Africa Norad is providing direct support to the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Regional Secretariat that also is supported through FK's South-South programme.

In the case of especially Tanzania, there is also much support to health from other Norwegian funding sources and channels. There is some complementarity with FK-funding here (e.g., in Haukeland Hospital's many projects in the country) with reportedly good integration between FK's exchange projects and other support from Norwegian FK partners.

CONCLUSION

The team found that there was limited co-operation between FK's exchange projects and other Norwegian support to civil society. This is not unique in Norwegian support to civil society. Lack of coordination and high level of fragmentation

is part of a broader systemic problem in development aid, as pointed out also by Norad's civil society panel in their recent assessment.³⁷ However, while these issues at least have been addressed in the other channels and instruments for Norwegian support to civil society, it has not really been an issue within FK. FK does bring certain added values and comparative advantages to Norwegian support. The team emphasises that FK also should address coordination and aid effectiveness in its support to civil society.

FK does distinguish itself by bringing in a large and diverse number of Norwegian institutions and youth into partnerships and engagement with development work in the South, and by facilitating a similar mutual exchange between partners in different developing countries. Furthermore, personnel exchange will also help to promote mutual learning and sharing of experiences and promote international networks between organisations in different countries and between diverse cultures.

³⁷ See Norad's Civil Society Panel, *Tracking Impact. An exploratory study of the wider effects of Norwegian civil society support to countries in the South*, Oslo, Norad 2012.

The team does not suggest that there necessarily shall be more harmonisation between FK and other Norwegian instruments. Nor do we propose that there necessarily shall be more joint projects. But we do think there is a need for further exploration of the possibility of making mutual exchange an additional component in existing Norwegian support to civil society. This will require that FK plays a more proactive role in identifying possibilities for promoting mutual exchanges involving South partners receiving support from Embassies, directly from Norad or from Norwegian NGOs.

The team has found that mutual exchange is more efficient if it is linked to long-term cooperation between partners with joint programmes and shared commitments. Other Norwegian instruments may help facilitate this and FK may bring the potential added value – the mutual exchange – to the support. The team has also noted the fragmented nature of some of FK's South-South projects. This comment is reinforced by the team's observation of the current efforts by FK's regional consultants in Asia and Africa to search for new South partners.

Very little, if any attention is paid to how this can benefit from other Norwegian initiatives and support. This does not necessarily imply that South-South exchanges should be downplayed – on the contrary they may increase, but then linked much more to triangular North-South-South exchanges or South-South exchanges between partners benefitting from other Norwegian support.

6: Conclusions and recommendations

This chapter summarises the team's conclusions on each of the three specific questions and presents the main recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS

FK has since 2001 funded more than 7000 persons participating in mutual exchange projects between partners in Norway and in developing countries, including South-South exchanges. The vast majority of these exchanges have involved civil society organisations. Below, we have summarised our assessments of FK's overall approach to strengthening of civil society, the comparative advantages and the added value of FK's programmes for civil society organisations.

It is important at the outset to emphasise that this is an evaluation of FK's contribution to the development and strengthening of civil society in developing countries. This is just one of the three objectives in the FK mandate. The other objectives are to facilitate reciprocal exchange between a diverse range of organisations, institutions and companies in developing countries and Norway, and to promote mutual learning

and sharing of experiences and contribute to the transfer of knowledge and experience back to the FK participants' own societies.

1: Is the current strategy and approach of FK Norway optimal when it comes to developing and strengthening civil society in developing countries

The team concludes that FK's strategy and approach is not optimal as a basis for strengthening civil society in the South. While strengthening civil society has remained an overall objective and the majority of FK-supported partners are civil society organisations, the main focus for FK has been the personnel exchange and on the operational aspects of the exchange. FK has made great efforts to ensure that the benefits for individuals are maximized and that partners manage the exchange well. There have also been increasing efforts to ensure that FK's approach can be more targeted – especially through thematic priority areas and by reducing the number of countries that can benefit from exchange projects. There are efforts to improve effectiveness and report results in the thematic

priority areas, but this is not covering civil society strengthening as an overall objective and sector.

FK's strategy documents do not define the concept of civil society. Nor do they specify what strengthening civil society would entail taking into account emerging changes in civil society and regional/country contexts and differences. This is also reflected in FK's management and instruments for translating objectives and strategies into actions.

FK's theory of change and strategy documents are most developed at the individual level. Basically, FK's approach is a bottom up or "trickle up" strategy starting with organising individual encounters, which in turn is expected to lead to a range of broader societal benefits. However, the expected causal links between the exchange and the overarching goal of strengthening the civil society is not sufficiently developed. This hampers FK's ability to focus on the critical issues that can be addressed in order to tune the activities in the direction that could lead to the fulfilment of higher-end goals.

FK's theory of change is mainly a theory for exchanges with assumptions, or hopes, about how the participants and partners may become change agents. However, these assumptions are not sufficiently identified or critically reviewed to understand if they are likely to hold in practice. Moreover, the objectives and expected impacts are not operationalised or concretised.

FK's support to civil society is in the current strategy period mainly addressed through the FK Youth programme, which now only support exchanges between civil society organisations. The main operationalisation of civil society strengthening here is the need for more efforts and incentives to help ensure that returning participants stay on in the home organisation or a related civil society organisation. There is far less attention to what the participants shall do to contribute to strengthen the partner organisation.

The team found that the Youth programme is a good instrument for stimulating changes in the minds of the participants. It is making a positive contribution in developing future youth leaders

and active citizens. It is a less efficient instrument in contributing to organisational strengthening and in having a wider impact on civil society.

The team found the mutual exchange projects through the North-South and South-South programmes to be more efficient instruments for strengthening civil society compared to the Youth programme. They do contribute to changes at the individual level, but exchanges in these programmes also had greater impacts on organisational development and wider levels. The results are uneven, but the greatest achievements were found where the purpose of the exchange was clearly formulated, when they were an integral part of a bigger project by the partner to pursue these purposes, and when they were based on the organisational capacity of the participating partners. A careful selection of partners as well as participants in the exchanges, based on their positions, functions, abilities, aims, commitment, etc. are important to achieve this. Moreover, careful selection seems to be a key instrument that will increase FK's likelihood of contributing to the higher-level goals of strengthening civil society.

The findings illustrated the general and major dilemma that FK is facing – and which it has faced throughout its history: is the purpose of the exchange primarily to lead to benefits for the individual participants, or shall it have instrumental purposes beyond the exchange?

2: What is the comparative advantage of FK Norway's strategy, approach and work compared with other Norwegian funded means for developing and strengthening of civil society in developing countries?

FK is in financial terms a small component of Norwegian support to civil society in developing countries. Its portfolio of partners in the South is broad and diverse and is not very different from the type of organisations supported through the major Norwegian NGOs involved in strengthening civil society organisations. FK does distinguish itself by bringing in a large and diverse number of Norwegian institutions and youth into partnerships and engagement with development work in the South. Furthermore, personnel exchange will also help to promote mutual learning and sharing of experiences and promote inter-

national networks between organisations in different countries and between diverse cultures.

FK's comparative advantage in relation to other instruments for Norwegian support lies in its focus on mutual exchange of individuals and promoting cooperation between organisations in different countries. This provides added value compared to other Norwegian support to civil society in the South. The team concludes that there is a need for further exploration of the possibility of making mutual exchange an additional component in existing Norwegian support to civil society, and that FK pays more attention to the enhancement of coordination and aid effectiveness in its civil society support.

3: What is the added value of FK's programmes for civil society organisations, in particular for those that receive other kind of Norwegian assistance?

There are examples, but very few, of FK partners receiving other kinds of Norwegian support. There are instances of major Norwegian NGOs with funding from Norad's civil society depart-

ment making use of FK's exchange programmes to add an exchange component to their regular support to civil society.

The added value of FK's programmes and approach highlighted by partners interviewed, lies primarily in three areas. The first is their operational approach to the exchange process itself. FK has become very strong in the ability to ensure that participants are prepared for the exchange and that partners provide the required support to the participants. Secondly, the exchanges are also by most partners interviewed found to be very important in promoting regional and global networks. In some cases they have also helped establish or strengthen joint programmes between partners. Finally, the team has noted that partners generally – but with exceptions - are satisfied with the dialogue and communication with FK and that FK is perceived to be highly accommodative to needs and priorities of partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions of this evaluation, what are the possible future options

for FK when it comes to strengthening civil society and what are our recommendations?

FK has become an increasingly professional organisation, proficient in facilitating exchanges that works well for individual participants. It has also become more purposeful in targeting selected sectors and areas of work. This is the point of departure. FK may meet the two first objectives in its mandate well – to facilitate reciprocal exchange programmes and promote mutual learning and sharing of experiences for participants in the exchanges. However, it fails to sufficiently address and operationalise its civil society objective as explained in this report. FK is faced with an overall strategic challenge and other more operational choices. First of all: Should the main purpose of the exchange be the exchange itself and the benefits for the individual, or should the exchange be an instrument for something beyond itself, e.g. strengthening of civil society? If FK defined itself primarily as a professional exchange organisation, the civil society strengthening objective could be removed from the overall mandate. As an alternative, FK could become a professional development

agency with a broader agenda – including civil society strengthening. Or find an alternative in between.

The evaluation concludes that the current situation is not optimal and satisfactory, but we have no normative insights to what future policy should be. Basically, the choice of direction is a strategic decision to be taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in consultation with FK. However, we are in a position to suggest three alternative scenarios – all possible and logical implications of the study findings – trying to come to grips with the objective of civil society strengthening. All of them may not be feasible, but we believe it is useful to think through the various alternatives.

Future scenarios

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs should in consultation with FK discuss and decide on future direction based on the following scenarios. The team recommends that the outcome of these discussions is reflected in a revised Government instruction for FK.

1: Leave the civil society objective but keep it as a priority sector

A possible option is to leave the civil society objective as an overall objective, but keep it as one of several priority sectors. There are two sub options:

- a) Focus on the qualities of an exchange for younger people and volunteers between civil society organisations; or
- b) Make it into a much more instrumental exchange for civil society strengthening with participants selected based on job experience and skills in relation to the purpose.

The changes from the current practice will be limited with the first option.

2: Abandon support to civil society as an objective

Another scenario would see FK abandoning its civil society objective. Instead, FK may focus solely on promoting mutual exchanges with the purpose of the exchanges being limited to mutual sharing of experiences and promotion of inter-

national cooperation, which may or may not be linked to civil society or coupled with exchanges within thematic priority areas. The changes from the current practice will be small in this scenario.

3: Keep the civil society objective as an overall objective

If it is decided to keep civil society strengthening as an overall objective, there are at least two future possible alternatives:

- a) Focus all future exchanges on exchanges between civil society organisations and emphasizing the individual benefits. This may in practice only be a theoretical alternative since it means excluding public and private sector exchanges – unless they have civil society components.
- b) Define FK as an instrument to strengthen civil society in selected countries through professional exchanges. This is a demanding alternative. This approach would require an analysis of civil society in the respective countries and an assessment of what would be FK's most effective partners. Partners and

participants should be selected systematically and for specific purposes.

Subsidiary recommendations

The choice of future direction is critical and the most important. However, there are other subsidiary recommendations emerging from the findings and conclusions to be addressed mainly by FK itself in consultation with the Civil Society Department in Norad and other national and international partners:

- 1: The capacity and competence of FK should be assessed. FK is currently set up through guidelines, planning/reporting systems and procedures, and so on to manage individual exchange projects. There is need for further improvement of these management instruments. This includes:
 - a) Review the criteria and process for selecting partners (individuals and organisations) in the South;
 - b) Improve the appraisal process and further formalise the decision making process; and

- c) Improve and expand the planning and reporting tools – in particular contextual narrative reporting.

If it is decided to pursue Scenario 3 with its stronger emphasis on development objectives FK has to systematically strengthen and professionalise its planning, reporting and review procedures. The alternatives in Scenario 3 require a carefully elaborated and detailed theory of change to support the development of an exchange design that has the highest likelihood of leading to the fulfilment of envisaged civil society objectives.

- 2: Further interaction and cooperation with other Norwegian aid instruments for strengthening civil society should also be considered. FK should pay more attention to the enhancement of coordination and aid effectiveness in its civil society support in consultation with the Civil Society Department in Norad. This includes exploring the possibilities of adding exchange components to other Norwegian-supported civil society strengthening. This may involve increased

support to exchanges between partners of Norwegian NGOs.

- 3: There is need for further consolidation and reduction of the fragmented nature of some of the new initiatives, especially in the South-South programme. It is difficult to see the value of supporting a small number of isolated of South-South exchanges – unless they are linked to broader networks, other Norwegian aid instruments or North-South exchanges.

Annexes

ANNEX 1: FK Norway's exchange projects 2006 – 2015. A brief profile	64
ANNEX 2: Literature consulted	76
ANNEX 3: List of Persons Interviewed	79
ANNEX 4: FK Norway's comments to the report.....	85
ANNEX 5: Terms of Reference	86

Annex 1: FK Norway's exchange projects 2006 – 2015. A brief profile

This Annex summarises FK's exchange projects in the two main country case studies (Thailand and Tanzania) as well as three other countries visited by the team (Cambodia, South Africa and Uganda). All projects in all programmes are reviewed. This includes the Youth, South-South and North-South (including ESTHER) as well as – where applicable – the now disbanded senior programme. All projects involving civil society partners as primary (coordinating) or secondary partner are identified. Any direct linkages to other Norwegian support to civil society are identified.

THAILAND

Thailand has been an important FK-hub in Asia in the evaluation period. While all exchange programmes and thematic priorities are represented the vast majority of exchanges are through the South-South projects. It largely involves civil society organisations and in most cases the coordinating partner is based in Thailand. The exchange may be between two organisations in two countries, but in most cases it appears to involve more than that, sometimes involving partners in as many as five and six countries.

TABLE A1.1: FK PROJECTS AND PARTNERS IN THAILAND 2006 – 2015

Programme	Civil society partners	Other partners	Total
Young	3	0	3
North-South	0	2	2
South-South	7	3	10
TOTAL	10	5	15

In the evaluation period an FK Asia office in Bangkok has been instrumental in identifying, facilitating and managing support to Asian organisations involved in South-South exchanges. From 2015 the role of the office – with new staff – was redefined and they are no longer involved in managing projects, but still play a key role in the identification and initial selection of South partners in Asia, especially related to the South-South programme and with a focus on the thematic priority sectors.

A notable feature of the FK projects in Southeast Asia in the evaluation period is also the phasing out of several countries from the FK list of countries eligible for exchange projects. This included

the Philippines, Malaysia, Laos and Indonesia as a result of FK's decision to focus on fewer countries. In 2015 Thailand itself was dropped from the FK country following a decision by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Only Myanmar, Cambodia and Vietnam remained as FK countries in the Southeast Asian region.

Civil society organisations in South-South projects

The main civil society partners are found in this programme. They can broadly be classified as related to governance, advocacy and human rights, but covers all the current three thematic priorities of FK.

The *Asian Institute for Human Rights* (AIHR) in Bangkok coordinates a South-South project with partners in Nepal (Samata Foundation), Bangladesh (Centre for Human Rights Studies) and India (Kislay). It ran from 2010 to 2015 with Centre for Human Rights taking over as co-ordinating partner when AIHR had to be dropped. The exchanges were linked to a range of issues related to human rights education, advocacy, information sharing and networking.

A related project was coordinated by the *Human Rights and Development Foundation* (HRDF) in Bangkok with partners in Indonesia (Jakarta Legal Aid Institute) and Myanmar (U Kyaw Myint Law Firm). It ran from 2013 to 2015 with Indonesia being phased out after the first year. The exchange had a clear focus on access to justice, legal aid and labour law with the exchange being linked to assisting the partner in Myanmar in developing a legal aid clinic and advocacy for new labour laws, and in Thailand with HRDF's work among legal rights for Burmese migrant workers. AIHR works under the legal umbrella of HRDF.

Another main exchange project is coordinated by the *Integrated Network of Engaged Buddhists*

(INEB), which has run exchange projects with FK support since 2008. This has involved partners in India (Youth Buddhist Society), Sri Lanka (Sewalanka Foundation), Cambodia (Khmer Youth Association, until 2010), Myanmar (Kalyana Mitta Foundation) and Vietnam (Social Policy Ecology Research Institute). The focus throughout has been on youth empowerment and providing a framework for personnel exchanged to grow and develop their skills as youth community leaders as well as to strengthen the organisational capacity of the participating organisations.

Help Age is a large UK-based international NGO with a regional office for East Asia and the Pacific located in Thailand. This office is the coordinating partner for a project which exchange staff between Help Age' national partners in four countries: Thailand (Foundation for Older Person's Development), Cambodia (Help Age Cambodia Country Office), Vietnam (Vietnam Association of the Elderly) and – until it was phased out from the list of FK countries – Philippines (Coalition of Services of the Elderly). It has run since 2010. The exchanges are linked

to Help Age' regional support for strengthening the capacity of national partners (NGOs). The project involves advocacy and service for old age people, and especially the most vulnerable (poor, handicapped). It is classified as a health project by FK.

This biggest exchange project began in 2008 bringing together partners in six countries belonging to the *Asian Women in Cooperative Development Forum* (AWCF). The AWCF Secretariat in the Philippines was the original coordinating partner, but when the Philippines were dropped from the FK list of eligible countries the Credit Union League of Thailand became the coordinating partner in 2013 with secondary partners in Vietnam (Centre for Agricultural Extension Volunteers), Indonesia (Forum for Indonesian Cooperatives Movement, until 2014), Malaysia (Credit Union Promotion Club, until 2013) and Cambodia (Socio-Economic Development Organisation of Cambodia). With Thailand now being phased out the Centre for Agricultural Extension Volunteers will be the new coordinating partner. The focus is on strengthening solidarity and

collaboration between and amongst a network and to enhance their capacity in the delivery of services. It also aims to harness young professionals in various fields of expertise such as business development for credit unions, household economic development, agribusiness and solidarity economy, as well as improved language skills in English as tools to address gender issues and environmental concerns. The AWCF is a network of civil society organisations. It is classified as a private sector/business development project.

Another civil society project is coordinated by the *Earth Net Foundation*. It seeks to promote organic agriculture and small scale farmers access to markets. It has run exchanges with partners in Sri Lanka, Cambodia and – until they were dropped from the FK list – Bhutan and Laos. It ran from 2010 to 2015. It is classified as a private sector/business development project. A short-lived project began in 2014-15 between the Informal Sector Service Centre in Nepal and the *Thailand Volunteer Service* (governance, human rights).

A short project in 2007-2008 ran between the *Thai Craft Association* and the Fair Trade Group in Nepal.

FK Youth

The main project is the Norwegian Mission Society's Connect project which had Thailand and the *Evangelical Lutheran Church* there as one of the partners (in addition to partners in Madagascar, China, Brazil and South Africa). It basically involves study at Hald International Centre and then working in one of the partner countries.³⁸ It caters for the 18-25 age group and ran from 2008 to 2015 in Thailand.

The United World College in Fjaler had an exchange project with the *Mercy Centre* in Bangkok, which ran for two years from 2013. Students from the College spend up to six months working as interns at the Mercy Centre, mainly related to running welfare and educational activities for the children. Young staff from the Mercy Centre spend a year in Fjaler as interns.

³⁸ The Hald International Centre is a Norwegian Folk High School. It is jointly owned by the Norwegian Mission Society (NMS), Stromme Foundation and Norges Kristelige Student - og Skoleungdomslag.

In 2007-2008 Agder Folkehøgskole had an exchange project with the *Karen Northern Further Education Programme*.

South-South projects not involving civil society organisations

This has mainly involved public and semi-public institutions in the health sector. The biggest is coordinated by *Prince of Songkla University* and involves partners in four countries. It ran from 2007 to 2012. The other is coordinated by the Department of Medical Service Administration in Vietnam with secondary partners in Thailand and Sri Lanka. *The Department of Mental Health* at the Ministry of Health was the Thailand-partner for this project, which ran from 2012 to 2015.

A project ran from 2013 to 2015 with the Network of *Aquaculture Centres in Asia-Pacific* (NACA). It was coordinated from Madagascar. NACA is an intergovernmental organisation that promotes rural development through sustainable aquaculture.

North-South

There has only been two smaller exchange projects through this programme, both involving pri-

vate business companies. One is the IMG Group, which collaborated with *IMG Asia* in 2013-2014. The other was Escenic AS with partners in Bangladesh and Thailand (*VIZRT*) in 2012-2013.

TANZANIA

The FK portfolio in Tanzania since 2006 is large and diverse, with all of FK's programmes being represented, including the FK Senior programme, which had three projects (health and culture) before it was disbanded in 2009.

Tanzania has seen many FK events (thematic conferences, participant alumni meetings, Friends of Norway) seeking to bring FK partners together, often also with Norwegian officials.

FK Youth

The FK Youth programme has had six projects in the country since 2006. They have been dominated by three projects managed by three Norwegian partners. The Stromme Foundation's 'Act Now' youth programme, has had exchanges in the whole evaluation period with (but at different times) three Tanzanian partners – *The Tanzania Home Economics Association*, the

TABLE A1.2: FK PROJECTS AND PARTNERS IN TANZANIA 2006 – 2015

Programme	Civil society partners	Other partners	Total
Youth	6	0	6
North-South	6	18	24
South-South	9	7	16
Senior	0	3	3
TOTAL	21	28	49

Christian Sports Contact, and the *Organisation for Community Development and Education*. They are also partners in the regular Norad-funded Stromme Foundation programme.

Norwegian Church Aid's and YMCA/YWCA's Communication for Change ran a project (between 2009 and 2011) partnering with the Tanzania activities of the *Global Network for Religion for Children*.

The biggest Youth exchange project is coordinated by 'Friendship North/South' (from 2007 and onwards). This Spor programme is a North-South-South exchange between Norway, Gua-

temala and Tanzania. *Flame Tree Media Trust* is the partner in Tanzania and Fundates in Guatemala. The project targets young people in manual and artisanal jobs, from rural and outlying areas and from ethnic minorities. The three smaller projects are the exchange between the YMCA/YWCA and *Ilula YWCA* (2013-2015). The Red Cross United World College in Fjaler has a project with the *Great Lakes Training Institute* (2013-2014). The final Norwegian partner supporting projects in Tanzania under the FK Young programme is the Norwegian Confederation of Sports (NIF), which cooperates with *Christian Sports Contact* (CHRISC) (2013-2015). This is a South-South exchange (with CHRISC Kenya,

CHRISC Uganda as well as partners in Zambia and Zimbabwe) and part of the bigger sports and community development project in Africa coordinated by NIF. CHRISC also takes part in an exchange with Stromme Foundation's 'Act Now'. The focus for all these exchange projects is on the individual experiences and "changes in the mind". The NIF project also has a stronger focus on skills development and organisational development.

North-South

There is a portfolio of 24 North-South Exchanges in the FK portfolio of which six involve civil society organisations, but most are relatively small in duration and volume. From 2007 to 2014 the Norwegian Church Aid's office in Tanzania was involved in a series of a triangular North-South-South exchanges involving local program staff and their regional offices and at the head office as well as between partners in Zimbabwe and South Africa. This was linked to organisational development as well as joint programme implementation (advocacy). It was part of a bigger FK supported exchange project funded by FK and implemented by the Norwegian Church Aid in Oslo (it ran from 2002 to 2013). Several

partners have been involved over the years. In the last phase this included – in addition to NCA offices in Guatemala, Angola, Zambia, Kenya, South Africa and Tanzania – partners in South Africa (Economic Justice Network and Bench Marks Foundation), Kenya (Fellowship of Christian Councils and Churches in the Great Lakes and Horn of Africa), Zambia (Zambia Council of Churches), South Sudan (The New Sudan Council of Churches), Tanzania (*Tanzania Council of Churches*) and Rwanda (The Protestant Council of Rwanda).

Naturvernforbundet (Friends of the Earth Norway) is managing a project with *Tanzania Traditional Energy Development Organisation* (2012-2015) which focuses on organisational development and networking. It also includes South-South cooperation with Kenya, Mozambique and Nepal.

The UN Association in Norway ran a project with the UN Association in Tanzania (2006-10). The NLA University College (Gimlekollen) had a project with the *Tanzania Media Women's Association* (2006-2008). Kristen Idrettskontakt had a project with the *Christian Sports Contact*

(2007-2008) and the Norwegian People's Aid also had a project focusing on sports in the 2006-2008 period.

There is a much larger number of projects not involving civil society organisations. This includes five private sector development projects between business companies (of which two are ongoing – Friends Fair Trade and Norwegian Registers Development Ltd).

Within education and research and the public sector there are nine projects. Within health (excluding those included under research) there is one project with Haukeland Hospital (but including four different partners in Tanzania) and one with Sophies Minde Hospital under the ESTHER programme. Two health projects were undertaken in the health sector before the arrival of ESTHER in 2010.

South-South

There are 16 South-South projects in the FK portfolio in the evaluation period. Of these nine are with civil society partners. The dominant sectors covered by this programme are advocacy

and human rights, as well as media.

This include the exchange arrangements for journalists preoccupied by environmental issues, or female lawyers, female media workers, human rights activists, child rights activists, and the cooperative movement. The case study project *Journalists Environmental Association of Tanzania* (2008-2013) had partners in Uganda (Rural Development Media Communication), Ethiopia (Ethiopian Environmental Journalists Association) and Kenya (Vihiga Community Development Organisation). The other case study project is with the Women's Group Coordinating Council (2008-2012) and the *Tanzania Association of Non-governmental Association* (2012-2016) which is coordinated by the National Association of Women Organisations in Uganda. Other partners here are in Zambia (Non-governmental Organisations Coordinating Council) and Ethiopia (Union of Ethiopian Women Charitable Associations).

The other projects include the Agribusiness Forum (between Tanzania Federation of Cooperatives and partners in Zambia and Uganda, 2000-2016); the Tanzania chapter of the *African*

Network for the Prevention and Protection against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN) (exchanges with Kenya, Ethiopia and Mauritius, 2007-2008); Tanzania Media Women's Association (exchanges with partners in Zambia, Ethiopia and Kenya 2007-2012); *Tanzania Women Lawyers Association* (with partners in Ethiopia and Kenya, 2009 - 2016); Forum for African Women Educationalists, Regional Secretariat (Tanzania, Uganda, 2015-2016); and the Tanzania chapter of the *Human Rights Network* (with Uganda and Kenya).

The regional office of the Stromme Foundation had some early (2006 - 2008) South-South exchange projects, mostly involving their microcredit programme, and have more recently (2010-2012) supported exchange within the same sector, expanded to include a youth self-employment project, with the participation of the *Tanzania Home Economics Association and the Youth Self-Employment Foundation*.

The most recent new South-South exchange projects concern support to the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Regional

Secretariat, to promote exchange visits between Kenya and Tanzania, FAWE is a pan-African network that also receives Norad support as part of Norad's strategy to promote girls' education. The seven South-South projects not involving civil society organisations include four private sector development projects and three within the public sector.

CAMBODIA

There have been several FK exchanges involving Cambodian partners, mostly through the South-South programme. The vast majority have involved civil society organisations. The coordinating partner ((FK's contract partners) for all projects involving Cambodian partners are located outside the country – they are based in Norway or in Asian countries, mostly in Thailand, but also in Nepal, Laos and Vietnam.

South-South programme

The major Thailand-coordinated projects include: Help Age with the *Cambodia Country Office* since 2010, Earth Net Foundation with the Cambodia Centre for the Study and Development of Agriculture (since 2010); International Network of Engaged

Buddhists working with the *Khmer Youth Association* (2007-2010); and Credit Union League of Thailand working with Socio-Economic Development Organisation of Cambodia (since 2008).

In addition there is a new project with the Cambodian Centre for Independent Media (coordinated by the Informal Sector Service Centre in Nepal) – 2014-2015.

In the 2011-13 period *Alliance for Conflict Transformation* was involved with an exchange project coordinated by the Centre for Peace-building and Reconciliation Promotion in Nepal.

In the 2012-13 period there was a private business development project involving a Cambodian NGO (*Cambodian Rural Development Team*) coordinated by Sunlabob Renewable Energy Co. Ltd in Laos.

One exchange project does not involve a civil society organisation: the *Bureau of Mental Health* at the Ministry of Health is involved in project involving several Asian countries and led by Vietnam.

TABLE A1.3: FK PARTNERS AND PROJECTS IN CAMBODIA 2006 – 2015

Programme	Civil society	Outside civil society	Total
South-South	7	1	8
North-South	1	3	4
Youth	1	-	1
TOTAL	9	4	13

North-South

Under this programme there has been four projects, of which two are ongoing. The main and big project has Sophies Minde Ortopedi as coordinating partner. It is an ESTHER project involving hospitals in also Malawi and Tanzania and – since 2010 – the *Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics* (CSPO). The legal partner in Cambodia is an international/UK -registered NGO – *Cambodia Trust* – but CSPO has now been integrated into the higher education system and the Department of Social Welfare in Cambodia.

The other projects are the ongoing exchange (since 2013) between the *Soria Moria Boutique Hotel* in Siam Reap with the Quality Hotel Expo (a Nordic Choice Hotel).

The two completed projects are between the University of Agder and the Ministry of Education (2006-2010) and the Norwegian Veterinary Institute and the National Animal Health and Production Institute (2006-2007).

FK Youth

There has been two rounds of exchanges between AIESEC Norway and *AIESEC Cambodia* (both in 2011).

SOUTH AFRICA

South Africa has remained an important country in FK's portfolio with exchanges from South Africa typically being more than 10 every year. All the FK programmes (Youth, North-South and South-South) are in use and all thematic priority areas are represented. The vast majority of partners involved are civil society organisations. Most FK exchange projects in South Africa are quite small and many have not lasted for more than 2-3 years. The portfolio is dominated by four major exchange programmes which have been running for most of the period. They are two within the Youth programme (Norwegian Confederation of Sports and YMCA/YWCA), one in the North-South programme (Norwegian Band Federation) and one in the South-South programme (IDASA).

The Youth programme

The Norwegian Confederation of Sports has been running a major programme with South Africa and several other Southern and Eastern Africa countries since 1997. More than 400 young Norwegians have worked 10-11 months as sports coaches in Africa and an equal number

TABLE A1.4: FK PROJECTS AND PARTNERS IN SOUTH AFRICA 2006 - 2015

Programme	Civil society partner	Other partners	Total
Youth	6	1	7
North-South	7	10	17
South-South	1	1	2
Senior programme	2	1	3
TOTAL	16	13	29

from Africa have been to Norway or other African countries. The general purpose has been to use sports as a tool for community development. The project has been supported both by Norad and by FK. South Africa used to be a strong partner in the project (through SCORE in Cape Town) but the South African partner was recently dropped due to financial irregularities. South Africa is now a minor partner through the *Rugby Union*. Today Zambia and Zimbabwe are the main recipients of Norwegian participants (10-15 per year).

YMCA/YWCA runs a global programme in co-operation with Norwegian Church Aid called Communication for Change where young persons

can spend half a year with partners in the South and half a year at a Folk High School (Sunnmøre Folkehøgskole) or a regional college (Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences) in Norway. The partner in South Africa is YMCA/YWCA. It has been running for most of the period.

In 2006-2007 Norwegian Church Aid had an exchange with a partner in Cape Town (Social Change Assistance Trust) involving them sending two staff to Oslo for shorter stays (3-4 months).

GRID-Arendal had a short-lived (2007-8) Youth project with partners in South Africa (*EIS – Africa*, affiliated to the Council for Scientific and In-

dustrial Research) and Zimbabwe (SARDC, a big NGO) which aimed at strengthening a network on geographical information systems.

A newer and ongoing Youth project is the cooperation between the film festival at TVIBIT (a municipal youth project in Tromsø) and a youth association in Oudtshoorn in Western Cape (*Suff Academy*) and in Kenya (Mysa Shootback). The focus is on film and filmmaking (“connecting youth through films”). The original South African partner was based in Gauteng (*Cyrus Development Solution*), but it was later moved to the Western Cape. The participants spend three months on exchange plus one month preparation and two months working for the organisation after the return from the exchange.

SAIH has recently (2015) started an exchange involving *1in9*, a small NGO which has been supported by SAIH since 2006. The exchange involves short stay in Oslo and with their partner in Zimbabwe (Katswe Sistahood). Participants stay approximately three months in each country. The focus is on advocacy, youth leadership and sexual and reproductive rights.

Finally, the Youth programme has also seen a new and pure South-South exchange between Uganda and South Africa - between the *Association of Girls Guides and Girl Scouts* in the two countries.

The upper age limit for these Youth projects varies. For the ongoing projects it is 25 years for YMCA/YWCA, 30 for TVIBIT, 28 for the Norwegian Confederation of Sports, and 27 for SAIH.

North-South and South-South programmes

The ongoing or recent completed projects involving civil society organisations include:

The North-South cooperation between *Field Band Foundation* and the Norwegian Band Federation is one of FK’s major flagship projects. It used to be defined as a culture project but when that theme was phased out the project was refocused and classified as a health project with an emphasis on integrating people with disabilities in local bands. Additional funding from the Norwegian Embassy is provided for the 2014-2016 period to help the Field Band’s training academy, originally launched through the FK exchange project, to become sustainable.

IDASA – a major South African NGO working with governance issues, advocacy and policy monitoring – has been involved in a range of South-South exchange projects with partners in several African countries. The projects came to an end when IDASA went bankrupt in 2012. In the past IDASA was also a major recipient of significant Norwegian funding from the Embassy and other channels. *Vardeteateret* has a North-South project focusing on improving conditions for prisoners and rehabilitation in Cape Town (Pollsmoor prison and Nyanga township). The project struggled with ambitious goals and in finding a suitable partner but has now partnered with a major NGO (NICRO) which focuses on these issues. It is classified as a health project. NICRO was in the past (1990s) supported by the Embassy and other Norwegian funding sources.

Completed projects include:

Two partners in Uganda had a South-South exchange with partners in South Africa (*Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation and Desmond Tutu Peace Centre*) in the 2007-10 period.

The Norwegian Children and Youth Council together with Norwegian Peoples Aid had a short exchange project with *Sudfontein Rural Development Association* in 2007-8.

Norwegian Church Aid has had two North-South projects in South Africa. In 2010 with IDA-SA and in 2011-2013 with its South African NGO-partner *Bench Marks Foundation*. The focus was on policy advocacy linked to mining/natural resources and climate issues. It was part of the bigger FK-supported exchange project implemented by the Norwegian Church Aid in the 2002-2014 period.

Under FK's now disbanded senior programme there were two small and short-lived projects (one or two exchanges) involving civil society organisations. *Stiftelsen Arkivet* in Kristiansand had a project with the *Robben Island Museum* (2007) and *Intech* (management consultancy) had a project with *National African Federated Chamber of Commerce* (NAFCOC) and the Norwegian South African Chamber of Commerce in 2007.

FK projects not involving civil society organisations

This involves research and higher education, environment and the private sector.

Some are being phased out following changes in FK's thematic priorities.

Research:

Genøk – Centre for BioSafety in Tromsø and *North West University*. *Genøk* also has additional Norwegian funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for this ongoing project.

Bergen University College has an ongoing cooperation with the *University of the Western Cape* and a university in Sudan (physiotherapy).

University of Stavanger and the *University of the Western Cape* had a project focusing on performing arts and teacher education that was completed around 2007.

The Norwegian University of Science and Technology and the University of Pretoria had a small project in 2007.

The University of Bergen and the University of the Western Cape had a short exchange project through the FK senior programme in 2008-9.

Environment:

The Nordic World Heritage Foundation and the *African World Heritage Foundation* had a North-South exchange project which ended when the Norwegian partner was closed down by the Ministry of Environment in 2014.

The Oslo Municipality's «vann og avløpsetat» had a North-South exchange with *Midwaal Water* in the 2009-2011 period.

Bloem Water Board had a South-South exchange with district water authorities in Zambia, Malawi and Lesotho in the 2007 – 2014 period.

Private sector:

Ekeby Gård (Østfold) and Fairview wine estate (Paarl) has an old ongoing exchange project through the North-South project.

Ekro A/S and Icarus Marine had an exchange in 2009-10 and Re-Turn and *Unitel Technologies* had a 2007-8 exchange project.

Debio (certification and approval of ecological products) had a short project in South Africa in 2008-9 funded through the now disbanded FK senior programme.

UGANDA

Uganda has been an important country for FK, for historical as well as operational reasons. Uganda has been home to FK's Africa office and it has been the host of a series of national and Africa wide training workshops, thematic conferences and alumni meetings.

FK Youth

There are seven Uganda-projects in this programme of which one does not include a civil

TABLE A1.5: FK PROJECTS AND PARTNERS IN UGANDA 2006 – 2015

Programme	Civil society partners	Other partners	Total
Youth	6	1	7
North-South	4	12	16
South-South	15	8	23
TOTAL	25	21	46

society organisation, and two are pure South-South projects. The 'Act Now' programme of the Stromme Foundation has managed projects with five different partners (2007-2015). Norges Kristelige Student- og Skoleungdomslag (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students, IFES) has been running a project with the *Fellowship of Christian Unions in Uganda* (2009-2013). Both organisations depend on Hald International Centre in Norway for training, support and back-up of young participants coming to Norway. In Uganda, Norwegian participants are hosted by several different partner organisations active in social work (mostly directed at young children) and vocational training.

AIESEC Norway manages an exchange project with *AIESEC Uganda* (2012 – 2015). There is also a new separate project between AIESEC Uganda and AIESEC Ethiopia (2015).

The Norwegian Confederation of Sports recently (2013-2016) launched a project with *Christian Sports Contact* as part of their larger regional programme for Africa. This is a South-South project with partners in Zambia and Zimbabwe and linked to a bigger Africa-project implemented by the Norwegian Confederation of Sports with support from FK and Norad.

The Uganda Girls Guide Association, with an emphasis on leadership training, under the auspices

of the Africa Region Association of Girls Guides and Girls Scouts take part in a new (2015) exchange with South Africa, Kenya and Burundi. This is pure South-South project.

The programme also had a project not involving civil society. In 2008 - 2009 GRID–Arendal had an exchange project with the *National Environment Management Authority* (NEMA) in Uganda, and the *Zambia Environment Management Authority*. They also had a similar but larger cooperation under the North-South programme (2007-2012).

North- South

There are few (four) and only small projects involving civil society under this programme. They are the UN Association of Norway with a cooperation with the *UN Association in Uganda* (2006 – 2009); Kristen Idrettskontakt with the *Christian Sports Contact* (2006-2009, also involving cooperation with Sudan); Gjennestad Gartnerskole with the *Volunteer Efforts for Development Cooperation* (2006-2008); and the NLA University College (Gimlekollen) with the *Uganda Media Women's Association* (2009-2011).

Exchange projects not involving civil society organisations include three private sector development projects implemented by business partners. Nine projects are implemented by public and semi-public institutions. The main exchange project here is the cooperation between Oslo and Akershus University College of Applied Sciences and *Kyambogo University* (2007-2015).

The Uganda Media Women's Association coordinated exchange visits to Tanzania and took part in an exchange with the NLA University College (Gimlekollen) in Norway (2009-2011).

South-South

This is the largest programme in Uganda with over 15 projects involving civil society organisations. Seven of them are the major South-South projects presented in the Tanzania-section (the networks on child rights, environmental journalism, female media workers and lawyers, cooperative movement, female educationalists). The additional eight projects are similar in the area of environment and governance. It includes two major projects. One is implemented by the *Ugandan Human Rights Network* (2008 – 2015) with

partners in six African countries. The other is the *Stromme Foundation's regional office in Kampala* (2006-2015) which manages a range of South-South exchanges between its partners in Africa and also (from 2013) Asia. A new (2015-2016) project is implemented by the *African Women Debt and Communication Network* and involves exchanges between Uganda and Kenya.

The South-South project has four private sector development projects and four within the public sector (agriculture, wildlife, forestry and health).

Annex 2: Literature consulted

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Applications, presentations and guidelines:

- FK Project Cycle
- FK Definitions
- Feasibility Study Application General Info
- Collaboration Agreement - General info.
- Round 1/2/3 - General info
- Result Management in FK
- Project Monitoring Advice
- Guidelines to Partners
- Participant Recruitment
- Guidelines for Participants
- Code of conduct
- Service Manual for partners
- Project Evaluation
- Requirements for partners
- FK Youth
- Go on exchange
- Trainings

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- 2005 – 2014

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- 2010 Instruction for Fredskorpset, issued by Royal Decree
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- Evaluation of Fredskorpset, NORAD 2006

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- FK Main Strategy 2007 – 2011
- FK Norway – Strategy 2010 - 2013
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- Buyer requirement specification. Consultancy Services in Asia (Appendix to contract between FK and FK Asia representative) (n. d. (2014))
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partner agreements, agreements for different rounds of exchange, annual reports, mid-term reports Data set (excel) of all FK supported individual exchanges in the evaluation period.

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Tildelingsbrev (2006 – 2015)

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Annex 3: List of Persons Interviewed

List of Persons Interviewed	Norway
Nita Kapoor	Director General, Fredskorpset
Jan Olav Baarøy	Deputy Director General, Fredskorpset
Øyvind Sunde	Administration Adviser, Fredskorpset
Ivar Evensmo	Senior Adviser, Section for Civil Society Strengthening, Civil Society Department, Norad
Vigdis Holm	Team Manager, Education and Private Sector Development, Fredskorpset
Fredrik Magnussen	Administration Adviser, Fredskorpset
Marianne Gohn Jønsberg	Programme Adviser, Youth, Fredskorpset
Kasper Landmark	Programme Adviser, Youth, Fredskorpset
Ole Bjørn Ileby	Programme Adviser, Health, Fredskorpset
Thore Anton Bredeveien	Programme Adviser, Education and Private Sector Development, Fredskorpset
Rune Hauger	Programme Adviser, Health, Fredskorpset
Grete Thingelstad	Team Manager, Training, Fredskorpset
Helge Espe	Senior Adviser, Fredskorpset
Marit Bakken	Programme Adviser, Education and Private Sector Development, Fredskorpset (and former head of Field Band Academy, South Africa)
Silvelin Havnevik	Programme officer, Norges Musikkorpsforbund
Henrik Tømmeraas Aasvestad	Team Manager, Youth, Fredskorpset
Nova Stella Erta	Senior Adviser, Section for Management of Subsidiary Agencies and Development Funds, Department for Regional Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Lisbeth Skuland	Deputy Director General, Section for Management of Subsidiary Agencies and Development Funds, Department for Regional Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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List of Persons Interviewed	Norway
Elray Henriksen	Former FK focal point, Kirkens Nødhjelp, Oslo
Astrid Johanne Mikidadi	Advisor, Spor Youth Exchange programme, Vennskap Nord/Sør, FK coordinator for Tanzania
Skjalg Rørtveit	Advisor, Spor Youth Exchange programme, Vennskap Nord/Sør, FK coordinator for Guatemala
Harald Eikeland	'Act Now' program leader, Hald International Centre, Mandal
Nine Justvik	'Act Now' instructor, Hald International Centre, Mandal
Agnar Aasland	Principal, Hald International Centre, Mandal
Marianne Haugh	Programme advisor, SAIH

List of Persons Interviewed	Tanzania
Ngunga Tepani	Executive Director, Tanzania Association of NGOs (TANGO)
Sarah Shija	Programme Officer, Norwegian Church Aid/ACT Alliance
Mwanzo Millinga	Executive Trustee, Flame Tree Media Trust
Mary Kabahati	Programme Coordinator, Tanzania Home Economics Association (TAHEA)
Asia Kapande	Regional Coordinator, Tanzania Home Economics Association
Faraji Paraga	FK Focal Person, TAHEA
Alfred Kafuku	FK Participant/ India (South – South), TAHEA
Mussu Masongo	FK Participant / Uganda (South-South), TAHEA
Elly Omondi	FK focal point, and former participant Christian Sports Contact (CHRISC)
Joyce Mwanga	Programme Coordinator, Women's Economic Groups Coordinating Council (WEGCC)
Anderson Mirisho	Programme Officer, Micro-finance, WEGCC
Deodalus Mfugale	Former Chair, Journalist Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET)
Emmanuel Kihale	FK Participant /Uganda (South - South) JET
Sidi Mgumia	FK Participant / Uganda (South – South) JET

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List of Persons Interviewed	Tanzania
Jamilah Khaji	FK Participant / Kenya (South – South), JET
Victor Mlunde	Programme Officer (Governance & Political Affairs), Norwegian Embassy
Siri Frette Allsted	Counsellor (Development Cooperation), Norwegian Embassy

List of Persons Interviewed	Uganda
David Matovu	Consultant/ Former FK Regional Office, Kampala
Gloria Ashaba	Consultant / Former FK Regional Office, Kampala
Monica Emiru Enyou	Secretary General, National Association of Women Organizations in Uganda (NAWOU)
Tina Apio	FK Participant / Zambia (South .- South) NAWOU
Susan Kanobe	FK Participant / Tanzania (South – South) NAWOU
Bernhard Finland	FK Participant /Uganda (from TANGO/Tanzania) (South-South) NAWOU
Sarah Kisolo	Secretary General, Rural Development Media and Communication (RUDMEC)
Joel Wako	Nature Uganda (RUDMEC Partner)
Robinah Winnie Nandudu	FK Participant / Kenya (South –South), RUDMEC
Rehema Aanyuu	FK Participant / Tanzania (South – South), RUDMEC
Caroline Nabukonde	FK Participant / Kenya (South – South), RUDMEC
Doreen Muhereza	Communications Officer, Strømme Foundation (Kampala)
Achilles Kiwanuka	Senior Programme Officer, Norwegian Embassy, Kampala
Susan Eckey	Ambassador, Norwegian Embassy, Kampala

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List of Persons Interviewed	Thailand
Kjetil Paulsen	Ambassador, Norwegian Embassy, Bangkok
Vegard Holmelid	Minister Councillor, Norwegian Embassy, Bangkok
Catherine Wilczek	Programme officer, FK Bangkok office (2008-2014)
Fon (Ms)	Project coordinator, Secretariat, International Network of Engaged Buddhists (former FK exchange participant)
Yada Saraneeyatham	Senior Research Analyst, Tractus Asia (FK Regional Consultant, Bangkok)
Daniel Bellefleur	Indonesia country manager, Tractus Asia (FK Regional Consultant, Bangkok, but Jakarta-based)
Kruewan Chonlanai	Project Manager, FK project with Credit Union League of Thailand (CULT), Executive Director Credit Union Development Institute, Chairperson, Asian Women in Co-operatives Development Forum (AWCF)
Dao Thi Phuong	Current FK participant from CAEVE/Vietnam with CULT
Chansopal Kim	Current FK participant from SEDOC/Cambodia with CULT
Kristine Misvaer Stenbeck	Project Coordinator, Foreign Support, HDF Mercy Centre
Kornkamon Klomdee	2014-15 participant with UWC/Fjaler, Staff HDF Mercy Centre
Pornthip Kanchiang	2013-14 participant with UWC/Fjaler, Staff HDF Mercy Centre
Pornthip Nakpiban	2014-15 participant with UWC/Fjaler, Staff HDF Mercy Centre
Prawina Sampong	Head, Communication department, HDF Mercy Centre
Karma Jigme Dhondrup	Former FK participant from Bhutan with INEB, now working for Dhammadrops Organisation Maerim, Chiang Mai
Sawong Kaewkantha	Executive Director, FOPDEV, Chiang Mai
Caitlin Littleton	Programme officer, Help Age Regional Office in South East Asia, Chiang Mai
Juthamas Suparatwarakul	Programme Officer, Help Age Regional Office in South East Asia, Chiang Mai
Saranyo Kaewkantha	Project Officer, Foundation for Older Persons' Development (FOPDEV), FK participant in Cambodia (2011-12)
Wiraphat Wilaisilpdelert	Project officer, FOPDEV, FK participant Vietnam (2010-11)

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List of Persons Interviewed	Thailand
Narathip Thepmongkol	Resource management officer, FOPDEV, FK participant Vietnam (2011-12)
Kadsarin Kanthain	Project officer, FOPDEV, FK participant to the Philippines (2012-13)
Yuwadee Areeluck	Financial Management Officer, FOPDEV, FK participant in Cambodia (2014-15)
Kalpalata Dutta (Lata)	Executive Director and FK project manager, Asian Institute for Human Rights
Preeda Tongchumnum	FK project manager, Human Rights and Development Foundation

List of Persons Interviewed	Cambodia
Sao Samouth	Head of Administration and HR unit, Khmer Youth Association
Tan Kim Heng	Assistant to President, Khmer Youth Association
Him Yun	Senior officer, People Centre for Development (2007-2011 manager, FK project with INEB, Khmer Youth Association)
Meas Kimleng	Former staff (2007-2010), Khmer Youth Association (FK participant in Indonesia 2009-2010)
Sisary Kheng	Country Director, exceed (Cambodia Trust), Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics (CSPO), (FK partner manager 2010-2013)
Odom Teap	Quality Manager, CSPO (FK partner manager since 2013, FK participant in Norway 2010-2011)
Prum Sovann	Clinic Manager, CSPO/exceed, FK participant to Malawi 2012-2013
Rann Vannara	Lecturer, CSPO/exceed, FK participant to Norway, 2011-2012
Thor Pearsa	Lecturer, CSPO/exceed, FK participant Tanzania, 2011-2012
To Sichooun	Lecturer, CSPO/exceed, FK participant to Tanzania, 2010-2011
Samedy Srors	Lecturer, CSPO/exceed, FK participant to Norway, 2013-2014
Prosper Kaya	2014-2015 participant from Tanzania to CSPO
Tiwongo Kapunda	2014-2015 participant from Malawi to CSPO
Hilde Folkestad Løfsgaard	2014-2014 participant from Norway to CSPO

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List of Persons Interviewed	Cambodia
Thou Sambath	Staff, CSPO/exceed, FK participant to Tanzania, 2013-2014
Anne Lill H. Pettersson	2014-2015 participant from Norway to CSPPPO
Sil Vineth	President, Socio-Economic Development Organisation of Cambodia (SEDOC)
Ouk Sokha	Manager, Administration and Finance, SEDOC
Oung Mean	Partner contact, SEDOC, former FK participant
Yem Neark Team leader	SEDOC
Oung Vouch Team leader	SEDOC
Toch Sovandara Marketing	SEDOC
Ung Map Team leader	SEDOC
Vu Thi Thoy	2014-2015 participant from Vietnam to SEDOC

List of Persons Interviewed	South Africa
Guro Almås	Area Representative, Norwegian Church Aid Policy Office for Southern Africa, Pretoria
Trine Skymoene	Ambassador, Norwegian Embassy, Pretoria
Øyvind Vangberg	Second Secretary, Norwegian Embassy, Pretoria
Beauty Musa	Programme officer, Norwegian Embassy, Pretoria
Nicky du Plessis Chief Executive Officer	Field Band Foundation, Johannesburg

Annex 4: FK Norway's comments to the report

While recognizing the four Key questions provided to the evaluation team by Norad, FK Norway has since the early phase of this evaluation emphasized opinions which are not reflected upon in the document:

It is stated in the mandate (Instruks) to FK Norway that we shall contribute to the development of civil society in developing countries. FK Norway has in many phases of the evaluation made our opinion clear that it is all the sectors through which we work (public and private as well as CSOs), and the manner in which the mutual exchanges are carried out, that civil society is strengthened, not merely through support to civil society organisations. Such a comprehensive understanding of civil society is also in line with current literature. In spite of this, the evaluation has solely chosen to look at FK's support to and through civil society organisations. In the view of FK Norway, this reduces the scope of assessing FK's operation, and also diminishes the understanding of collaborative work and partnership across sectors as processes that can contribute towards creating positive change within civil society.

Key question no. 1 asks: "Is the current strategy and approach of FK Norway optimal (...)". As we first saw this question early in the preparatory stage for the evaluation, our response was that if optimal is to be a normative standard to which FK Norway shall be evaluated, optimal ought to be defined. The mandate for the evaluation, the inception report, the draft report and the final report have all gone by without defining optimal. This report concludes, and reiterates in the Executive Summary: "FK's strategy and approach are not optimal and sufficient (...)". It concludes without making any reference to what optimal would be, and this makes the improvement of relevant strategies (in the search for optimal) challenging.

FK has since its relaunch in 2000 worked towards the strengthening of independent south-south initiatives as a means to create sustainable partnerships across borders in developing countries within our given priority sectors. Acknowledging that it has at times been challenging to facilitate such exchanges of personnel based on Norwegian administra-

tive principles, reports from the partnerships, supported by former evaluations, emphasize both the aid effectiveness and political importance of this model. This report's final comment that "It is difficult to see the value of supporting a small number of isolated south-south exchanges – unless they are linked to broader networks, other Norwegian aid instruments or north-south exchanges" (p69) would seem to imply an actor from the North as a premise for development in the south. If this is the inference of the report, it represents an approach we would consider contrary to the values of FK Norway.

Annex 5: Terms of Reference

Introduction

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) has asked the Evaluation department to evaluate FK Norway (FK - Fredskorpset - the Norwegian Peace Corps). The last evaluation of FK Norway, commissioned by the Evaluation department in 2006, concluded that the organization is “a relevant and reasonably effective mechanism”.

The focus of the evaluation is on FK Norway’s role, function and strategic priorities in fulfilling its main objective of strengthening the civil society in developing countries.

Description of FK Norway

FK Norway is a government agency under the MFA. Together with the MFA itself, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) and Norfund - the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries, FK forms the Norwegian Development Cooperation Administration. FK is funded through the National budget and governed by an allocation letter from the Ministry.

According to policy guidelines, the main objective for FK is to assist in implementing the

overarching objective of Norway’s cooperation with developing countries. In particular, FK Norway will work to promote basic human rights. On this basis, FK will promote contact and collaboration between individuals, organizations and institutions in Norway and developing countries, built on solidarity, equality and reciprocity. It will create broad commitment to human rights and international development issues, especially targeting young people.

The guidelines define FK's core activities as the following:

- Facilitate exchange programs and administer grants to a variety of organizations, institutions and enterprises in Norway and in developing countries.
- Encourage and facilitate the exchange of experience and learning and contribute to the reversal of knowledge and experience to their own communities.
- Contribute to the development and strengthening of civil society in developing countries.

The strategy for the organization for 2010-2014 has as its main objective to strengthen professionalization and development effectiveness in all aspects of FK’s work. The strategy also states that an important concern for the period 2010-2014 is to document results and align and coordinate the organization better with key agencies within the field of Norwegian development cooperation.

The Government budget proposal for 2015 gives FK an administrative budget of NOK 44.8 million, which is the same as in 2014. The proposed budget for the exchange programs is NOK 160 million, also the same as for 2014. According to the budget proposal, the objectives of the exchange programs are to develop and strengthen the civil society in developing countries, and to exchange experiences and knowledge through targeted exchange programs between organizations and institutions in Norway and developing countries.

Neither the 2015 budget nor the recent allocation letters raise any fundamental or major concerns with FK’s operations.

PARTICIPANTS WITH DEPARTURE 2013 ACCORDING TO PROGRAM

	2013	2001-2013
FK Health Exchange program (Esther)	73	241
North-South program	111	2480
Senior Program	-	63
South-South program	152	1053
FK Youth program	280	2618
TOTAL	616	6455

GENDER DISTRIBUTION OF PARTICIPANTS ACCORDING TO DIRECTION OF EXCHANGE

	NORTH-SOUTH	SOUTH-NORTH	SOUTH-SOUTH	TOTAL
Female	70%	46%	40%	53%
Male	30%	54%	60%	47%

FK presents itself as an organization that “gives young people in Norway and developing countries the opportunity to experience each other’s reality”. Since 1963 almost 8000 participants have taken part in exchange between Norway and countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and between developing countries. About 400 organizations and institutions have participated as partners.

The different exchange programs (North-South, South-South, Esther Health Exchange, and Youth) are structured according to internal regu-

lations. These include descriptions of the specific grant’s objectives, target groups, criteria for the achievement of objectives, reporting requirements, allocation criteria, how the grant will be announced and how follow-up and control will be done. The regulations also refer to the responsibility of Norad to do independent evaluations.

FK has formulated a theory of change to explain its approaches and fulfill the vision to “Fostering leadership for global justice, creating change on the ground and in our minds”. FK makes

assumptions on how the partnerships and the exchange of personnel will contribute to change “on the ground and in our minds”, and how this change will foster leadership for global justice.

This is interpreted as making a contribution in promoting positive peace by creating change in our minds by promoting a set of values and relationships, by creating change on the ground by facilitating the development of technical capacity in institutions, and by enhancing leadership skills among youth volunteers in civil society organizations.

Through their involvement in global institutional partnerships and personnel exchanges, the participants are meant get access to a wider network of people and institutions and in that way are exposed to new ways of working and being. The theory is that partnership will – given the right set of preconditions and environmental factors – foster leadership for exchange of personnel for global justice between countries. The theory talks about individual change and institutional change. The belief is that FK can contribute to changes that can make both institutions and individuals become role models as well as spokespersons for a more just world.

Available knowledge

FK has commissioned a number of studies, reviews and surveys to assess results and provide input for learning. The reports from these provide a good knowledge base for the evaluation. Here we only mention a few as illustrations. A comprehensive list of studies and surveys can be found on FK Norway's website.³⁹

An assessment of the partnerships with Nepal,

³⁹ <http://www.fredskorpset.no/regelverk-evalueringer-undersokelser/>

Norway and Ethiopia⁴⁰ concluded that FK is a successful enterprise in terms of having “produced” numerous future leaders and/or change agents and many good outcomes on different sectors. But due to the weak monitoring systems, the consultants found it to be a challenge to document these outcomes in an evidence-based way. They also found that complementarity and synergy with other Norwegian development efforts were not always observed in the FK partnerships. The fact that FK is receiving directions from MFA provides many opportunities for synergy effects, while at the same time running the risk that FK might duplicate what other governmental or governmental-funded actors or initiatives are conducting.

A study⁴¹ of projects within education concluded, among other things, that the programs had the ability to generate change at the institutional level, but was lacking a clear and consistent process to select participating agencies.

⁴⁰ Assessment of results - FK in Nepal, Norway and Ethiopia. Nordic Consulting Group 2009

⁴¹ Creating Change in the Education Sector: The Catalytic Factors – Review FK Norway's projects within education 2001-2012. Nordic Consulting Group 2012

A review⁴² found that the South-South program has benefitted 96 staff of the African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect and 98 members of Media Women's Association. Participants asserted that they gained a lot of knowledge and skills from the exchange program ranging from acquisition and perfection of knowledge of new languages. Participation in the program enabled organizations to identify and address governance issues that were affecting them.

A review⁴³ of the cooperation between South Africa's Field Band Foundation and Norges Musikkorps Forbund noted that the project, Bands Crossing Borders, has been very well managed. It also found a strong and positive impact on the skills and personal development of the individuals involved in the exchange, and a contribution to the growth and expansion of the Field Band Foundation.

⁴² Review of Exchange projects of Media Women's Associations and the African Network for the Prevention and Protection Against Child Abuse and Neglect (ANPPCAN). Mentor 2012

⁴³ Review of the Cooperation between South Africa's Field Band Foundation and Norges Musikkorps Forbund Chr. Michelsen Institute, 2013

Some of the findings in a participant survey⁴⁴ was that 75% said that their language skills had improved and 91% said that their cross-cultural skills had improved. 90% of the Norwegians said that their understanding of North-South issues had improved, 71% of the South participants stated that their technical skills had improved and that they have developed leadership skills. The participants report that the FK experience has helped them and inspired them in both their professional career and in voluntary involvement as well as gaining new contacts. A partner survey⁴⁵ showed that the partners involved in FK exchange projects are generally satisfied with capacity building, participants, FK services and communication.

The 2006 external evaluation commissioned by Norad's Evaluation department, done six years after the reestablishment of FK as an agency under the MFA, concluded that FK is a relevant and reasonably effective mechanism.

By combining objectives of development in the

44 FK Participant survey of former participants. 1280 responses. 2011

45 FK Partner Survey. 181 partner responses. 2011

South and increased knowledge and involvement in Norway, and by its particular modality of exchange of people, it fills a niche within Norwegian development assistance. With an enhanced utilization of the opportunities which the exchange program through partnerships offers for human resources development and capacity building in the developing countries it can become an example for other donors to follow.

Furthermore, the evaluation found that FK offers an excellent opportunity for individuals and institutions in Norway to participate in international development work. The individuals are getting exposure, knowledge and invaluable social and communication skills. Already experienced institutions have been given a mechanism to maintain relationships with partners, and newcomers among public and private sector organizations have been provided with a facilitating framework for international networking and capacity building.

Evaluation rationale and purpose

FK's exchange programs and activities, and the value for individual participants, have been well documented in several internal reviews and as-

sessments. However, FK's strategy and approach when it comes to developing and strengthening the civil society in developing countries has not yet been evaluated. The strategy and approach seems to have been gradually developed on the basis of the policy guidelines and with the support and guidance from the MFA through budget documents and letters of allocation.

The purpose of the evaluation is to evaluate the overall approach in light of international research knowledge on how to best develop and strengthen the civil society in developing countries.

The findings from the evaluation is intended to be used by FK Norway and the MFA in shaping and managing the organization to improve its role and function, and as a basis for considering revision of theory of change, the mandate and policy guidelines for FK.

Scope and key questions

The evaluation will focus on FK's overall approach – including its role, function, setup, strategic priorities, partners and theory of change. The evaluation will explore if this is the optimal approach for FK Norway in light of international knowledge on how to best develop and strengthen the civil society in developing countries. It will also look at the comparative advantage of FK compared to other means for strengthening of the civil society being funded by the development policy budget.

The key question the evaluation aims to answer are the following:

- 1: Is the current strategy and approach of FK Norway optimal when it comes to developing and strengthening the civil society in developing countries?
- 2: What is the comparative advantage of FK's strategy, approach and work compared with other Norwegian funded means for developing and strengthening of the civil society in developing countries?

- 3: What are the possible future options for FK when it comes to approach, set-up, programs and partners?
- 4: What is the added value of FK's programs for the civil society organizations, in particular for those that receive other kind of Norwegian assistance.

The evaluation is to cover the period 2005-2015.

Methodology/Data collection

The evaluation will be a combination of literature studies, desk reviews of previous reviews, assessments and surveys commissioned by FK, interviews and field work.

Data collection is the responsibility of the evaluation team. Access to archives will be facilitated by FK and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Norad.

Validation and feedback workshops shall be held in the countries visited before departure, involving relevant stakeholders.

The evaluation shall be carried out according to OECD DAC's evaluation quality standards and

criteria as well as recognised academic and ethical principles.⁴⁶

Evaluation Team and organization

The tenderer and the evaluation team shall be assessed based on the competency requirements as elaborated in section 6 (award criteria) of the tender document.

The evaluation will be managed by the Evaluation Department in Norad. The evaluation team will report to Norad through the team leader. The team leader shall be in charge of all deliveries and will report to Norad on the team's progress, including any issues that may jeopardise the assignment as well as proposals on how to deal with such issues. A reference group will be established to provide technical advice to the evaluation team.

⁴⁶ Quality Standards for Development Evaluation. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series. OECD 2011.

All decisions concerning these Terms of Reference, the inception report, draft final report and final report are subject to approval by the Evaluation Department.

Timeframe, budget and deliverables

The evaluation will be carried out from May to November 2015, within an estimated timeframe of 1000 hours.

The evaluation assignment is planned according to the following time frame:

All parts of the evaluation shall adhere to the OCED Development Assistance Committee's quality standards for development evaluation and relevant guidelines from the Evaluation Department.

The tenderer shall quote a total price for the assignment, inclusive of costs related to field work and data collection in the field.

The team leader is expected to budget for and participate in the following two meetings in Oslo: a contract-signing meeting and a meeting to

Activity	Deadlines
Contract signature	11.05.2015
Inception report received	08.06.2015
Inception report accepted	26.06.2015
Draft final report received	11.10.2015
Draft final report accepted	19.10.2015
Final report received	09.11.2015
Dissemination seminar, publication, distribution	November

present the final report. The consultant may be requested to make additional presentations, in which case Norad will cover the cost outside the tender budget.

Further specifications regarding the budget is given in annex 3, section 3 - Price.

The deliverables in the consultancy consist of the following:

- Inception Report not exceeding 20 pages to be commented by stakeholders before final approval by the Evaluation Department.
- Draft Final Report not exceeding 40 pages

- for preliminary approval by the Evaluation Department. The draft will be sent to stakeholders inviting them to comment on facts, findings and conclusions.
- Final Evaluation Report.
- Policy brief not exceeding 2 pages.
- Seminar for dissemination of the final report in Oslo.

List of tables/figures/boxes

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1.1: FK Participants 2001 – 2014

TABLE 1.2: participants per programme 2012-2014

TABLE 1.3: Countries with 10 or more participants in 2014

TABLE 1.4: FK participants per programme and FK expenditures 2014 (in million NOK)

TABLE 4.1: FK projects with civil society partners in Thailand, Tanzania, Cambodia, South Africa and Uganda 2006 – 2015

TABLE 4.2: Case studies – FK supported civil society partners in Thailand and Tanzania

TABLE A1.1: FK projects and partners in Thailand 2006 – 2015

TABLE A1.2: FK projects and partners in Tanzania 2006 – 2015

TABLE A1.3: FK partners and projects in Cambodia 2006 – 2015

TABLE A1.4: FK projects and partners in South Africa 2006 - 2015

TABLE A1.5: FK projects and partners in Uganda 2006 – 2015

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 3.1: FK's theory of change

BOXES

BOX 1.1: Key questions

BOX 2.1: Civil society strengthening – levels and activities

BOX 3.1: Policy instruments

Abbreviations and acronyms

AHRI	Asian Institute for Human Rights	NCG	Nordic Consulting Group
AWCF	Asian Women in Cooperative Development Forum	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CMI	Chr. Michelsen Institute	NIF	Norwegian Confederation of Sports
CSPO	Cambodian School for Prosthetics and Orthotics	NOK	Norwegian kroner
CV	Curriculum vitae	Norad	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
CHRISC	Christian Sports Contact	SAIH	Norwegian Students' and Academics' International Assistance Fund
CULT	Credit Union League of Thailand	TAHEA	Tanzania Home Economics Association
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists	TANGO	Tanzania Association of NGOs
FK	Fredskorpset/FK Norway	TVIBIT	(Municipal Youth House in Tromsø)
FOPDEV	Foundation for Older Persons' Development	UN	United Nations
HRDF	Human Rights and Development Foundation	UWC	United World College
INEB	International Network of Engaged Buddhists	VNS	Vennskap Nord-Sør
JET	Journalists Environmental Association of Tanzania	YMCA/	Young Men's Christian Association/
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation	YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs		
NAWOU	National Association of Women's Association		
NCA	Norwegian Church Aid		

Former reports from the Evaluation Department

All reports are available at our website: www.norad.no/en/front/evaluation/

<p>2015</p> <p>10.15 Evaluation of Norwegian Support to capacity development</p> <p>9.15 Evaluation series of NORHED: Evaluability study</p> <p>8.15 Work in Progress: How the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its Partners See and Do Engagement with Crisis-Affected Populations</p> <p>7.15 Evaluation of Norwegian Multilateral Support to Basic Education</p> <p>6.15 Evaluation Series of NORHED Higher Education and Research for Development. Evaluation of the Award Mechanism</p> <p>5.15 Basis for Decisions to use Results-Based Payments in Norwegian Development Aid</p> <p>4.15 Experiences with Results-Based Payments in Norwegian Development Aid</p> <p>3.15 A Baseline Study of Norwegian Development Cooperation within the areas of Environment and Natural Resources Management in Myanmar</p> <p>2.15 Evaluation of Norway's support to women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation</p> <p>1.15 Evaluation of the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund)</p>	<p>2014</p> <p>8.14 Evaluation of Norway's Support to Haiti after the 2010 Earthquake</p> <p>7.14 Baseline. Impact Evaluation of the Norway India Partnership Initiative Phase II for Maternal and Child Health</p> <p>6.14 Building Blocks for Peace. An Evaluation of the Training for Peace in Africa Programme</p> <p>5.14 Evaluation of Norwegian support through and to umbrella and network organisations in civil society</p> <p>4.14 Evaluation Series of NORHED Higher Education and Research for Development. Theory of Change and Evaluation Methods</p> <p>3.14 Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative: Synthesising Report 2007-2013</p> <p>2.14 Unintended Effects in Evaluations of Norwegian Aid</p> <p>1.14 Can We Demonstrate the Difference that Norwegian Aid Makes? Evaluation of results measurement and how this can be improved</p> <p>2013</p> <p>5.13 Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative: Measurement, Reporting and Verification</p>	<p>4.13 Evaluation of Five Humanitarian Programmes of the Norwegian Refugee Council and of the Standby Roster NORCAP</p> <p>3.13 Evaluation of the Norway India Partnership Initiative for Maternal and Child Health</p> <p>2.13 Local Perception, Participation and Accountability in Malawi's Health Sector</p> <p>1.13 A Framework for Analysing Participation in Development</p> <p>2012</p> <p>9.12 Evaluation of Norway's Bilateral Agricultural Support to Food Security</p> <p>8.12 Use of Evaluations in the Norwegian Development Cooperation System</p> <p>7.12 A Study of Monitoring and Evaluation in Six Norwegian Civil Society Organisations</p> <p>6.12 Facing the Resource Curse: Norway's Oil for Development Program</p> <p>5.12 Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Lessons Learned from Support to Civil Society Organisations</p> <p>4.12 Evaluation of the Health Results Innovation Trust Fund</p>
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Former reports from the Evaluation Department

All reports are available at our website: www.norad.no/en/front/evaluation/

3.12	Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with Afghanistan 2001-2011	of Travel Compensation in Three Developing Countries	1.11	Evaluation: Results of Development Cooperation through Norwegian NGO's in East Africa	
2.12	Hunting for Per Diem. The Uses and Abuses of Travel Compensation in Three Developing Countries	1.12	Mainstreaming disability in the new development paradigm		
1.12	Mainstreaming disability in the new development-paradigm	2011		2010	
2012		10.11	Evaluation of Norwegian Health Sector Support to Botswana	18.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative
9.12	Evaluation of Norway's Bilateral Agricultural Support to Food Security	9.11	Activity-Based Financial Flows in UN System: A study of Select UN Organisations	17.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Country Report: Tanzania
8.12	Use of Evaluations in the Norwegian Development Cooperation System	8.11	Norway's Trade Related Assistance through Multilateral Organizations: A Synthesis Study	16.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Country Report: Indonesia
7.12	A Study of Monitoring and Evaluation in Six Norwegian Civil Society Organisations	7.11	Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation to Promote Human Rights	15.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Country Report: Guyana
6.12	Facing the Resource Curse: Norway's Oil for Development Program	6.11	Joint Evaluation of Support to Anti-Corruption Efforts, 2002-2009	14.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Country Report: Democratic Republic of Congo
5.12	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Lessons Learned from Support to Civil Society Organisations	5.11	Pawns of Peace. Evaluation of Norwegian peace efforts in Sri Lanka, 1997-2009	13.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative. Country Report: Brasil
4.12	Evaluation of the Health Results Innovation Trust Fund	4.11	Study: Contextual Choices in Fighting Corruption: Lessons Learned	12.10	Evaluation: Real-Time Evaluation of Norway's International Climate and Forest Initiative (NICFI)
3.12	Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with Afghanistan 2001-2011	3.11	Evaluation: Evaluation of the Strategy for Norway's Culture and Sports Cooperation with Countries in the South	11.10	Evaluation: Evaluation of the International Organization for Migration and its Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking
2.12	Hunting for Per Diem. The Uses and Abuses	2.11	Evaluation: Evaluation of Research on Norwegian Development Assistance		

- 10.10 Evaluation: Democracy Support through the United Nations
- 9.10 Study: Evaluability Study of Partnership Initiatives
- 8.10 Evaluation: Evaluation of Transparency International
- 7.10 Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation with the Western Balkans
- 6.10 Study: Evaluation of Norwegian Business-related Assistance Uganda Case Study
- 5.10 Study: Evaluation of Norwegian Business-related Assistance Bangladesh Case Study
- 4.10 Study: Evaluation of Norwegian Business-related Assistance South Africa Case Study
- 3.10 Synthesis Main Report: Evaluation of Norwegian Business-related Assistance
- 2.10 Synthesis Study: Support to Legislatures
- 1.10 Evaluation: Evaluation of the Norwegian Centre for Democracy Support 2002–2009
- 2009**
- 7.09 Evaluation: Evaluation of the Norwegian Programme for Development, Research and Education (NUFU) and of Norad's Programme for Master Studies (NOMA)
- 6.09 Evaluation: Evaluation of the Humanitarian Mine Action Activities of Norwegian People's Aid
- 5.09 Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian Support to Peacebuilding in Haiti 1998–2008
- 4.09 Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian Support to the Protection of Cultural Heritage
- 4.09 Study Report: Norwegian Environmental Action Plan
- 3.09 Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation through Norwegian Non-Governmental Organisations in Northern Uganda (2003-2007)
- 3.09 Study Report: Evaluation of Norwegian Business-related Assistance Sri Lanka Case Study
- 2.09 Evaluation: Mid-Term Evaluation of the Joint Donor Team in Juba, Sudan
- 2.09 Study Report: A synthesis of Evaluations of Environment Assistance by Multilateral Organisations
- 1.09 Study Report: Global Aid Architecture and the Health Millenium Development Goals
- 1.09 Evaluation: Joint Evaluation of Nepal's Education for All 2004-2009 Sector Programme
- 2008**
- 6.08 Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian Development Cooperation in the Fisheries Sector
- 5.08 Evaluation: Evaluation of the Norwegian Research and Development Activities in Conflict Prevention and Peace-building
- 4.08 Evaluation: Evaluation of Norwegian HIV/AIDS Responses
- 3.08 Evaluation: Mid-term Evaluation the EEA Grants
- 2.08 Evaluation: Joint Evaluation of the Trust Fund for Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (TFESSD)
- 2.08 Synthesis Study: Cash Transfers Contributing to Social Protection: A Synthesis of Evaluation Findings
- 2.08 Study: Anti- Corruption Approaches. A Literature Review
- 1.08 Evaluation: Evaluation of the Norwegian Emergency Preparedness System (NOREPS)
- 1.08 Study: The challenge of Assessing Aid Impact: A review of Norwegian Evaluation Practise
- 1.08 Synthesis Study: On Best Practise and Innovative Approaches to Capacity Development in Low Income African Countries
- 2007**
- 5.07 Evaluation of the Development -Cooperation to Norwegian NGOs in Guatemala
- 4.07 Evaluation of Norwegian Development -Support to Zambia (1991 - 2005)
- 3.07 Evaluation of the Effects of the using M-621 Cargo Trucks in Humanitarian Transport Operations
- 2.07 Evaluation of Norwegian Power-related Assistance
- 2.07 Study Development Cooperation through Norwegian NGOs in South America
- 1.07 Evaluation of the Norwegian Petroleum-Related Assistance
- 1.07 Synteserapport: Humanitær innsats ved naturkatastrofer:En syntese av evalueringsfunn
- 1.07 Study: The Norwegian International Effort against Female Genital Mutilation

2006

- 2.06 Evaluation of Fredskorpset
- 1.06 Inter-Ministerial Cooperation. An Effective Model for Capacity Development?
- 1.06 Synthesis Report: Lessons from Evaluations of Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation

2005

- 5.05 Evaluation of the “Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (1997–2005)”
- 4.05 Evaluation of the Framework Agreement between the Government of Norway and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- 3.05 Gender and Development – a review of evaluation report 1997–2004
- 2.05 – Evaluation: Women Can Do It – an evaluation of the WCDI programme in the Western Balkans
- 1.05 – Study: Study of the impact of the work of FORUT in Sri Lanka and Save the Children Norway in Ethiopia: Building Civil Society
- 1.05 – Evaluation: Evaluation of the Norad Fellowship Programme

2004

- 6.04 Study of the impact of the work of Save the Children Norway in Ethiopia: Building Civil Society
- 5.04 Study of the impact of the work of FORUT in Sri Lanka: Building Civil Society

- 4.04 Evaluering av ordningen med støtte gjennom paraplyorganisasjoner. Eksemplifisert ved støtte til Norsk Misjons Bistandsnemda og Atlas-alliansen
- 3.04 Evaluation of CESAR’s activities in the Middle East Funded by Norway
- 2.04 Norwegian Peace-building policies: Lessons Learnt and Challenges Ahead
- 1.04 Towards Strategic Framework for Peace-building: Getting Their Act Together. Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of the Peace-building.

2003

- 3.03 Evaluering av Bistandstorgets Evalueringsnettverk
- 2.03 Evaluation of the Norwegian Education Trust Fund for Africa in the World Bank
- 1.03 Evaluation of the Norwegian Investment Fund for Developing Countries (Norfund)

2002

- 4.02 Legal Aid Against the Odds Evaluation of the Civil Rights Project (CRP) of the Norwegian Refugee Council in former Yugoslavia
- 3.02 Evaluation of ACOPAMA An ILO program for “Cooperative and Organizational Support to Grassroots Initiatives” in Western Africa 1978 – 1999
- 3A.02 Évaluation du programme ACOPAMA Un programme du BIT sur l’« Appui associatif et coopératif aux Initiatives de Développement à la Base » en Afrique de l’Ouest de 1978 à 1999
- 2.02 Evaluation of the International Humanitarian

Assistance of the Norwegian Red Cross

- 1.02 Evaluation of the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM)

2001

- 7.01 Reconciliation Among Young People in the Balkans An Evaluation of the Post Pessimist Network
- 6.01 Can democratisation prevent conflicts? Lessons from sub-Saharan Africa
- 5.01 Evaluation of Development Co-operation between Bangladesh and Norway, 1995–2000
- 4.01 The International Monetary Fund and the World Bank Cooperation on Poverty Reduction
- 3.01 Evaluation of the Public Support to the Norwegian NGOs Working in Nicaragua 1994–1999
- 3A.01 Evaluación del Apoyo Público a las ONGs Noruegas que Trabajan en Nicaragua 1994–1999
- 2.01 Economic Impacts on the Least Developed Countries of the Elimination of Import Tariffs on their Products
- 1.01 Evaluation of the Norwegian Human Rights Fund

2000

- 10.00 Taken for Granted? An Evaluation of Norway’s Special Grant for the Environment
- 9.00 “Norwegians? Who needs Norwegians?” Explaining the Oslo Back Channel: Norway’s Political Past in the Middle East
- 8.00 Evaluation of the Norwegian Mixed Credits Programme

- 7.00 Evaluation of the Norwegian Plan of Action for Nuclear Safety Priorities, Organisation, Implementation

- 6.00 Making Government Smaller and More Efficient. The Botswana Case

- 5.00 Evaluation of the NUFU programme

- 4.00 En kartlegging av erfaringer med norsk bistand gjennomfrivillige organisasjoner 1987–1999

- 3.00 The Project “Training for Peace in Southern Africa”

- 2.00 Norwegian Support to the Education Sector. Overview of Policies and Trends 1988–1998

- 1.00 Review of Norwegian Health-related Development Cooperation 1988–1997

1999

- 10.99 Evaluation of AWEPA, The Association of European Parliamentarians for Africa, and AEI, The African European Institute

- 9.99 Evaluation of the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF)

- 8.99 Aid Coordination and Aid Effectiveness

- 7.99 Policies and Strategies for Poverty Reduction in Norwegian Development Aid