



Evaluation Of The Service Centre For Development Cooperation In Finland (KEPA)

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EVALUATION OF THE SERVICE CENTRE
FOR DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN FINLAND
(KEPA)

MAIN REPORT

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APPENDICES A: Data Summaries and Key Background Documents.

(Published on MFA's web-page www.global.finland.fi)

Background documents

- A1. The Evaluation Terms of Reference
- A2. The Inception Report (methodology, issues, information sources, etc.)

KEPA structure and history

- A3. KEPA's Operational Structure
- A4. Organisational Time- Line 1995–2005.
- A5. Findings from Previous Evaluations 1996–2002.
- A6. Team Self Evaluation Template

KEPA Country programme offices

- A7. Zambia Country Evaluation
- A8. Mozambique Country Evaluation
- A9. Nicaragua Country Evaluation

Summaries of KEPA's views, issues and recommendations

- A10. Member Organisations Assessment of KEPA
- A11. Summary of Board Members Views
- A12. Summary of Staff Views
- A13. Summary of KEPA Team Issues and Recommendations

Comparative Study

- A14. Comparative Analysis of Government Funding

APPENDICES B: Supporting Materials

(Available on request to INTRAC, info@intrac.org)

- B1. Total KEPA Expenditure 1995–2004.
- B2. Personnel Costs 1995–2004.
- B3. KEPA Team Self Evaluations
- B4. Country Evaluations: Questions and Issues

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 INTRAC was commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA), to conduct an evaluation of KEPA. The research took place between February and July 2005. The terms of reference were comprehensive: to review KEPA's organisational history over the last 10 years (since the 1995 Evaluation); make an analysis of capacity and performance; review the management systems; assess the different roles of KEPA; conduct evaluations in the country offices, and critically review the relationship of KEPA with MFA. In addition the evaluation was to undertake a comparative analysis study of similar non-government organisations (NGO) and ministries in Scandinavia, Ireland and the UK.
- 1.2 Though MFA is the 'contractual' client INTRAC places great importance on the ownership of the process by all major stakeholders. Thus KEPA's input and full participation has been a priority for the evaluation team. Because of this there should be no 'surprises' for any of the major stakeholder groups when they read the findings and conclusions of this Report because they have been involved in the process throughout. This is not to say they will agree with all the conclusions and recommendations and where there are likely to be differences in opinion or emphasis it has been commented on in the text.
- 1.3 The Ministry asked that the Report should be action-oriented and not 'academic' in style. Given the large number of issues to be examined the Report has to be of a certain length, but to achieve brevity the main body of the Report has concentrated on the key findings and discussion. The fuller analysis of results and supporting materials have been placed in two Appendices: Appendix A is in a separate document; Appendix B is available on request from INTRAC.

Methodology

- 1.4 In summary the Evaluation activities involved:
 - Meetings and interviews with all the main groups of stakeholders
 - Reading relevant documents and previous evaluation reports.
 - Running a range of participatory workshops
 - Facilitating staff teams to conduct 'self-evaluations' of their work.
 - Visits to Zambia, Mozambique and Nicaragua.
 - Data collection and original research into 7 comparative countries.
- 1.5 The evaluation process was designed to answer the specific questions posed in the TOR but it was also underpinned by three questions that any good evaluation process should be able to answer, namely:
 - 1) Has KEPA done what it said it would do? (1995–2005)
 - 2) Has KEPA made any difference? (Impact Assessment)
 - 3) Is KEPA doing the right things? (Relevance and Coherence)

Understanding KEPA

- 1.6 KEPA is described as a 'service centre'. Its Mission states that: 'KEPA's basic task is to encourage, support, and organise the Finnish civil society to participate in actions that promote global responsibility'. The word 'service' in English does not adequately encompass

the range of things KEPA does. The word suggests the obvious areas of support that KEPA provides for its membership organisations: acting as a 'watch-dog', running training courses, offering advice and information, organising public events and giving logistical support to Finnish NGOs working overseas. But KEPA also advocates and campaigns, and most surprisingly (at least to the outsider encountering KEPA for the first time) it has overseas offices that directly support Southern NGOs.

- 1.7 Its budget has grown from just over the equivalent of 3 million euro in 1995 to 4.6 million in 2005. About a third of this goes to supporting the programmes and offices in the South. Thus the majority goes on work in Finland. Most of the budget (95%) comes from MFA. Overall there are more than 90 employees.
- 1.8 In terms of governance there is a Board and Annual General Meetings. The Helsinki based staff are organised in eleven teams. The Management Team consists of an Acting Executive Director; a Director of Programmes and a Director of Administration. The three Country Offices are headed by Co-ordinators. The number of organisations belonging to KEPA is steadily growing and there are now 263 member organisations (MOs).
- 1.9 KEPA is a very different organisation today than in 1995. The previous major evaluation was a 'bombshell'. The volunteer programme, the core of KEPA's activities, was phased out and over the next few years the organisation was seeking a new role and new ways of working. Since 2004 the programme has been expressed under the title of the 'One Global Programme'. Within the OGP, KEPA's various activities are unified and structured under common goals and objectives. The aim is to create coherence between the different activities. The staff structure and budgets are likewise all designed around the OGP. In operational terms KEPA's work is achieved under two headings: Policy Work and Quality Services. Underpinning all of this is a development philosophy namely the idea of 'impoverishment'.

RESULTS:

KEPA's Work in Finland

- 1.10 An organisational weakness is that KEPA is not able to adequately evaluate its own work, and certainly has great difficulty trying to provide an assessment of the OGP's overall performance. The Evaluation team tried to overcome this weakness by collecting its own data; reviewing previous evaluations, and by introducing to the teams a 'self-evaluation' tool. Given this methodology the results presented in the Report are not focussed specifically around the two OGP functions, but are structured around the work done by the teams.
- 1.11 **Has KEPA done what it said it would do?** A lot of 'services' are being provided to MOs and generally the quantity and quality of what is being done is good. KEPA is providing:
 - Training and advice
 - Lobbying for the interests of MOs
 - Information services
 - Connections and networking
 - Global education support

- Support to the ETVO Programme (volunteers)
- Advocacy and campaigning
- Public events (Market of Opportunities and World Village).

1.12 **Has KEPA made any difference?** In Finland it is having the most impact in certain specific areas of organisational and institutional development:

- Training in basic skills for the medium and smaller sized organisations
- Advice on MFA's project funding.
- As a watch-dog for members.
- As a provider of information about development co-operation issues and activities.
- Facilitating networking and learning amongst MOs.
- Campaigning and advocacy around specific issues.
- Providing opportunities for MOs to raise their profile.

KEPA's work in the South

1.13 During the period of 'KEPA Initiatives in Partnership' (1995 to 2004) it supported work in nine countries plus the more extensive programmes in Zambia, Mozambique and Nicaragua. The nine initiatives did make contributions to development debates and understanding, but the work was not planned with an overall focus or strategy, and therefore the learning was not systematically collected, used or disseminated.

1.14 The three Country Office evaluations are presented in Appendices A7 – A9.

1.15 **Has KEPA done what it said it would do in the country office programmes?** The OGP provides the 'logic' for what the offices do, and generally their work does fit into this very broad framework. Policy-advocacy work is done in all three offices; capacity building is being used as a major strategy with local partners but a weakness is that KEPA does not have an organisation-wide approach to assessing needs of partners and therefore interventions risk being ad hoc; liaison services are provided for the Finnish NGOs (FNGOs) working in developing countries. Overall the Evaluation concluded that the three offices were being run efficiently and effectively.

1.16 **Has KEPA made any difference in the South?** Because KEPA does not have a systematic way of evaluating impact it has not been possible to give a comprehensive assessment but it does appear that the programme in Nicaragua is strengthening the ability of local organisations to improve the rights and well being of the Caribbean Coastal people. In Zambia and Mozambique partners give a positive picture of the relationship with KEPA, and most stressed the importance of the support given over and above any funding received.

1.17 The work in the South needs to be seen, not in isolation, but in its contribution to the OGP because by definition, all the work KEPA does, irrespective of location, is working towards one programme. In summary the key contributions are:

- Gives legitimacy to its work in the North especially in advocacy and campaigning
- Has the possibility to provide learning about development issues and methodologies for the MOs and other Finnish actors.
- Provides valuable support to FNGOs working in the South.

Is KEPA doing the right things? (effectiveness, relevance and coherence)

- 1.18 In terms of **effectiveness** the Evaluation has identified the areas where KEPA appears to be making the greatest difference. Of course it is doing far more things than those highlighted in the two boxes above, and many (probably most) are of value and make a contribution to ending impoverishment, but it is these highlighted areas of significant contribution where KEPA is adding-value to the development sector.
- 1.19 The OGP genuinely provides the basis for most of what KEPA does. There are some things that do not sit comfortably within the current OGP but overall KEPA's work is **coherent**. It is also **relevant** as judged by its key stakeholders in Finland. Member Organisations provide a very consistent picture of what they want from KEPA and most of what KEPA does coincides with these expectations. MFA believes that KEPA is not providing enough 'quality training and advice' to the NGO sector but generally their perception of KEPA's functions is also in line with what is being done (MFA's main concern is about direct funding of Southern partners).
- 1.20 The most important issues to arise in this context is that KEPA's statement of Mission does not adequately express the organisation's purpose, and KEPA's title as 'service centre', which was originally adopted to allow engagement with a broad range of member organisation, does not adequately convey all the things it does and should be doing.

KEPA the Organisation

- 1.21 The Evaluation concluded that the current Board is carrying out its **governance** role well but there are things that could be done differently that would strengthen its ability for holding the accountability for policy and strategic direction.
- 1.22 The organisation has grown greatly since 1995 but more importantly it has shifted from the KEPA of the 1980s with its roots in volunteerism, to a reliance on professional staff with plans, policies and procedures. This change demands a high level of **management**. The team structure is not an easy one to manage, and though staff are generally pleased to be working in teams, the leadership, clarity of objectives, and accountability should be improved. The lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation is a symptom of the need for a greater commitment to manage KEPA.
- 1.23 KEPA does have a lot of staff but it is also doing a lot of work and providing a lot of services. In terms of **human resources** the biggest single challenge is the very high staff turnover. This is leading to a serious loss of expertise and an unnecessary investment of time and money in recruiting and inducting new staff.
- 1.24 KEPA does not exist to simply exist, so **organisational sustainability** is only of relevance in so far that KEPA has the ability to achieve its mission. It was concluded that KEPA does have the ability (and legitimacy) to achieve its strategic goals: specifically, that most stakeholders assess that it is providing appropriate support and there is an on-going need; that the organisational skills and capacity are, on the whole, adequate to deliver them; and that the level of government funding support will, hopefully, continue.

The Relationship with MFA

- 1.25 At times the relationship in recent years has been difficult. MFA provides almost all of KEPA's funding and therefore is a major stakeholder and as such, has a legitimate right to ask questions of KEPA and expect answers. The two main weaknesses in the relationship to emerge from the Evaluation are: lack of clarity as to expectations; and lack of regular discussions and feedback.
- 1.26 The **lessons learned** are the need for clear written agreements and unambiguous reporting by KEPA that is easy for 'outsiders' to understand; that KEPA communicate with MFA through one focal point, namely the Management Team; that regular meetings are held with the NGO Unit and other MFA departments to review progress and share learning; and that within the NGO Unit there is a need for an experienced and KEPA-dedicated person who can manage the relationship.
- 1.27 In the last year the situation has improved greatly and the prospects for a mutually beneficial relationship are good. If the organisational changes recommended in this report are implemented then MFA **can be confident** that it should continue to fund KEPA at the current level (and potentially increased levels), and in the same manner i.e. one grant for the entirety of its work.
- 1.28 There are two issues that relate to the long-term relationship of MFA and KEPA that were of importance to MFA when the Evaluation was commissioned. These are the form of future funding and whether KEPA should take on new functions in relation to FNGO project-funding applications. To answer these questions a **Comparative Analysis Study** was undertaken. The full report is shown in Appendix A14.
- 1.29 The issue of out-sourcing project applications and management is now longer of urgency for MFA. However, the Comparative Analysis does provide very valuable models for future policy changes. Overall the study found that there was no single model that could be easily transposed to the Finnish situation but there that are a number of good practice principles that need to be considered.

Conclusions

- 1.30 The Conclusions focus on the overall organisation and programme concerns but there are many more issues and recommendations that relate to individual KEPA teams' performance (see Appendix A14). Eight areas for change have been identified.
- 1.31 What is KEPA all about?

- KEPA's Mission (Purpose) statement does not adequately describe what it does.
- The title 'service centre' is causing confusion.

The confusion is not simply about semantics; it is about whether KEPA should be doing certain things. This Evaluation is unequivocal in saying that the primary stakeholders are the 263 MOs and satisfying their needs is paramount. KEPA also needs to more clearly acknowledge MFA's legitimate right to make known the pieces of work it thinks are important. To establish more clearly KEPA's purpose requires it to take account of its distinctive competence.

1.32 KEPA's distinctive competence is:

- Building the capacity of its MOs who are a huge potential force for change.
- Using its good name within Finland, and its contacts and networks, to influence decision-makers.
- Using its relatively large resources and skilled staff to focus on the key issues that will promote global responsibility.
- Drawing on its overseas work to give it a legitimacy to advocate and campaign for change.
- Sharing the learning from its work in Finland and the South with other development actors.

This 'niche' lies somewhere between a 'service centre' function where KEPA is primarily a provider of support activities specifically requested by MOs and MFA, and being a 'development agency' (characterised as placing the needs of Southern partners and beneficiaries as primary stakeholders). KEPA's mission and its distinctive competence suggest that KEPA is between these two extremes. Its primary customer is the MOs, not Southern partners, but at the same time KEPA is more than a 'passive' supplier of services: it does effective advocacy that draws legitimacy from the South; it is strengthening the capacity of FNGOs and it is strengthening local partners so that they in turn can contribute to civil society. But given KEPA's mission the work in the South must be directly linked to the OGP and making a significant contribution to its achievement. Any internal reviews of the activities in the South should critically assess their relationship and relevance to the OGP.

1.33 KEPA should not be entering into another major shift in direction:

- The 1995 Evaluation led to a major change in direction, and it has taken KEPA many years to find a new direction.
- KEPA now needs to CONSOLIDATE.

New things and new ways are being suggested as a result of this Evaluation but these involve a steady period of improvement not a radical adoption of a different identity.

1.34 KEPA has invested a lot of time in understanding the causes of poverty:

- A key strength of KEPA is the clarity of its answer to the basic question: why are people poor?
- Its answer is IMPOVERISHMENT.

This analysis has been explained in KEPA publications and underpins all of what KEPA does. It is a very valid model, and one that is shared by many other international NGOs. More work however, needs to be done on thinking through what this conceptual understanding means at the operational level in terms of capacity building, partnerships and global education. A weakness in **gender mainstreaming** was identified and this needs to be addressed.

1.35 The governance of KEPA must be strengthened:

- It is a complex organisation and for those on the outside it can be confusing.
- It is not always clear who is responsible for what, or holds overall accountability.

The **membership** of the Board should be reviewed to ensure that the composition is reflecting both the nature of the membership, and the skills needed to govern a 4.8 million euro organisation with more than 90 staff. The Board needs to focus more on **policy issues**, and staff needs to provide the Board with information that is both digestible and facilitates taking strategic decisions.

For practical reasons the smaller voluntary-based MOs face particular challenges in influencing KEPA. Procedure and meetings need to be organised in a way that facilitates the participation of all of its MOs. Representation of immigrant-based MOs should be included in the Board.

1.36 Many of the changes in KEPA are related to how it works as an organisation:

- KEPA does not need major new directions or a new organisational structure but it does need to improve the way it works internally.

There are very good reasons for retaining the current 'team' structure but there are problems: the amount of time spent in meetings; lack of clarity as to priorities; the difficulty of knowing where to go for information; and most serious the lack of clear accountability. The risks here are that as responsibility is not clear, difficult decisions may not be made. For those wanting to communicate with KEPA the lack of clear focal points create an obstacle. Overall the Evaluation believes that the current structure should be kept but improvements made.

- The three Directors should be more confident in their critical directing role as senior staff members.
- Consideration should be given to making the 'leadership' of the teams into permanent management positions.
- To clarify country programme management a Deputy Director for the South Programmes (reporting to the Director of Programmes) could be nominated as the line manager of the Country Programmes.
- A Management Charter for staff to be implemented.
- Focal points should be nominated for all services.

1.37 At KEPA's heart is how it 'pumps' **learning** around the organisation and throughout the member organisations. KEPA is developing a monitoring and evaluation system but this should embrace the whole of what KEPA does and how it performs. The Resources Team (with other teams) could have an enlarged role as KEPA's 'Learning Team'.

1.38 Since 2004 the One Global Programme provided a clearer framework for linking, synergistically the work in the North and South. However there is still room to improve the way it is written and implemented:

- The OGP is an imaginative means of conceptualising KEPA's work but it is not currently in a form that enables achievements to be judged in any systematic way.

The OGP should remain as the main expression of KEPAs goals and objectives but a major piece of work must be done so that it is possible in the future to answer the questions: has the OGP done what it said it would do? What difference (impact) has it made?

1.39 A **challenge for the OGP** is how it fits with the work in the country programmes. All the things KEPA does in the South must be directly contributing to the OGP; the country teams in this respect should be no different from those in Helsinki. As the OGP becomes more embedded in the organisation, it is realistic to assume that it will become more focused. There is an expectation that, the operationalisation and measurement of the programme will crystallise as a result of, the next strategic review (2006) and accompanying strategy. But currently there is a problem. In part because the OGP is too vague; in part because of lack of management and accountability; in part because of poor organisational communication; and in part because each country has a different context and set of needs. The solution is to implement the changes outlined above but also to make explicit what the country programmes are meant to be achieving. Two things should be done:

- 1) Each Country Office needs a set of **strategic objectives**: these to be developed within the framework of the OGP but moulded to suit the specific country situation.
- 2) Each Country Office has a **service agreement** with the teams in Finland: this would set out what contributions are required from the country teams in order that the Helsinki teams can fulfil their OGP objectives, and vice versa.

1.40 If properly managed the above would ensure that stakeholder needs are clearly met (especially those of MOs and the MFA). It will mean that all KEPAs work is effectively contributing to the one programme; that the work in the South is addressing local needs, and at the same time, can be justified in terms of achieving KEPAs mission; and finally, it will result in greater accountability. After 1995 it was valid for Keba to try out various **initiatives**. However, their relevance was found to be low, and so it was right to cease this work. Now Keba needs to concentrate on improving the existing programme under the OGP. In case new initiatives arise, they should be critically judged in terms of their relevance to the OGP.

1.41 KEPA has a diverse range of stakeholders, and it must become more **customer-focussed**:

- KEPA has the potential to be an even greater force for change if it more systematically builds on the needs and motivations of its stakeholders

It already does a lot to monitor what its membership want in terms of services but it needs to be even more innovative in building the capacity of its MOs. MFA is an important 'customer' for KEPA, not simply because it is providing funding but also because it is a major player in development and has much expertise to offer. So there must be a new spirit of cooperation between KEPA and the Ministry. Being customer-focussed does not mean being passive. KEPA has the right to try new things even if not specifically asked for by the stakeholders. The skill lies in the judgements of the staff, and how well they identify opportunities. Being 'professional' is not a swear word; it is vital that staff use their professionalism to create programmes around the things that are critical for Finnish civil society to take forward global responsibility.

Concluding Remarks

1.42 KEPA is fulfilling an important function in Finnish civil society. Since 1995 it has become increasingly focussed. The Evaluation Team has been impressed by most of what it has seen and though measuring impact in any systematic way has proved difficult, this Report provides evidence of where KEPA is making a positive difference. It has become a professional organisation that has not lost its original values or its vision for a better world. It has grown in size and complexity and most of the recommendations are about consolidating this good work, and how KEPA's management and accountability can be strengthened further.

Recommendations:

To MFA

- Continue to fund KEPA
- If outsourcing is considered in the future then follow the 'good practice' principles
- That a new MFA/KEPA relationship of cooperation be built upon the lessons learnt in this evaluation.

To KEPA

- Mission Statement and the description 'service centre' to be revised
- Board should focus more on policy issues
- Board membership to be reviewed
- KEPA needs a period of consolidation and to develop its distinctive competence
- Even more effort to be put into monitoring the needs of stakeholders
- KEPA must build a cooperative relationship with MFA
- Internal accountability and leadership processes should be strengthened
- Greater priority is given to establishing a monitoring and evaluation system
- Learning is placed at the centre of what KEPA does both internally and with MOs
- OGP is revised to ensure that the objectives are achievable and outcomes can be evaluated
- KEPA must ensure that the work in the Country Offices is congruent with its Mission and is directly contributing to the OGP
- The recommendations made to specific teams are considered and implemented where appropriate.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 INTRAC, (the International NGO Training and Research Centre, Oxford, UK) was commissioned by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) to conduct an evaluation of the Service Centre for Development Cooperation (KEPA). The research took place during February to July 2005. This document is the Final Report, being submitted in August.
- 2.2 KEPA was established in 1985 by 56 Finnish NGOs and became mainly a volunteer sending agency. In 1995 a comprehensive evaluation of the organisation concluded that KEPA's volunteer programme had limited relevance or effectiveness and was costly compared to similar types of organisation. The programme was ended and during the last ten years KEPA has focussed its work on wider global issues and developed as a trustee and umbrella organisation for its member organisations. It is now a large NGO with more than 90 staff and an annual budget of almost five million euro; it offers a range of services to its membership and other sectors of Finnish society, and has overseas staff in Zambia, Mozambique, Nicaragua and Tanzania.
- 2.3 The MFA provides 95% of KEPA's funding and is thus a major stakeholder. In asking INTRAC to conduct this evaluation it was clear that they did not want an 'academic style' of research but a concise review of KEPA's performance and a set of practical recommendations that would be of relevance to both KEPA and the Ministry. An essential task was also to conduct a comparative analysis of similar NGO organisations and ministries in Scandinavia and Ireland.
- 2.4 The evaluation's Terms of Reference is shown in Appendix A1. Overall it identifies six main areas to be examined:
- A brief organisational history of the ten years since the last major evaluation.
 - An analysis of KEPA's capacity and performance.
 - A review of the management and financial systems (an external audit was also conducted independently of the INTRAC evaluation).
 - An assessment of the different roles of KEPA .
 - An evaluation of the Country Offices in Mozambique, Zambia and Nicaragua.
 - A critical review of the processes and relationship involved in the KEPA: MFA interaction.
- 2.5 As will be explained in the methodology though the MFA is the 'contractual' client, INTRAC places great importance on the ownership of the process by all the major stakeholders. Thus KEPA's input and full participation in the evaluation has been a priority for the INTRAC team. Because of this there should be 'no surprises' for any of the stakeholder groups when they read the conclusions and recommendations of this report because they have been involved in the process throughout. This is not to say that they will necessarily agree with all the conclusions and where there is likely to be differences in opinion or emphasis the authors of the report have commented on this in the text.
- 2.6 Very early on in the evaluation it became obvious that some major issues needed to be researched and considered in order to answer the specific questions that had been identified in the TOR. The original list of issues is described in Appendix A2 but in brief they are around:

- Who 'owns' KEPA?
 - What is meant by a 'service-centre'?
 - Is KEPA 'too professional' (i.e. lost its roots in volunteerism)?
 - Does the structure of the organisation (team/matrix) work effectively?
 - How are decisions made in KEPA and where does accountability lie?
 - Should KEPA have overseas offices?
 - Are all the services and programmes relevant?
 - How does KEPA monitor, evaluate and learn?
- 2.7 Thus this Report is an attempt to present in an easy to digest form the answers to some very specific questions relating to KEPA's organisational efficiency, effectiveness and relevance, and also to examine the underlying issues that relate to its basic mission and ability to 'add-value' to Finnish development cooperation.
- 2.8 The Ministry has asked specifically that the Report be succinct and 'action-oriented'. To achieve this the main body of the Report has been kept relatively short: there are three '**Results Sections**' (KEPA's work in Finland; its work in the South; and an assessment of the overall Programme's relevance); two '**Issues Sections**' that discuss 'KEPA the Organisation' and its relationship with MFA; and finally the **Conclusion and Recommendations**.
- 2.9 In order to keep the Report 'punchy' much of the supporting evidence is presented in the Appendices. In **Appendix A** are copies of the evaluation findings either written in report form (e.g. the three Country Evaluation Reports, the Comparative Analysis Report), or as summaries (e.g. Previous Evaluations, Responses to the Questionnaire Surveys), or as specific tables and diagrams (KEPA History Time Line, MO Profiles). Appendix A is in a paper form and accompanies the main body of the Report. **Appendix B** is 'supporting material'. It is not expected that the majority of readers will need to read this material but it provides more detailed findings and copies of the tools used (e.g. the Questionnaires, range of answers to MO survey). This is available on request from INTRAC.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 The TOR described in general terms the information to be collected and the major questions that needed to be answered. The initial stage of the evaluation led to the production of an Inception Report that was submitted to MFA at the end of March. This was approved by MFA. It described in detail the methodological approach to be followed; the main issues to be addressed; and a timetable for the data collection and reporting. An updated version of the Inception Report is shown in Appendix A2.

3.2 The process was implemented in five phases:

1. Inception
2. Study Phase Finland
3. Country Visits
4. Synthesis and feedback
5. Finalisation of the Report

In practice these phases were not discrete and data collection, testing ideas and feedback were integral to all the phases. Underpinning the way the INTRAC evaluators worked were three principles: consultation (listening attentively to the evidence and views and probing in a critical but respectful way); credibility (striving to gain ownership of the results by both KEPA and MFA); communications (working closely with MFA and KEPA to ensure understanding of the process).

3.3 In summary the evaluation activities involved:

- Meetings and interviews with all the main stakeholders i.e. MFA staff, other Ministry officials, past Ministry staff, Embassy staff, KEPA Board members, Member Organisations, KEPA staff both in Finland and overseas, ex-staff, local Southern partners, and key Finnish activists and opinion leaders. (Full list is shown in Appendix A2).
- Reading all the main documents. These included: previous evaluations, MFA Policy papers; KEPA internal reports, KEPA policy, strategy, and procedure papers.
- Running a range of participatory workshops for different stakeholder groups e.g. MFA staff, KEPA Teams, KEPA Strategic Planning Group, Member Organisations, and meetings with Southern partners.
- A major Team Self Evaluation process that involved all KEPA teams in HQ reviewing their work and its impact.
- Questionnaire surveys to Member Organisations, Board Members, and KEPA staff.
- E- mail contact with overseas –based staff.
- Visits by evaluation team members to Mozambique, Zambia and Nicaragua.
- Visit to Forum Syd and SIDA in Sweden.
- Data collection and original research into 7 comparative countries whose governments support development cooperation via the NGO sector.

3.4 This evaluation process was designed to answer the specific questions posed in the TOR but it is also underpinned by three questions that ALL good evaluations should be able to answer, namely:

- 1) Has KEPA done what it said it would do (1995 to 2005)? [Internal Validity]
- 2) Has KEPA made any difference? [Impact Assessment]
- 3) Is KEPA doing the right things? [Relevance and Coherence].

4. UNDERSTANDING KEPA

- 4.1 KEPA is described as a 'service centre'. Its mission states that: 'KEPA's basic task is to encourage, support and organise the Finnish civil society to participate in actions that promote global responsibility' (Strategic Plan 2000–2005). The number of Member Organisations (MOs) is not static but at the time of the evaluation it was 263. KEPA initially adopted this name in order to engage a broad membership. However the word 'service' in English does not adequately encompass the range of KEPA's activities, because though it does do the obvious things that an umbrella organisation can be expected to provide for its membership: acting as a 'watchdog' to protect the sector's interests; running training courses, offering advice to members on project funding applications to the Ministry; and giving logistical help to Finnish NGOs working in places where KEPA has staff. It also advocates and campaigns; organises public events like the Market of Opportunities, works with other NGOs to run a volunteer sending programme, provides information to the public via its web pages, newsletters and magazine, and most surprisingly (at least to the outsider encountering KEPA for the first time) has overseas programmes that directly support Southern NGOs.
- 4.2 KEPA's Headquarters is in Helsinki. It has three country offices (Zambia, Mozambique and Nicaragua) and staff in Tanzania. Until recently it also had a staff member in Thailand and another in Indonesia. There are more than 90 employees; just over half in Finland. In the South the staff are a mixture of Finnish nationals and locally recruited.
- 4.3 The budget has grown from the equivalent of 3 million euro in 1995 to 4.8 million in 2005. Just under half of the total expenditure is on personnel costs. In terms of how the money is allocated, in 2005 about a fifth (22%) went to KEPA's 'Policy Work'; a fifth (20%) to 'Quality services'; 44% to Programme Support and 14% to 'Independent projects' (these categories will be explained later). In terms of where the money was spent a third (1.57 million euro – 33%) went to supporting the programmes and offices in the South. Thus the majority of the budget is allocated to work in Finland. Most of the budget (95%) comes from MFA; the remainder is mainly from KEPA's own income generation activities.
- 4.4 In terms of governance there is a Board currently chaired by the Green Party MP Heidi Hautala and fifteen regular Board members appointed for two year terms by the Annual General Meeting. The Helsinki-based staff (below director level) are organised in twelve teams with rotating (and team- elected) leaders. KEPA currently has an Acting Executive Director; a Director of Programmes and a Director of Administration. These three in effect are the 'senior' management team. The three Country Offices are headed by Co-ordinators (Finnish in Zambia and Mozambique; a national in Nicaragua). These three Co-ordinators and the head of the Tanzania office attend twice- yearly meetings in Helsinki with the Management Team. These meetings constitute the Global Management Team. It is this team that negotiates and agrees the annual work plans for each country (the overall Operational Structure is shown diagrammatically in Appendix A3).
- 4.5 Since 2004 KEPA's programme has been expressed under the title of the **One Global Programme (OGP)**. Within the OGP, KEPA's diverse activities and services are structured under common themes, goals and objectives. The aim is to create coherence between different activities. The staff structure, and the role of the country offices, cannot be

understood without placing their contribution within the context of the OGP. For example, it is not just the advocacy staff who determine the effectiveness of a specific campaign; many contributions have to come together, and therefore, it may require major pieces of work to be done by the country staff, the training and advice team, the World Village team etc. The OGP will be described later, but it too cannot be understood without considering the process that KEPA undertook after the 1995 Evaluation. It was this evaluation that led to the termination of the volunteer programme.

KEPA's Time-Line 1995 to 2005.

KEPA is a very different organisation in 2005 than it was ten years previously. The evaluators requested that the Management Team produce an organisational time line that shows the significant changes and forces for change during this period (see Appendix A4).

- 4.6 In 1995 KEPA had one Director and between 8 to 12 staff directly managed by the Director. The consequences of the evaluation were a 'bombshell'. It criticised the approaches and the technical assistance work (volunteer programme) and led to KEPA looking for a new direction. By 1998 it had identified international campaigns and work on policy issues as this direction. It re-structured into a line management organisation with a director and four units and the number of staff increased. It started to provide training for the Finnish NGOs (FNGOs) and worked on its core mission, values and principles. This was the period when KEPA started to explore different ways of working in the South: In Brazil and Guatemala; in Thailand, Indonesia and India. The programmes in the former volunteer-receiving partner countries (Mozambique, Zambia, Nicaragua) were developed, an office in Tanzania opened with liaison officers (1997), and additional liaison officers appointed: in Brazil (1997), Indonesia, Thailand, Dominican Republic and Uganda. During 1997 to 1999 KEPA played an important role in several campaigns such as the Nigeria Campaign (Shell boycott). By 2002 the volunteer programme had been phased out and partnerships were developed in the three overseas countries.
- 4.7 By 2000 KEPA was well into developing into the organisation that it is today: in 2000 it produced its six-year Strategic Plan, and its Development Policy was more clearly articulated. An external management consultancy reviewed its internal structure (2001) and recommended the introduction of the 'team' way of working (matrix). This was modified in 2003. In terms of funding KEPA had annual agreements with MFA up to 2001 and then a Framework Agreement for 2001–2003, and a new agreement for 2004–6. There has also been some EU financed projects and activities: Nicaragua EIB with the Danish Ibis (2000–2), in Nicaragua after the Mitch Hurricane with Oxfam (2001–2); and the Global Education project (2002–4).
- 4.8 The period from the 'bombshell' evaluation to the early 2000s was a creative time for KEPA. It was seeking a new identity (and it had the resources to experiment). The idea was to 'create pilots in order to learn new modalities in the N-S relations'. During this trial period it had in effect four goals:
- Improve the methods of working in partnership
 - Create dialogues with partners and thus equality in relations
 - Incorporate member organisations into KEPA's work
 - Service members in the field.

This was a time of development debate within the Finnish solidarity movement, thus 'mutuality', 'bridge building', 'commitment', and the 'grass roots level', were seen as important issues to explore in any new forms of action. A critical debate at this time was whether KEPA should be more a people's movement or a professional actor. It is interesting to note from the four 'goals' above that KEPA realised it was 'ahead' of its membership in development thinking and needed to inform/persuade/influence then to work in new ways. As the KEPA director's have observed 'the objective was to break the modes of traditional NGO development cooperation and implicitly, to drag the "traditional" NGOs to the new track with the introduction of the development policy agenda...'. It was the Partnership Working Group that was in charge of these trials. The group initially gathered wide participation but it was not a representative group; membership being by willingness to join, and it suffered from discontinuity, and a lack of clear objectives. Thus it could be quite arbitrary which of the initiatives were developed. This can be seen in the fact that the geographical scope of KEPA's work was not based on any proper consideration. Nor was the commitment of Finnish NGOs working in the same areas secured. The 'working group' idea was discontinued in 2002; the alternative idea was to create thematic sub-committees for the Board but this was not approved as it was thought to be too time consuming and might lead to lack of clarity as to decision-making.

- 4.9 A number of evaluations of aspects of KEPA's work took place during the period and the Evaluation TOR asked specifically that these should be reviewed. This review is shown in Appendix A5 and reference is made throughout the Report to the findings of these earlier evaluations.

The One Global Programme (OGP)

- 4.10 The main concern of this Evaluation has been how KEPA has performed during the last few years (as this obviously has the most significance for future performance and MFA support). Since 2004 KEPA has been working to achieve the One Global Programme. It has to be said that this is not an easy concept for the 'outsider' (and some insiders) to easily understand. The main purpose of KEPA is: '...to encourage, support, and organise the Finnish civil society to participate in actions that promote global responsibility'.

The OGP has two main objectives (goals):

- 1) 'Finnish civil society works increasingly to end impoverishment in the South'.
- 2) 'Improved quality of cooperation of FNGOs with their southern partners through effective capacity building'.

- 4.11 There are eight sub-objectives:

- Actors work for global responsibility
- Promote people's right to food.
- Promote participatory political systems
- Develop KEPA's global structures and forms for policy work
- Improved quality of cooperation of the FNGOs and their partners through technical advice and new views and skills.
- Improved quality of cooperation of the FNGOs and their partners through better access to information.

- Quality services network has an active discussion among the FNGOs and their partners on the quality of cooperation for common goals.
- KEPA actively promotes partnership between FNGOs and the MFA of Finland.

There is a third main objective which is about KEPA having ‘appropriate mechanisms’ to support the programmes.

- 4.12 In operational terms the way these objectives are to be achieved is expressed in terms of two functions: **POLICY WORK** and **QUALITY SERVICES**. It is this conceptualisation that is the pivot around which KEPA is organised (e.g. the teams relate to this dual functionality; moreover the budget is expressed in terms of its contribution to these two).

Policy Work: are the things that KEPA does to achieve policy changes by drawing on the cooperation between actors in the Finnish civil society, KEPA’s southern partners and international networks.

Quality Services: is the support that KEPA gives to strengthen the capacity of Finnish and southern NGOs to learn in cooperation.

The important thing to note is that both include activities that KEPA does in Finland, and those it does in the South. Hence, the work of the staff in Helsinki and the work of the staff in the Country offices are as one; they are NOT two separate sets of activities and thus can only be evaluated in their entirety.

- 4.13 Over recent years KEPA has had many different documents expressing what it does. In the Programme Policy Document 2004–6 it explained that the achievement of these two functions was through five **instruments**.

- Personnel exchange
- Training and advice
- Funding
- Information
- Campaigning and lobbying

The above are self-explanatory but the ‘funding’ instrument does need comment as it was this that led to some relationship problems with MFA’s NGO Unit. By ‘funding’ KEPA means the use of relatively small amounts of money to provide capacity building support to southern partners. As the Programme Policy document stated: ‘Funding needs to be transparent and be based on clear criteria on its usage, volume, decision making process, follow-up and evaluation’.

- 4.14 In addition to these are three ‘independent projects’, namely; World Village festival (now annual), Kumppani Magazine, and the Finnish Volunteer Programme (ETVO).

KEPA’s Conceptual Framework

- 4.15 One of the things that KEPA has worked very hard is the identification of its underpinning development philosophy. In essence this is KEPA’s answer to the most basic of questions: Why are some people materially poor? It is the answer to this question that in a healthy/effective organisation informs and moulds its goals, objectives and strategies.

- 4.16 KEPA has a very clear answer: **IMPOVERISHMENT**.
‘The most significant concept in KEPA’s work is ‘to impoverish’. KEPA’s view is that describing impoverishing only as a condition is not a sufficient basis for the programme that wants to abolish poverty from the world. Impoverishing draws attention to the institutions and processes, which actively cause poverty.’ (Programme Policy 2004–2006).
- 4.17 The word ‘impoverishment’ is not a commonly used one in English, so the meaning of the concept may not be immediately apparent to ‘outsiders’. But KEPA’s explanations are clear. Their underpinning conceptual analysis of the causes of poverty centre around their belief that it is ‘processes’ that cause poverty, not simply the fact of having few resources. Therefore, to help poor people escape from poverty needs strategies that focus on these processes (at family, community, national and international levels) rather than simply implementing ‘solutions’ that rely on the transfer of material resources. This conceptual framework is one that is shared by many of the international development NGOs but often it is not understood by the general-public. In KEPA’s case it may not necessarily be understood or owned by all its Member Organisations. The development of KEPA’s thinking since the 1995 Evaluation is a major achievement and gives it a very firm foundation for achieving the main task: to promote global responsibility.

KEPA’s Stakeholders

- 4.18 One of the questions to be addressed in this Evaluation is: who ‘owns’ KEPA? At least six potential groups of stakeholders need to be considered:
- Finnish civil society and the Finnish public (and specifically taxpayers)
 - The Member Organisations
 - The KEPA Board
 - The staff
 - MFA (and the Finnish Government)
 - Southern partners and beneficiaries
- 4.19 All the above have a potential to influence what KEPA does- but some more than others. KEPA’s description as a service centre suggests that MOs are likely to have a very significant influence; but the fact that 95% of the funding comes via MFA might suggest that they are the ‘real owners’. While KEPA’s values and principles would suggest that listening to the Southern voice is what provides KEPA’s work with its true legitimacy. These issues will be examined later but at this point it is helpful to understand a little more about the Member Organisations.
- 4.20 At the time of this Evaluation there are 263 MOs on KEPA’s Membership Register. They are a diverse range of organisations:

Table 1: Profile of Member Organisations

Type of Member Organisation*	Number*
Cultural Associations	38
Development Country Associations	34
Schools and Educational institutions and organisations	28
Child and Youth organisations	27
Friendship Associations	25
Missionary and religious organisations	22
Aid Organisations	21
Adoption and 'godmother/godfather' organisations	15
Environmental organisations	14
Trade-related (e.g. Fair Trade)	13
Human Rights organisations	12
Peace Organisations	11
Health Sector organisations	9
Disability Organisations	9
Gender specific (women specific) organisations	8
Trade Union related organisations	7
Development Policy-related organisations	6
NGOs of Immigrants in Finland	5
Foundations	3

[NB Some organisations appear under more than one category so total does not equal 263. Many of the Immigrant NGOs are not classified as such on KEPA's register].

Cultural Associations are the biggest single grouping with development country associations next. Although only 21 MOs (less than 10%) are classified as aid organisations, most of the MOs provide some assistance to the South. In terms of size, 68% of MOs have less than 500 members; 22% have 500 to 25,000; and 10% are bigger than 25,000. Most MOs are based in Helsinki (63%).

4.21 In KEPA's publication 'Services for members 2004' it describes eleven areas of support:

- Training
- Advice (about project planning and funding)
- Meeting venues
- Contacts with other organisations (networking in Finland and the South)
- Liaison services (helping FNGOs in the South)
- Information services (web-pages, newsletter, library and its publications)
- ETVO (Finnish Volunteer Programme)
- Global Education (established a network)
- Markets of Opportunities
- World Village festival
- Campaigns

In the next sections the provisions to MOs will be examined.

5. RESULTS: KEPAs WORK IN FINLAND

Introduction

- 5.1 The presentation of the results into sections (5 reporting on KEPAs work in Finland, and 6 the work in the South) is, in one way, an artificial split. Its been done this way because the Evaluation's TOR determined the basic structure of data collection i.e. it prescribed the field visits and the other main issues to be addressed. But KEPAs OGP requires the work to be looked at holistically; an approach which examines the overall attainment of each KEPA objective making up the OGP, irrespective of the geographical location where the activity took place. However, the results are presented by location but the Evaluator's believe, that even with this limitation it is possible to say valid things about the performance of KEPAs work.
- 5.2 As explained in the Methodology (para 3.4) the process posed three questions that a good evaluation should be able to answer:
- 1) Has KEPA done what it said it would do?
 - 2) Has KEPA made any difference?
 - 3) Is KEPA doing the right things?

The results in Sections 5 and 6 present the answers to Questions 1 and 2, while Section 7 examines the last question.

- 5.3 A major organisational weakness is that KEPA is not able to adequately evaluate its own work, and certainly has great difficulty in trying to provide an assessment of the OGP's overall performance. It cannot do this for a number of reasons:
- Its objectives are not specific; they are not outcome oriented and they don't have indicators that can be measured.
 - There is no systematic monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in place. Even though KEPA does carry out or commission evaluations of specific aspects of its work these are not comprehensive and there is nothing in place that enables it to assess impact.
 - Because the last ten years has been a period of constant experiment it means that 'everything is new'. The OGP was adopted in 2004 and so the gut response from most KEPA teams to the question: 'is it making any difference?' is 'its too early to say'.
- 5.4 The Evaluation team has tried to overcome these weaknesses by collecting its own data and examining the evaluations that have been done before; and secondly, by introducing the teams (in Finland), to a 'self-evaluation' methodology that they applied to the work for which they had a responsibility. Combining these two has enabled the Evaluation to make some overall assessments.
- 5.5 Given these challenges the results are not focussed specifically around the two OGP functions: Policy Work and Quality Services. Rather the Evaluation has taken KEPAs team structure as its focal points i.e. the three country teams; and in Finland the 14 Helsinki-based teams.

KEPA's Work In Finland

A) Has KEPA done what it said it would do?

5.6 The evaluation team had to work hard to try and answer this question because there are no overall KEPA action plans that provide, specific activities that can easily be measured. The existing action plans, the latest is 2005, only gives a 'general intent' as to some of the things KEPA will be doing within Policy Work, Quality Services and the independent projects. It does not systematically describe the intended actions nor provide indicators of how achievement can be assessed. So the evaluation has had to draw its evidence from a number of sources: the Team Self Evaluations (the summary templates are shown in Appendix A6); from a review of documents and reports, and from the evaluation team's research done among MOs and other stakeholders. The results are summarised in Table 2. They refer mainly to the last two years (since the adoption of the OGP) as what KEPA is doing now is obviously a much better guide to considering the future than the activities before the current strategy.

5.7 *Table 2: Summary of KEPA's Activities in Finland*

Activities	What has been done	Comments
Training and Advice:	<p>+Training has reached a large audience in Finland: 400 course participants annually in project management and development policy issues; project advice was given to 100 NGOs and with 230 individual contacts during 2004.</p> <p>+10 different basic courses related to the project cycle are provided (most on Saturdays).</p> <p>+From 2004 training in advocacy and lobbying has been run (15 organisations and 50 people attended the first 'Impoverishment Training'; and 58 Participants from 56 NGOs took part in the first advocacy and lobbying methods courses in 2005).</p> <p>+Organisational development training is offered on web-page design and fund-raising.</p> <p>+Between 1997–2004 150 training courses were run with a total of approx. 2500 participants.</p> <p>+A project planning course consisting of 18 half-day workshops was provided for Finnish-Somali organisations (2004/5).</p> <p>+Electronic learning is providing a resource for those outside Helsinki.</p> <p>+The Good Partnership Prize was a new initiative in 2004 to stimulate debate about good quality cooperation.</p>	<p>*There is evidence that KEPA is providing a good quality service on core subjects and at basic levels and that this meets the needs of many medium to smaller size NGOs.</p> <p>*For experienced MOs/experts KEPA's training is too basic. However, this does not necessarily mean that KEPA should provide the advanced specialised training; it could also actively cooperate with relevant other training institutions for providing the advanced training.</p> <p>*More active approach in training needs assessment might improve the relevance of KEPA's training.</p> <p>*Providing advice on project funding applications is very resource intensive. Range of support from simple technical questions answered to consultation over many months.</p> <p>* KEPA carried out a pilot project in 2003 with MFA to assess 28 project support applications. This pilot did not lead to further work being done in this area of support.</p> <p>*Training assistance and customer service are key functions to ensure that participant's needs and the training content are in line. KEPA is exploring new areas of support to do this.</p> <p>*Greater effort is needed to meet with MFA to identify issues and needs that should be incorporated into training and the organisational development of MOs (Training Team has tried to respond to MFA identified needs (e.g. gender, financial management).</p>

		<p>* Main form of 'quality control' has been the end of course participant questionnaire and some Training Evaluations.</p> <p>*A number of initiatives are under way to increase the marketing of the courses.</p>
Lobbying for the interests of MOs.	<p>+Worked on project support application criteria and organised a delegation to meet the Minister</p> <p>+Lobbied with others to ensure that the share of the development budget going to NGOs would increase.</p> <p>+Lobbied with others by organising a meeting with the Minister to ensure NGOs would not have their overseas work confined to the eight official partner-countries that Finland has bilateral cooperation.</p>	<p>* The watch-dog' role was strengthened in KEPA at the start of 2004 when the post of Secretary for MOs was divided into two co-ordinators jobs and one of these is now responsible for lobbying.</p> <p>* Evidence that KEPA's ability to be more proactive and better coordinated in representing member's interests has strengthened in last two years.</p> <p>* KEPA is aware of the need to have regular meetings with the MFA NGO Unit to share issues about NGO support.</p>
Information Provision	<p>+Website: reaches over 40,000 people per month. Reader survey in 2004 indicated that 80% of those who answered said it was hard to find this kind of information elsewhere.</p> <p>+The new and improved Extranet should further strengthen MOs ability to form networks and concentrate their actions.</p> <p>+Newsletter published monthly (2360 subscribers in April 2005).</p> <p>+List-servs and events calendar are used by MOs</p> <p>+Kumppani Magazine is published monthly; it's an illustrated global magazine focussing on development and multicultural issues.</p> <p>+Publications: brochures and books are regularly published and updated. The book 'Impoverished: the informal majority of human kind' is a way that KEPA has shared its conceptual analysis.</p> <p>+Library: 11,000 items at beginning of 2004 with around 2000 loans per year. It is a member in a cooperation network of development sector libraries.</p>	<p>*KEPA provides a range of sources of information that are relevant to both MOs and specific sections of the public and it is developing these services as new technologies become available.</p> <p>*The quality of the website is very high as shown by the KEPA surveys.</p> <p>*Reader surveys show that more than 70% keep part of the Newsletter on file.</p> <p>*Many different sections of Finnish society use KEPA's information; an influential sector is the media who frequently use KEPA as a primary source of data.</p> <p>* The quality of KEPA's written publications appears high.</p> <p>*Due to university library budget cuts in early 90's the KEPA library's role as a source of information is still important. The information retrieval service is of benefit to both KEPA staff and external people.</p> <p>*The immigrant-based MOs find some problems in using KEPA's information due to language constraints.</p>
Making connections and Networking	<p>+KEPA's membership has increased annually by 10%.</p> <p>+Co-ordinated two big, nation-wide networks: Global Education Network and the Market of Opportunities Network.</p> <p>+Actively shares research and learning with MOs and other sections of society. Network of practitioners and researchers was started in 2004.</p>	<p>*Networking is one of the major ways that KEPA works. Not just through 'formally' constituted networks but seeing its role as facilitating cooperation between actors in Finland (and between them and the South).</p> <p>*There is still potential to strengthen the networking; e.g. through cooperating more actively with MOs in training and events, as well as in networking with INGOs.</p>

Global Education	<p>+A lot of work was successfully conducted between 2002–4 as part of a EU funded project. Three main components: collection and distribution of information about FNGO's global education work (e.g. register of 160 NGOs, 240 publications acquired, and a Report on the state of GE in Finland was published); FNGO skills were strengthened (34 national training sessions) and networking improved (network present in over 20 events); and dialogue between Finnish and other European and Southern actors (e.g. through 18 international networking meetings).</p>	<p>*An external evaluation gave examples of the benefits to the organisations involved. * The external evaluation also commented positively on the good implementation of work-plans and administration of the budget. *The sustainability of the project's results are at risk as no clear plans for continuation have been made. However, Kepa is now working on finding new solutions on organising its Global Education work.</p>
ETVO	<p>+ 400 volunteers sent in the last ten years to 11 countries and 57 partner organisations. 17 Southern volunteers have come to Finland. + At least 30% of returned volunteers participate in Finnish NGOs, and almost all in some form of global education work.</p>	<p>* ETVO is one of KEPAs independent projects. KEPA runs it in partnership with 4 other Finnish organisations.</p>
Advocacy and Campaigning	<p>+ In recent years 5 themes have been prioritised: - 0.7% campaign - Public campaign on root causes of hunger - Advocacy on Finnish Trade Policy - Co-ordination of the Finnish Jubilee Campaign -Advocacy to promote currency transaction tax + KEPA has represented Finnish civil society in a range of international inter-governmental meetings. +It had a role in the creation of the Finnish Fair Trade organisation and Finnwatch.</p>	<p>* KEPAs advocacy work is aimed at those issues that have a Finnish dimension. * Target groups have primarily been key ministers and government officials but also parliamentarians and other interested groups. *Its advocacy is concerned with political policies as well as popular campaigning.</p>
Market of Opportunities and World Village.	<p>+ Market of Opportunities takes place in about 20 towns and KEPA has worked to strengthen the ability of NGOs to take part. Period 2002–4 saw growth in KEPAs support. + Organised training sessions and applied for EU funding support. + Produced a campaign specifically designed to work well at open- air events. Press- work assistance made a priority. + KEPA provides a platform for networking between different towns. +World Village event owes a lot of its success to KEPAs support. From 2005 it will be held annually.</p>	<p>* KEPA has put in more resources: one new staff member and more financial assistance. * Quality issues are monitored from annual feedback activities and larger surveys (2003). *Some 160 NGOs get a chance to publicise their activities at the World Village event and KEPA is working to enlarge the range of those taking part. The World Village event is rather costly. Clearer global education objectives (and respective implementation) would justify it better. *The Markets of Opportunities are extremely cost-efficient events for global education and MO networking.</p>

B) Has KEPA made any difference in Finland?

5.8 This is the impact question. All development organisations find it challenging to assess what effects, results, outcomes and longer-term impact their work is having. Because KEPA's objectives are not outcome oriented it is not possible for this evaluation to make a comprehensive assessment. Given this weakness the evaluators have worked with the KEPA teams to help them retrospectively identify what they think were the intended outcomes of the activities described above. This team-provided information (see Appendix A5), plus external evaluations where they have been done, and the Evaluators own research and observations, has enabled at least some answer to be given to this impact question.

5.9 *Table 3: The achievements and effect of KEPA's recent work in Finland*

KEPA's Activity	Achievements and effect
Training and Advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + A recent small evaluation study of five NGOs who take part in KEPA's training suggests that project planning has become more systematic, the concepts of project planning are better understood, as are the cross cutting themes like gender and participation. One of the big challenges is that MOs don't participate in a systematic way and therefore their staff may not be exposed to courses such as gender. Also budgeting and accounting skills are still a problem in the smaller organisations. +The advocacy training does appear to have some effect on increased interest by FNGOs to conduct advocacy and lobbying. These benefits related to work in both Finland and the South. +Training participation has enhanced networking and information sharing among MOs. + It has not increased the organisational capacity of NGO's but this area has not been a priority for KEPA. +The effect of the project planning workshops on the quality of Finnish Somali NGOs may not be as large as was expected, though it has led to these groups cooperating with each other. + It is difficult for KEPA to assess the effect of its project application advice work but one positive outcome of the MFA:KEPA Pilot in 2003 was the learning that FIDIDA (umbrella for disability organisations in development) took from the work and used to improve its own processes. + The Good Partnership prize led to some mainstream newspapers running articles. This gave the public some positive stories of development cooperation. There is also evidence that it led to debate about good practice among some FNGOs.
Lobbying for the interests of MOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Staff are able to give many examples of achievements. Given the lack of KEPA M&E processes it is not possible to say how many of these outcomes derive directly from KEPA's work but the Evaluators did hear many positive things from external stakeholders. Certainly KEPA has made a contribution to the following achievements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the share of self-financing by NGOs decreasing from 20% to 15% by 2006. - the lobby of government to increase the share of development assistance going to NGOs to 15%. -the fact that NGOs will not have to confine their overseas work to the 8 official partner countries. - the lobby of MFA regarding the suggestion of a Foundation to administer project grant applications made the concerns of the NGO sector known.

Information Provision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The website staff conduct reader surveys that show it is informing MOs and others (64% in the 2004 survey said the site had informed their world view). The team also trains MOs (70 information officers in last 5 years) and this has strengthened the networks. + Reader and MO Surveys show that the provision of information is one of the KEPA services they value most highly. Finnish media's use of KEPA provided stories, insights and development themes is high. + The Kumppani Magazine's target of 2000 paying subscribers has been surpassed (5000 currently) and this suggests some kind of positive influence. There is some reader feedback and this is good. The magazine is frequently quoted in the press and the editors are invited to speak at many forums. + There is a good take up of KEPA's books. Sales are reasonable; many reviews are published in newspapers and magazines and academic institutions (e.g. Inst of Development Studies) use some KEPA material as basic texts. + Library has contributed to the global education project and training but it is also an important source of information for FNGOs, and with the university library cuts for those studying development.
Making connections and Networking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + This is difficult to assess in terms of impact. The MO Surveys show that it is ranked highly as an important KEPA service. + Success can certainly be seen in how MOs have come together to jointly lobby (e.g. NGO self financing issue). + Networking has provided some MOs with 'models' of how they should be relating to their Southern partners.
Global Education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The EU funded project was aimed at strengthening the GE work of key actors, not directly implementing GE activities in Finland. The external evaluation indicates that been a positive impact at individual and organisational levels: these effects are in gaining information, making contacts and developing strategies for future actions. + The most visible benefits have been the web based data bank, better project communication and stronger group working.
ETVO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + For a relatively small amount of money 50 to 60 volunteers are sent overseas and three reciprocal volunteers work in Finland. An ETVO study shows that while only 19% of volunteers actively took part in a FNGO before volunteering, this rose to 30% after, and almost all carried out some global education work, as well as their personal influence on friends and family about development issues. However, it is not clear what contribution the South to North volunteers make in Finland. + It also provides a 'stepping stone' of experience into a development cooperation career.
Advocacy and Campaigning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + KEPA has influenced both the Finnish decision-making processes and public debate. Some examples are:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 0.7% Campaign: Due to KEPA's general election campaign work the Government committed itself to a timetable for reaching 0.7%. Sixty million euro of the 80 million was returned by Parliament in the autumn of 2004 and sub committees have taken a strong stand to keep the government on the promised track to 0.7%. KEPA drafted nearly all the questions in March 2005 used by parliamentarians. This was after KEPA has organised a cross-party event for MPs. The first ever vote of confidence on development issues in the Parliament happened in April 2005, and many observers said it would not have taken place without KEPA's lobbying. - Food Campaign: Evidence that the main message of the campaign is getting across as the issue of poor country protection and support for rural producers is talked about. For example, the Minister referred to it in her speech at Cancun WTO Meeting; the President in her speech in Helsinki Cathedral (Sept 2004). The issue now appears in Ministry strategy papers and Ministry organised seminars. In three Finnish towns councils have taken initiatives to promote the use of fair trade products after the Caffè latte campaign.

	<p>- Trade Policy Advocacy: the direct impacts cannot be seen as this point but government officials certainly see more concretely the links between trade and development in the poorest countries. In the Spring 2005 the MFA has initiated formulation of Finland's Trade Policy that contained trade as one of the two main objectives. A coordination meeting inside MFA was set up between trade policy, and development policy departments on EPAs, apparently after an enquiry by KEPA.</p>
<p>Market of Opportunities and World Village</p>	<p>+ KEPA's survey in 2003 found that local organisers think that the markets are valuable for raising funds and recruiting supporters. Most towns take part in the training and networking sessions and said they were useful for both this event and more general development education activities.</p> <p>+ All events attract media attention, and it involves people who otherwise may not be concerned with development issues.</p> <p>+ Contacts made used in local campaigns e.g. use of fair trade products by municipalities.</p> <p>+ Overall both these set of events are seen as highly motivating for activists.</p>

5.9 The relevance of these activities and their impact will be examined after the Report has looked at the findings in the South but the analysis already allows us to identify a number of areas where KEPA does seem to be most effective. In other words where currently it is 'adding value' within Finland.

Where KEPA is making the most difference in Finland:

- Training in basic skills for the medium and smaller sized organisations.
- As a watch-dog for members (lobbying).
- As a provider of information about development cooperation issues and activities.
- Facilitating networking and learning.
- Campaigning and advocacy around specific issues.
- Providing opportunities for FNGOs to raise their profile.

6. RESULTS: KEPA'S WORK IN THE SOUTH

Introduction

6.1 This section is divided into two parts. The first will look at KEPA's work in those countries where it does not have an office; in these places, with the exception of Tanzania, it currently does not have any staff located. The evaluation team did not visit any of these countries. The source of its data is therefore drawn from previous evaluations, interviewing or e-mailing partners or staff who know about the work, and from the KEPA team self-evaluation exercise described in the previous section (in this case the Management Team reviewed KEPA's work in the South since 1995). The second part examines the findings of the evaluations made by the INTRAC team visits to Zambia, Mozambique and Nicaragua.

Working In The South: KEPA Initiatives In Partnership 1995–2004

6.2 After the 1995 Evaluation KEPA entered a period of trying new partnership initiatives. The idea was to learn from new ways of working with partners in the South. This was a time when there was strong debates within the Finnish solidarity movement that stressed 'mutuality', 'bridge building', 'commitment', and being 'grass-roots'. The choice of where these pilots should be located was based on the proposals of the MOs. One of the initial weaknesses was that there was no coherence about themes, geographical priority or approaches. What was done had more to do with the wishes of individual people and individual MOs than a clear underpinning methodology.

6.3 KEPA started work in a number of countries:

Table 4: KEPA Initiatives in the South

Country	Type of initiative
Thailand (Mekong)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Trial of a new method: Liaison /information officer working with a local partner (PER/Terra). Purpose was to influence Finnish and multinational companies with policies that harmed local communities and the environment.* Liaison staff worked on lower salary than previous Finnish volunteers in order to demonstrate a relationship of equality.* Provided a service to MOs by giving information to them on development cooperation issues but also worked on PER information needs.* This partnership was 'frozen' at the request of MFA at the beginning of 2005 due to the interpretation of the agreement between KEPA and the NGO Unit.
Uganda	<ul style="list-style-type: none">* Three KEPA MOs requested a liaison officer to assist them in their projects. These were in different parts of Uganda. The purpose was to strengthen communication between them and produce information on participatory methods. The objectives were not achieved (1997–1999) and the pilot 'collapsed'.* This pilot was an attempt to service members based on their stated needs and with the intention of creating new know-how.* Management was weak and there was lack of clarity as to roles and responsibilities.

Tanzania	<p>* The new initiative here was a development policy liaison officer in Dar es Salaam to follow political, social development and economic issues and make contacts with local civil society actors (1997–99). In Morogora an office had two liaison officers who serviced FNGOs. An evaluation took place in 2000 that led to an emphasis in Morogora where most of the FNGOs were based.</p> <p>*Currently KEPA Tanzania provides support to Finnish NGOs; monitors the partnership agreements with TANGO and UNGO and follows discussions about the Local National Policies; provides capacity building to local NGOs like UNGO through training and advice; networks with the Embassy, NGO Policy Forum etc; and involved since 2003 in the Helsinki Process and other international initiatives.</p> <p>* This office is in a strange in-between status; it's not simply a liaison office but not of the same status as the three Field Offices. There is a need for clarity of role here.</p>
Guatemala	<p>* This was an experiment of institutional support to a local organisation without involving a Finnish employee. It was also to have strengthened KEPA's competence in Human Rights and Indigenous people.</p> <p>*It started in 1997 but by 2000 it was not working as KEPA's involvement did not seem to bring benefits to the partner and communication became difficult. It ended.</p> <p>* Objectives for this initiative had not been made clear. A Guatemala Working Group was set up in Finland but not many FNGOs were interested and it faded by 1998 leaving KEPA to run this on its own.</p>
Caribbean Area (Dominican Republic)	<p>* A liaison officer was appointed (1999–2003) to support the work of several Finnish trade unions; in the latter period this post also served as the project coordinator of the EU project Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland- SASK.</p> <p>*The liaison officer was to follow the political situation in Haiti and Cuba but without a local partner.</p> <p>* This initiative ended because SASK did not need the support any more; the ambiguity of the dual role was never clarified; and it proved very difficult to follow the situation in Haiti and Cuba with no local partner.</p>
Brazil	<p>* This was the placement of a liaison officer in the Amazon region (1996–2004) to work on campaigns about the environment and human rights with FNGOs. This eventually led to support to the Brazilian rubber-tappers organisation (CNS). The liaison officer was withdrawn and a new agreement started.</p> <p>*This was ended partly because it over- stretched KEPA's capacity and partly because it needed KEPA to have environmental expertise. It did not have this knowledge. There were also financial difficulties in the relationship, and language problems as few Finns speak Portuguese and the partner had few English speakers.</p> <p>* The FNGOs lost interest in the project.</p>
Cambodia	<p>* This was a Finnish Sign Language Adviser project (1996–97). The worker was attached to FNGOs interested in establishing in the region. Interestingly, KEPA does not have any written record for why the initiative ended but they think it likely that it did not contain sufficient development content and may have led to FNGOs competing for KEPA resources.</p>
India	<p>* Interest to have a liaison service in India began in 1996 but this was changed to cooperating with a local Indian organisation Lokayan in publication activities and exchanges. A working group was set up. An agreement was signed in 1998 around a dialogue on equal cooperation and democratisation in North-South relationships.</p> <p>* This was a very 'radical' project. The financial support from KEPA has now ended but some of the publications are still being used (and one to be published). Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam Finland was founded and the conceptual development of democracy is continued with them. The experience of the activist exchange still has influence and a consequence of the initiative can be seen in the Helsinki Process</p> <p>* Interest on the Working group has waned leaving only some long-term activists.</p>

Indonesia	<p>* KEPA's partner was INSIST, an Indonesian NGO which supports various types of strengthening civil society. INSIST is a network of 13 member organisations. KEPA placed a liaison/information officer with the partner.</p> <p>The whole concept of INSIST as an umbrella is based on its relationship with KEPA. KEPA has provided financial support for training of young activists; it supports the publication of a journal; and 'fellowships' which initially were to help activists do local research. But this project failed and instead support is given to small income generation projects.</p> <p>* From the partners point of view this has been a very successful relationship as they feel that KEPA is very participative in the way they work, while the financial and the liaison officer support have been valuable. Communication with Helsinki has been difficult in the last two years since the organisational changes and the partner finds it hard to know who is responsible for what in KEPA.</p> <p>* One consequence of the initiative is that Finnish support for Indonesian civil society has made Finland better known in the Indonesian media</p> <p>* The project was 'frozen' as a consequence of the 'difficulties' with MFA.</p>
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Have the Initiatives done what they said they would do?

6.4 Underpinning the new initiatives were four objectives related to N-S relations:

- Find new ways of working in equal partnership
- To create dialogue and thus greater equality in the relationship
- Incorporate MOs into KEPA's work
- Provide a service to MOs in the field.

6.5 These initiatives did not lead to new methods or modes of cooperation because this aspect was not explicitly included in the terms of reference when the individual projects were evaluated or reported on, and therefore no explicit learning was drawn out. Creating equality of dialogue was found to be a challenge not least because the financial imbalance between N-S remains i.e. KEPA and its MOs have the money. Opening the concept of 'equality' to debate could have resulted in more explicit addressing this objective. As it worked out some projects did have very fruitful relationships but at the other extreme it led to insufficient financial reporting and accountability. Most of the initiatives came from MOs so in this sense the third objective had some success; but after a while members lost interest. India was an exception to this though few of the members of the Working Group were still on it at the end. Technical assistance in the form of a liaison officer seems to be the support which most MOs valued. Not many used KEPA's policy work (especially in Guatemala and Brazil). But some of the policy material produced by KEPA staff reached users such as the Foreign Ministry officers in Finland and the embassies.

What difference have the 'Initiatives in the South' made?

6.6 In the 90's the debate about how to work in the South was an important one and the MOs expected KEPA to be a leader in these discussions. These initiatives were intended to be a main source of ideas and to provide FNGOs with a 'credibility'. One positive consequence was the Finnish Jubilee Campaign as KEPA had partners with experience of debt issues. For the partners themselves a positive effect has been the networking and contacts they have made with the wider international actors. There have been a number of major events (e.g. the IGGRI conference in Helsinki; TRIPS meeting in Nicaragua). Compared to the previous volunteer programme the direct benefit to partners was probably greater in terms of financial help and capacity building.

- 6.7 One important effect has been the recognition that NGOs (both FNGOs and Southern) have a role to play in Finnish development co-operation. This can be seen in the formulations of the present development policy of the Finnish government; it states more clearly than before the role of the civil society in development efforts.
- 6.8 There is also some indication that these initiatives have helped to strengthen the policy work of local actors. Networks and umbrella organisations have enabled more local actors to put issues on the political agenda (e.g. UNGO in Tanzania).
- 6.9 In posing the question- were these the right things to do? KEPA in retrospect, says that some errors were made: the initiatives were steered by the partnership working group but the composition of this group was not based on any clear criteria or ideas of representation of stakeholders' views. Rather membership was a result of 'interest' in development issues. It suffered from discontinuity, a lack of clear purpose and goals, and long-term commitment. Thus the countries and partners chosen were not based on any explicit criteria that would ensure a rational selection of initiatives. The commitment of participating FNGOs was never really established nor were proper risk assessments made. The Management Team refer to this time as the '**trial and error**' phase. The process was not planned with any overall focus or strategy and therefore the learning was not systematically collected, used or disseminated.
- 6.10 KEPA was very fortunate during this time to keep the volume of funding that it had received when it ran the volunteer programme. But this was a two-edged sword because the money came so easily it did not put any pressure on the management to justify the new areas of work.
- 6.11 A final consequence of this period that has relevance to what follows is the continuation of KEPA's offices in Zambia, Mozambique and Nicaragua. By staying in the countries where the volunteer programme had operated, KEPA chose to develop the expertise and contacts already existing. One of the lessons from this period was that its work does stand **a greater chance of survival and making an impact**, when it has a field office presence, than compared to initiatives with single partners in countries with no office.

Evaluation Of KEPA's Work In Zambia, Mozambique And Nicaragua.

- 6.12 Members of the INTRAC team visited each of the three KEPA country-programmes team during May or June (2005). The visits lasted between 10 and 14 days and involved talking to staff, and partners, interviewing key stakeholders, visiting project work, reviewing documentation and facilitating workshops to help the teams consider their work. To ensure consistency of data collection and approach, a guide to the questions and issues was prepared that outlined the methodology to be used (see **Appendix B4** or Inception Report Appendix A2). All preliminary results were shared with the country team before the evaluators left the country, and the draft reports were shared with the Country Co-ordinators. At the Global Management Team Meeting (June) in Helsinki a summary of the major findings was presented and discussed by the Co-ordinators and the Management Team.

- 6.13 Separate Country Evaluation Reports have been produced for each and can be found in Appendices A:
- Appendix A7: Zambia Country Evaluation Report
 - Appendix A8: Mozambique Country Evaluation Report
 - Appendix A9: Nicaragua Country Evaluation Report
- 6.14 In order to meet MFA's request that this Evaluation Report be succinct and action-oriented the evaluators will now provide a synthesis of the findings from these three field reviews.

Has KEPA done what it said it would do?

- 6.15 As referred to earlier one of the problems in evaluating KEPA's programmes is that little of the work has specific and measurable objectives, and this is also true for the country office work. The One Global Programme provides the 'logic' of what KEPA does. At the Country level the two OGP Objectives (Policy Work and Quality Services) provide the framework for what the KEPA Country Programmes do:

Policy: includes support to local organisations to engage in policy issues and actions that claim rights. It also includes the provision of information to Helsinki on issues related to policy and campaign work being carried out in the North.

Quality Services: is interpreted as supporting the capacity of local organisations to strengthen links to FNGOs and to provide services to MOs. This includes helping to make initial contacts and ongoing communication; management support such as project monitoring and providing logistical assistance to visiting FNGOs.

- 6.16 However, there are some exceptions in all the offices. Some of this can be attributed to the gradual implementation and harmonisation of what was done prior to the OGP. Another explanation is that the OGP is so broad that it allows offices to continue with previous work and to respond in different ways to local needs. There is some evidence that the work with local partners falls into both these categories. While there are also examples of work that appears to be outside the OGP; in Mozambique there is a direct relationship with the disability network which in turn advances the rights of disabled people. In Nicaragua KEPA works with marginalised ethnic groups who are disadvantaged and excluded from political and economic development processes. Zambia is the only country of the three where the volunteer sending programme operates. It is possible to argue that all these 'exceptions' can fit into the OGP, but it reveals a strategic weakness in that the OGP is not providing very clear guidance as to what is an appropriate KEPA intervention.
- 6.17 The way strategy is made is different in all three offices. Nicaragua has its own Strategic Plan 2002–2005, and which is the main point of reference for their work. Zambia does not, and Mozambique has been working on setting local objectives for the programme to improve accountability. The evaluation team in Zambia concluded that the OGP does not provide adequate shape to the country programme.
- 6.18 The policy-advocacy work is present in all three countries and the partners are often network organisations who aim to represent their member's views in policy dialogue. There are many activities which focus on the rights of marginalised groups such as ethnic minorities, subsistence farmers, disabled people etc and some of these are linked to the

policy and campaigning work in the Finland. The role that these partners play in creating a legitimacy for KEPA is important. There is a tendency for the link between the South and the North to be managed by a KEPA staff member. Although there are examples of a Southern partner being invited to international forums to directly engage, this is not the norm. A weak link here is the lack of feedback from KEPA HQ on what progress has been made with these campaigns. This could be an oversight in communication but is perhaps indicative of a lack of clarity on KEPA's behalf on the different roles they play as part of civil society in Finland and as a facilitator in the South.

- 6.19 Capacity building is one of the major strategies that KEPA uses in the South. By its nature it is a broad concept and is interpreted very differently in each office. There is limited conceptual clarity in what is included and its relationship to the development of the partners. However, the results showed that in all countries KEPA is helping local partners to develop and some partners attribute their very existence to KEPA support. In Zambia the focus has been on the provision of general training for partners but this is now changing to giving more emphasis to meeting individual organisational needs. Likewise Mozambique had an emphasis on training and this is evolving into more general support to the partners' overall strategies. In Nicaragua through a system of 'accompaniment' they mentor and support organisations as a way of developing capacity-by-doing. A major weakness, therefore, is that KEPA does not have an organisation-wide approach to assessing the capacity needs of partners and as such interventions risk being ad-hoc and not sustainable.
- 6.20 KEPA provides liaison services to facilitate development cooperation between the FNGOs and local NGOs. KEPA currently supports the work of Finnish MOs across the three countries, in a wide range of sectors from disability, women's development, children's rights, HIV/AIDS and the environment. Not all of these projects are with local NGOs as some are with government departments of social welfare.

Efficiency and effectiveness

- 6.21 From the country studies alone it is impossible to assess whether KEPA is operating effectively and efficiently because the OGP necessitates taking a 'whole' view of the different contributions. However, it is possible to make some observations from the field perspective. In Zambia there have been efforts to improve the effectiveness of the training activities by changing the ways the course are delivered. In Mozambique some of the courses are outsourced to local trainers as a way of reducing costs. Their effectiveness remains open to question and KEPA need to develop monitoring systems so that they can make assessments.
- 6.22 The budgets of most offices are below • 500 000. The budgets are clearly linked to the activities, and there was no obvious area of excess in any of the three offices. The nature of the work inevitably means that a large proportion of the budget goes to staff costs: in 2005 between 50 and 60%. The grants made to partners represents less than 20% of the budget and has been decreasing in recent years. Some capacity building costs have increased.
- 6.23 Maintaining staff appears to be a challenge. Although this is not specifically referred to in Nicaragua, it is seen as a major constraint on KEPA Zambia's effectiveness; in 2004 half the staff left for jobs with other organisations. Many stakeholders referred this to and

they complained about the time spent on establishing new relationships. KEPA staff attributes the turnover to the level of salaries. The high turnover was striking among the better-qualified staff; in contrast some of the support staff had been with KEPA for many years. In Mozambique there have also been difficulties in recruiting the right staff especially in development policy. The trend with expatriate staff is for two-year contracts and in most cases this is the length of their stay in KEPA. Many of the ex-staff remain working in the country and it raises the question of why KEPA has not taken steps to retain these people.

- 6.24 In-country there appears to be increasing concerns about the liaison service as provided to the FNGOs. There is a small proportion of the KEPA membership that benefit from this work. There are also different levels of services being provided. In Zambia the work includes logistical support whereas in Mozambique the focus is on communication and monitoring. Overall the efficiency of this work is hard to compare across the countries because of the different situations. Interviews in Finland with MOs indicated that some were unhappy with the service being provided by KEPA. Some felt there was no proper mechanism for feeding back to KEPA their experience of the service being given. In general the Country Evaluators believe that as KEPA has staff on the ground it potentially is an efficient way of working as it reduces the need of Finnish based MOs to visit as frequently. Some of the logistical support could be outsourced.

Is KEPA Making Any Difference?

- 6.25 Because KEPA does not have a systematic way of monitoring and evaluating its work it has not been possible for this evaluation to give a comprehensive assessment of the impact of KEPA's field work. Rather the three reports had to rely on offering examples of outcomes and benefits. In Nicaragua the KEPA team has tried to develop country focused process and change-indicators. The KEPA offices receive reports from partners which are compiled into a joint report. Overall in Nicaragua it does appear that the work is making an important contribution to the ability of local organisations to improve the rights and well being of the Caribbean coastal people (an interview by the evaluation team in Finland with the former MFA Councillor in Nicaragua confirmed that KEPA has an important role and one that an individual Finnish NGO could not have achieved). Interviews by the evaluation team in Mozambique and Zambia with partners generally gave a positive picture of the relationship, and most stressed the importance of the support given over and above any funding received.
- 6.26 As explained earlier the answer to the question: are the three country offices making any difference, can only be answered in terms of its contribution to the OGP. It has taken some time for the field to make changes given this overall programme. Most say it is too early to be able to assess the effects (a point of view given by many teams in Finland about their work to achieve the OGP). By managing the country programme work around the two functions of policy and quality services there is a risk that they are conceptualised and implemented separately. In all the offices the teams had developed mechanisms for sharing information about what they were doing as a way of avoiding sticking narrowly to their functions. However, there is less evidence of the active seeking of synergy and cross-fertilisation between policy and quality work, and given the absence of a monitoring culture the room for dialogue on impact is limited. It thus raises the question of whether

what KEPA does really adds value to strengthening civil society. One consequence of the OGP is that partners may be seen as separate entities that make individual organisational contributions to the programme, but there too little strategic thinking by the KEPA teams as to the synergy between partners and civil society strengthening. There have been some attempts to encourage the Zambian and Mozambique network organisations to share experience of the poverty monitoring and policy- work, and this is valued by the partners, but it not always prioritised.

- 6.27 The provision of services to member organisations has not changed much as a result of the OGP. There has been an increase in FNGOs partnering local NGOs and a larger number of projects. The range of activities and projects in these organisations do fit within the broad objective of working to eliminate impoverishment (it is difficult to think of things that do not), but are less clearly linked to the policy work. It does mean that the FNGOs and KEPA may be following different strategies and therefore having different impacts.

Some Issues

- 6.28 Implicit in the documentation and frameworks that support the OGP is the idea of **gender equity**. This is an area where KEPA was traditionally thought of as strong. The global trend of the feminisation of poverty and the impact of gender on HIV/AIDS means that gender remains a critical issue. Some partners such as the Mozambican Forum de Mulher and the Zambian work with DWDAS do have explicit gender focus. However, there is very limited evidence of a gender-analysis taking place in the work carried out with partners and no aggregated data on gender from the partners. There has been some policy analysis in Mozambique but this was not evident in Zambia. The absence of an overall assessment process for capacity building of partners means that this is an area that can easily be overlooked by staff who respond to partners more immediate needs. There has been no gender awareness course for partners in recent years. The absence of an overarching gender policy from HQ which field staff could use, means that KEPA, if not gender-blind. Is certainly gender short sighted.
- 6.29 KEPA tend to work in a very isolated way in Mozambique and Zambia with limited engagement with other International NGO forums or thematic groups. This may indicate that such networks are not very strong but it also reveals an absence of strategic thinking or benchmarking against other organisations. This is different in Nicaragua where the KEPA programme has established links with other INGOs engaged with the same target groups and partners. The local partners are more thoroughly linked into local networks and KEPA supports their engagement.
- 6.30 The guidelines for the selection of partners were developed in the late 1990s and do not appear to have been updated since the OGP. The main emphasis of the guideline is on different intensities of relationship and agreements. They take into account the need to develop trust over a period of time before signing a long-term agreement of 3–5 years. On the whole partners do have 3 years in principle but these are reviewed on an annual basis. KEPA's monitoring does not look at the impact of funding and the differences KEPA money makes to an organisation. Thus it is hard to weigh up whether funding is a significant factor in capacity building.

Lessons From The Country Evaluations

- 6.31 The OGP minimally provides a framework for the country offices but more needs to be done if the country work is to be both an important contributor to achieving the OGP and responding to local needs and opportunities. The country offices require their own Country Strategic Objectives and indicators that are founded on the OGP but draw on the added-value that the local partners can bring. Later in the Report suggestions will be made as to how this could be achieved.
- 6.32 The field evaluations find KEPA engaged in useful work with local partners and providing services to a small number of MOs who work in these three countries. However, it has been hard to detect ‘impact’ (though there is some evidence for this in Nicaragua). There is new work in KEPA Helsinki to develop a M&E system and it’s vital that the offices actively engage in this process, and with some urgency more systematically evaluate just where they are making a difference. Specifically, the M&E needs to enable staff to be able to track performance and change and less on activities and outputs.
- 6.33 KEPA uses many development concepts but how it uses them needs clarification. In particular:
- Civil society strengthening: needs a clearer definition of the role of KEPA and where it can add value.
 - Partnership: the term is used very loosely. It needs a differentiation into the kinds of relationship KEPA will have and on what basis. It would be useful to benchmark this against other INGOs.
 - Capacity building: KEPA must be more systematic in its approach and to have a model of how it works to strengthen capacity. Organisational assessment tools could be made explicit to provide a better basis for support and greater transparency.
- 6.34 Gender analysis should to be included in all aspects of KEPA’s work.
- 6.35 Communication across the OGP must be strengthened, especially effective channels between the Finnish advocacy and campaign work, and the Southern country policy work.
- 6.36 The services to MOs should be clarified and harmonised across the three offices. There is a need for a local system of feedback so that MOs can help KEPA be more customer-focussed and effective. Some of these services could be outsourced.

Conclusion To KEPA’s Work In The South

- 6.37 If the Evaluators had to summarise in just a few words what conclusions can be drawn from this assessment of the work KEPA has done during the ‘initiative’ phase in the South, and through supporting three field offices, it would be:

KEPA’s work in the South

- Gives a legitimacy and knowledge to its work in the North especially in advocacy and campaigning.
- Provides learning about development issues and methodologies for its MOs and other Finnish development actors.
- Provides valuable support to FNGOs working in the South.
- Supports local partners to strengthen civil society.

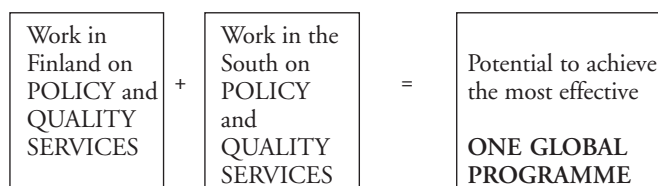
6.38 But it is very important to remember that KEPA is trying to operationalise ALL the things it does under the One Global Programme and as the four things above show the impact of what KEPA does in the South is, and should be, supporting the work it does in the North. The converse should also be true; the work it does and the learning it acquires in Finland, needs to be informing the work in the South. The challenge that will be addressed later is how to ensure that this synergy can be made really effective.

7. RESULTS: IS KEPA DOING THE RIGHT THINGS?

- 7.1 This basic evaluation question can be addressed at two levels: the strategic and the operational. Some operational issues have been pinpointed in earlier sections, and some important ones will also be discussed in later parts of the Report. This section focuses on the **strategic answer** to the question.
- 7.2 Three elements need to be considered: the effectiveness of what KEPA is doing; its relevance and its coherence as an overall programme. Effectiveness in terms of what KEPA does in Finland and the South was examined earlier and some conclusions were drawn as to what effect KEPA's work is having. Relevance and coherence need to be looked at from the viewpoint of KEPA's Mission and the assessments of the key stakeholders.

KEPA's Effectiveness

- 7.3 Since 2004 KEPA has adopted the One Global Programme and though the two geographical locations of KEPA's work (Finland and the South) should no longer be of great importance in determining effectiveness, the Evaluation methodology did examine these two separately: Section 5 reported on the work done in Finland, while section 6 looked at the South. But the OGP is an attempt to build the synergy of all the different KEPA activities irrespective of location. So the evaluation needs to try and bring the two together. In practice the two locations are important because:



- 7.4 The earlier conclusions show where KEPA is being most effective:

KEPA In Finland

- Training in basic skill for the medium and smaller sized organisations.
- As a watch-dog (lobbying) for its members.
- As a provider of information about development cooperation issues and activities.
- Facilitating networking and learning.
- Campaigning and advocacy around specific issues.
- Providing opportunities for FNGOs to raise their profile.

KEPA In The South

- Giving legitimacy and knowledge for its work in the North.
- Providing learning about development cooperation for MOs and others
- Providing support to FNGOs working in the South.
- Supporting local partners to strengthen civil society.

- 7.5 Of course KEPA does far more than the things identified in the two boxes, and many (probably most) are of value and make a contribution to ending impoverishment. But the evaluation has tried to identify those things where it appears that KEPA is adding significant value to the development sector. It is these which are of strategic importance because in striving to be even more effective KEPA needs to build on the things where it has the potential to make the most difference.
- 7.6 The converse also is true. KEPA should be doing less of the things where it does not have any organisational advantage, and the evaluation results indicate that its impact is not found in ad hoc initiatives that are not related closely to an overall strategy and plan.

The Coherence Of What KEPA Does

- 7.7 One of the things that the evaluators found impressive about KEPA is the work it has done over recent years to take a very complex process- the ‘development cooperation’ process (and how Finnish organisations and people can contribute to the process) and to find a structure that operationalises these complex and inter-related change interventions. It has called its solution – the One Global Programme. The OGP is not just rhetoric; a way of packaging the things that the organisation does but in a form that appears to have unifying rationale. The OGP genuinely provides the basis for most of what KEPA does; for example, as will be examined in the next sections, the staff/team structure has been created around the needs of the OGP. There are some things that KEPA does that do not sit comfortably within the current OGP but overall **KEPA’s work is coherent**.

The Relevance of Its Work

- 7.8 This needs to be assessed from at least two main perspectives: KEPA’s Mission (its mandate to do certain things), and the views of the stakeholders.
- 7.9 As described earlier (para 4.1) KEPA is a ‘service centre’ and its mission states: ‘KEPA’s basic task is to encourage, support and organise the Finnish civil society to participate in actions that promote global responsibility’ (Strategic Plan 2000–2005). For most ‘outsiders’ to KEPA this mission leads to an expectation that KEPA only works in Finland. Like St. John the Baptist it is preparing the way to enable politicians, MOs, institutions and the general public to have attitudes, policies and actions that are development friendly in relation to the peoples of the South.
- 7.10 But the current Strategic Plan enlarges on this mission statement:
- ‘The main instrument for the fulfilment of this goal is the Partnership Programme which KEPA:
- 1) Increases the awareness of global issues in Finnish civil society and improves its ability to act by organising information, training, campaigns and service activities for and in cooperation with Finnish non-government organisations; and
 - 2) Strengthens the civil societies in the developing countries through their own field activities as well as through building cooperation networks between Finnish and Southern non-governmental organisations.’ (p3).

- 7.11 It is from this time (2000) that the potential for confusing and conflicting interpretations of the description of KEPA as a 'service centre' begins. The first group of activities above are clearly in line with most peoples' understanding of what a service centre does. But the second could appear to be shifting KEPA into the role of a development agency in its own right. Is this **mission creep** on a grand scale? Of course it is quite legitimate for KEPA stakeholders (and in particular the Board and Annual Meeting) to make changes to KEPA's purpose, but for an organisation to be effective it needs this type of decision to be transparent, well thought through and clearly understood by all those who support the organisation, especially by the stakeholder that constitutes the membership and the stakeholder that provides most of the funding (i.e. MFA).

The Views Of The Stakeholders

- 7.12 Extensive data gathering was done by the Evaluators among most of the main stakeholder groups: this involved reviewing KEPA's own MO surveys, sending a new survey by the Evaluation Team to members, focus group meetings, one-to-one interviews with a sample of MOs; interviews with some Board members and a questionnaire; interviews with staff and a confidential staff questionnaire; and interviews with a range of ex-KEPA staff and Finnish activists. In addition the work in the three Country offices collected information from non-KEPA individuals and organisations, and in Finland the evaluation team had many interviews and meetings with MFA staff from different parts of the Ministry.

Member Organisations

- 7.13 A very consistent picture emerges from MO surveys as to what the 263 Member Organisations want from KEPA (for a fuller analysis see 'Member Organisations Assessment of KEPA' **Appendix A10**). They want:
- Influencing decision-makers on development policy issues
 - Acting as their 'trade union/watch-dog'
 - Providing publicity activities
 - Seminars and training
 - Support to multicultural education and awareness raising in Finland
 - Networking and cooperation in Finland
 - Events (e.g. World Village, Market of Opportunities)
 - Advice on project applications
 - Library and information services
 - Support for FNGOs working in the South
 - Support to the Southern NGOs
 - ETVO Volunteer Programme.
- 7.14 All of these KEPA is providing. So it is important to say at the outset that the membership is validating the relevance of most of KEPA's core services. The above list is in a rank order of importance and it's interesting to note that all the top ones relate to work in Finland but the analysis above is simplistic because it does not tell us whether all the MOs place equal importance to these or whether there are differences depending on the type of organisation.

- 7.14 Small MOs rate the importance of practical services (project advice, training, mail lists, meeting facilities etc) higher than the bigger ones. This is as would be expected as the larger agencies have their own professional staff and resources.

Those outside the Helsinki region prioritise the advisory and training services more highly, and it is this group that most criticise KEPA for being ‘Helsinki-biased’. The Evaluation’s own survey of MOs asked specifically about the use of the country offices. Only 15% of those replying had benefited from the offices in the last two years, and the main use had been:

- Coordination and assistance in contacts (finding new contacts and partners, communication with present ones)
- Support for planning and monitoring projects
- Information services (country information and on specific issues such as HIV/Aids, disability).
- Practical assistance during visits
- Representation in meetings
- Support for financial management

- 7.16 How satisfied were the MO’s with what KEPA is providing? Table 5 looks at this:

Table 5. Satisfaction of MOs with KEPA’s Support

Service provided	Rated* (Scale 1–4)
Events (World Village, Market of Opportunities)	3.40
Information Services	3.24
Training	3.10
Advisory Services on NGO development cooperation projects	3.10
Use of KEPA information channels	3.00
Network on global education	2.99
Meeting facilities	2.98
Joint Campaigns on development policy issues	2.94
Other advisory services e.g. publicity projects	2.94
Studies and other publications	2.91
Library and information services	2.90
Discussion forums and seminars	2.86
Support to the networking and cooperation in Finland	2.85
Trade Union activities in Finland	2.83
Contact services	2.78

(*KEPA’s Member Survey 2004: N=139 MOs replied. Rating used 4 = Very satisfied, 3 = Satisfied, 2 = Not so satisfied (moderate), 1 = Unsatisfied)

- 7.17 In general satisfaction levels were high. The events particularly were considered well run and meeting their needs. It was among the smaller MOs that some felt KEPA was not protecting their interests sufficiently; they feared that the present trends in MFA’s funding is leading to the status of the large professional NGOs improving at the cost of the small agencies. The practical advisory services and training support is rated as good but there is room for improvement.

- 7.18 The Evaluation's survey specifically asked those who had contact with the overseas offices their ideas for changes to the support they had experienced. They identified:
- More active service attitude
 - More active networking with FNGOs, partners. INGOs, UN agencies etc
 - Strengthening the practical support (logistics, financial arrangements)
 - Monitoring and quality assurance of projects
 - More information on the countries
 - Training and project advice for local NGOs
- 7.19 Overall the picture that emerges is that most members are reasonably happy with what they get from KEPA. Most see KEPA as providing this support in Finland; it is only a minority that use the help being given in the South.

Ministry for Foreign Affairs

- 7.20 Any individual, group or entity that provides 95% of the funding for the operation of another organisation is **by definition a very important stakeholder**. Providing almost five million euros a year (on behalf of the Finnish public) gives MFA a legitimacy of interest in what KEPA does and why it does what it does. The relationship between the Ministry and KEPA will be examined in Section 9 but what is relevant here is the general expectation that MFA has of what KEPA should be doing. This is not easy to answer and the reasons for this will be looked at later but in general terms the NGO Unit sees KEPA as providing the following services:
- Training and advice for its members
 - Providing services in the Southern Offices for FNGOs
 - Global education done in cooperation with other stakeholders (e.g. Information Unit)
 - Advocacy
 - Events
 - Information
- 7.21 The direct funding of partners in the South has been an issue of contention and also the 'trades-union' role if it appears to lead KEPA to be 'unreasonably resistant to changes proposed by the Ministry'. A concern of the NGO Unit has been the level of project funding applications and the financial reporting of FNGOs. They believe that as a service centre it should be an important priority for KEPA to ensure that standards are at an acceptable level among their membership. In other words the 'advice' function should be a major element in KEPA's work. Other departments and staff in the Ministry also have issues that they want KEPA to take forward. An example of this is gender. The Ministry have done a lot of very good work in this area and expect KEPA to be a channel informing the membership of the issues and training them in strategies to take forward gender-sensitive policies.

Board and Staff

- 7.22 Board Members and KEPA staff obviously have an important influence on determining what KEPA does. Both of these groups will be discussed in the next section, but what is important here is that they have the power to be both a 'conduit' of the views of other stakeholders (primarily MOs and MFA) ensuring that KEPA's goals and strategies are being informed by these views, but also an instigator of new work and directions in their own right. Many of the new initiatives in the South during the 1990s were created and

led by working groups containing staff and Board members (and other MO members); similarly what KEPA campaigns and advocates about is partly determined by priorities expressed by MOs but as the number of issues will always be greater than KEPA's ability to resource, it is KEPA staff who judge what is feasible and most likely to succeed, that is often the deciding factor. So in terms of assessing 'relevance', most staff and Board Members do believe the overall direction and content of the OGP is right.

8. KEPA THE ORGANISATION

- 8.1 The Terms of Reference identified six specific issues to be addressed by this evaluation (see TOR Appendix A1). Three of these relate to KEPA as an organisation, namely: its organisational capacity and performance; its management and financial systems; and its role and governance. A variety of methods were used to make these organisational assessments: internal documents relating to policies and procedures were read, meetings held with all the staff teams, interviews with Board Members and the use of a questionnaire, confidential questionnaires to staff, and a team self assessment of their work. At the same time as the INTRAC evaluation an external audit was conducted to look at KEPA's financial management, and a report was submitted by the auditors (July 2005).
- 8.2 This section will examine four aspects:
- Governance
 - Management
 - Human Resources
 - Organisational Sustainability

Governance Of KEPA

- 8.3 Good governance is about providing KEPA with overall accountability, direction and policy, to fulfil its mission, in a way that takes account the views and needs of stakeholders. It is not an easy task to hold the interests of 263 very diverse member organisations, or to provide direction for such a large range of activities. The evaluation concludes that the current Board and Chair are doing this well but there are some things that could be done differently that would help to make the governance processes even more effective.
- 8.4 Board Members themselves believe that they have very positive and open discussions of issues, and that this generally leads to consensus when making decisions (see Appendix A11). The main weakness they believe is spending too little time on policy issues and too much on issues, which are really management concerns. Some Board Members also felt there was a need to ensure that the right people were on the Board; that is those with skills to bring, commitment and an ability to try and represent the views of a wide range of MOs, not just their own interest group. Staff have an important facilitating role here as providers of information. Currently it is felt that sometimes the papers that go to the Board are too long and not decision-oriented. An important function of the Board is to represent (and defend) the interests of KEPA to MFA. The Board Members assess that they do this well though they accept there has been problems in the recent past and that this suggests they do need to keep working on the relationship to ensure mutual understanding.
- 8.5 The Board recognises that there are weaknesses in how the voices of the smaller MOs are taken into account, and how those based outside Helsinki can more fully participate. The immigrant MOs now represent a sizeable part of the membership but events such as the Annual Meetings can exclude their full participation if the papers and proceedings are confined to Finnish.

- 8.6 KEPA has a tradition of using working groups. Currently there is a Strategic Planning Group that is looking at options for 2006 and beyond. It is a mixture of Board and staff members, and this participatory approach appears to work quite well given the organisational culture of KEPA. In the past many new things have been instigated by working groups (e.g. the initiatives in the South between 1997 and 2002); one weakness, however, is that a working group should not take over the functions of the Board or management; it is acceptable to delegate responsibilities to these groups so long as the Board is holding on to the accountability and maintaining a 'watching-brief'. This has not always happened and there is a history of groups with unclear mandates and a membership that declines leaving a few keen activists taking decisions that should really be made by senior management or the Board.
- 8.7 An important aspect of governance is maintaining the clarity of KEPA's **mission** (purpose). The evaluation identifies two problems: the organisation's description as a 'service centre', and the Mission statement itself. Both are inadequate as descriptions of what KEPA is really about. A small amount of this confusion may lie in how the Finnish words translate into English, but from the comments of many people it is obvious that these problems in definition are about more than mere semantics.
- 8.8 The description of KEPA's purpose is '...to encourage, support and organise the Finnish civil society to participate in actions that promote global responsibility.' This leads those outside KEPA to think that the organisation has a very narrow area of work. For example you might assume that it only worked in Finland, and that its main activities were giving logistical support to Finnish NGOs, providing information, doing global education and some advocacy and campaigning. The words do not immediately suggest that KEPA's role involves supporting Southern partners; or providing models of good development practice. Assuming that the Board and other stakeholders do believe that KEPA's purpose encompasses this wider range of activities, then KEPA needs to have an updated Mission Statement that clearly captures its mandate.
- 8.9 The use of the title **service centre** is also a problem. The evaluators have probably debated with others what this means more than any other topic. Of course all NGOs, by definition, provide a 'service' to their client (beneficiary) groups. But KEPA currently defines the totality of what it does as 'service'. The problem is that it can lead to a narrower definition of what it should do; even narrower than the mission statement suggests. In other words some may think that KEPA exists solely to provide practical help to its MOs and enable them to be more efficient and effective.
- 8.10 KEPA is **not a development agency** per se but it does have a legitimate role in working in the South and entering into local partnerships; it has legitimate role in advocacy and campaigning in both the North and South, and a legitimacy in lobbying on behalf of its members' interests. The current title is both limiting in what KEPA should be doing, and suggests that KEPA is 'passive' in the development process i.e. it waits for members and MFA to ask them for things. So a better description is needed that conveys both the direct services it provides to members and the fact that it proactively takes part in development learning and processes. The Evaluation Team have tried and failed to find an alternative title ('Development Support Centre' was one idea) but they are confident that others, with more creativity, can find a solution!

Management Of KEPA

- 8.11 The organisation has grown greatly since 1995; today it has a budget of 4.8 million euro; over 90 staff and five office locations. But more importantly it has shifted from the KEPA of the 1980s with its roots in volunteerism, to a reliance on professional staff with plans, policies and procedures. This change demands a high level of management. Along with the One Global Programme and all the complexity that brings, is the introduction of the 'team structure', and a matrix way of working. For many of those on the outside (and this includes Board Members and MOs – see the survey and questionnaire results Appendix A10 and A11) this structure is confusing. Staff are organised into eleven teams: the Advocacy Team, Training and Advice team, Networking Team, the Management Team etc. There are also groupings of staff into forums that coordinate the policy and quality services, while the Country Office Coordinators and Management Team form the Global Management Group. There is a good rationale for doing it this way as the achievement of the OGP requires that different staff work on different aspects of the programme, and that if it is to work well all staff need to contribute to the achievement of all parts of the OGP (for example the trainers need the support of the membership coordinator to identify MO needs, of the field staff to provide models of good practice, the advocacy team to help with advocacy training etc). Overall the staff themselves do assess that it works well (see Appendix A12 Staff Responses to Questionnaire). But the downside of this is that it is not always obvious who knows about an aspect of KEPA's work (a problem for MO's wanting specific information) or who holds accountability for ensuring a task is done. So for example there is no longer a South Desk which means that there is no one easy to identify location that holds either the information, learning or accountability for the work of the Country Offices (the Programme Director has overall responsibility for all the programme work both in Finland and the South but it is not possible for one person to be the focus of accountability for all this).
- 8.12 KEPA's organisational culture places importance on staff involvement in participatory and transparent decision-making. This is congruent with KEPA's underpinning values but this does not negate the need for decisive **leadership** that is willing to make difficult, and sometimes, unpopular decisions. In fact the 'team way of working', with all its inter-connections and dependence on others to achieve tasks means that there is an even greater need (more than in a traditional line management structure) to have managers who hold accountability and ensure that things get done. There are currently weaknesses. One of the symptoms is an organisational 'shyness' of the word management. In Finnish the team title, "johtotiimi" is translated as "directing". The directing and other teams elect one of their number to the temporary post of 'team leader'. Many take on this responsibility reluctantly and make it clear they are counting the days till they can hand it over to the next 'victim'.
- 8.13 There are many consequences of this lack of decisive management. As some of the staff explain:
- ' I consider the team organisation in KEPA an empowering tool. The team is supportive; it provides a home base. The team organisation gives freedom of decision and is less bureaucratic than a line organisation. It teaches participation and democratic leadership. The problem lies between the teams and management. The common goals and priorities as well as the decision- making are not always clear and there are problems with coordination of the work done in different teams. At times things that should be decided for the whole organisation are left floating and to the teams to act upon or not.'

‘ We are sometimes confused as to who does what. Who has the final responsibility? Teams taking the responsibility can also mean that nobody actually does anything because we have not agreed our roles properly. Team meetings can take a long time because we are discussing everything over and over again. Sometimes there are no clear decisions and the issue is just transferred to the next meeting’.

- 8.14 The most serious consequence of not prioritising the importance of management, is a lack of clear accountability. As ‘outsiders’ the evaluation team encountered this frequently during the evaluation process. It is not clear who has responsibility for a specific service or task – just where does the buck stop? For example who actively manages the Country Co-ordinators? Who is responsible for the membership? Who is tackling the problem of staff turnover? Who is evaluating overall organisational performance? Etc. An organisation of KEPA’s size and complexity needs managers who prioritise, managers who can take difficult decisions and managers who account for why their team’s objectives have been achieved or not.
- 8.15 At least in part, KEPA’s lack of an organisational **monitoring and evaluation** system (M&E) is a result of this weakness in management and accountability. As a general rule organisations have the policies and procedures in place that are important to them. Conversely if a system is absent it is probably due to the fact that the organisation does not see any need. There are two sets of forces acting on KEPA today to develop M&E. The first relates to results based management in the public sector and the requests by MFA that KEPA should demonstrate the impact of its work. The second is internal: the organisational desire to learn from what it is doing in order to improve performance. Work has started on designing and implementing a KEPA wide system. There has been good cooperation recently with MFA to develop impact assessment methodologies and KEPA has been part of study group. Within KEPA a plan has been agreed (2005) by which teams identify indicators for their activities (tools and support being given by the Resources Team staff).
- 8.16 In one way KEPA has a tradition of evaluation and assessments but both have usually been conducted by outside people. These have mainly been conducted in order to be accountable to external funders; there has been no consistent process of internal review in order to learn and improve. One of the big problems to overcome is that currently KEPA has poorly defined and multiple objectives. The proliferation of goals, visions, functions, activities, and ‘instruments’ over the last few years has been very confusing for the evaluation team but it is also confusing for staff who are meant to be achieving these vague and changing objectives.
- 8.17 But it needs to be stressed that this is not primarily about a lack of tools or methodologies; the problem exists because, historically, there has been a lack of management will. In other words, the solution is not simply to appoint a staff member with responsibility for establishing the KEPA M&E system, it needs KEPA as an organisation to want to be able to monitor, evaluate and learn in order that it can improve its performance. Only when KEPA has fully adopted an **organisational culture of learning** will it have a successful M&E methodology.
- 8.18 This is a critical point because development co-operation learning can be considered KEPA’s life-blood. Its one of the things that it needs to pump around its own organisational arteries, but is also a potential distinctive competence that it can use to help its MOs

become more effective. One of the Reports' recommendations will be that the Resources Team takes on the role of KEPA's 'Internal learning centre' with a responsibility for facilitating learning (from all the teams including the Country Office teams), and helping the Management Team to use this learning to support organisational improvements.

Human Resources

- 8.19 A criticism of KEPA from some people outside is that it has a lot of staff. This issue is raised by those in Finland looking at KEPA's HQ, and by some Embassy staff casting their eyes over the local Country office. It is true that almost half the KEPA expenditure is on personnel costs (see Appendix B2). But this fact alone does not mean that its staffing is excessive. KEPA provides 'services' and this requires a much higher ratio of staff to budget than say, a development agency that is primarily providing funding. The evidence from the Country Office evaluations was that KEPA staffing compared to the size of office budget was comparable to sister agencies (International NGOs). Within Finland it is difficult to find any agencies doing similar work so an alternative test, is not to look at the staffing levels per se, but to ask whether stakeholders are satisfied with the services being provided. At least among the members the MO surveys show that overall they are content (MFA as a stakeholder will be discussed in the next section).
- 8.20 Most staff (74%) say they are satisfied with the 'team way of working' and assess that it is working well or extremely well (see Appendix A12). The worst thing about their job is workloads and lack of prioritisation (29%), slow decision-making (18%), and the high staff turnover (14%). The two top things they would most like to change are improved planning and measurable objectives (reported by 27%), and better salaries or incentives (27%). The continual changes since 1995 has also had some negative effect on morale. As one senior KEPA person said:
- 'KEPA seems to have been subject to many structural changes over the last 3–4 years. Against this background it is perhaps fair to say there may be some battle fatigue'.
- 8.21 Perhaps the biggest single human resource issue in KEPA is the very high **staff turnover**. This is an issue in both Helsinki and the overseas offices. For example, in 2004 the HR personnel dealt with 30 termination of work contracts (this was composed of 2 people on permanent contracts, 5 on fixed-term, 8 substitutes, 7 conscientious objectors and 3 expatriate staff). This is an incredible turnover. Some of this is explicable by the high proportion of trainees and conscientious objectors, (even though they are temporary they still have to be inducted into the organisation and then their knowledge and skills replaced). But the most significant factor is the recruitment of 'substitutes'. This arises because KEPA very generously allows staff to take secondments and retain their right to return. This has led to some posts having substitutes for substitutes! The problem in the Country Offices may be more to do with local staff salary levels. But whatever the reasons this high staff turnover represents both additional costs in recruitment, and more importantly, a continual loss of skills and institutional memory. This is an example of where the Board and senior management need to make changes to staff terms and conditions even if this is unpopular.
- 8.22 The evaluation team was impressed by the high standard of HR policies; the commitment to diversity and the commitment to developing staff skills. However, more needs to be done to translate some of the words into actions. For example, all the HQ staff are Finns

(and white); overseas there has been recruitment of local staff at both the support levels, and in the case of Nicaragua and Tanzania the senior staff member is from the country. The OGP makes it necessary to have Finnish speakers and this is a constraint on recruiting non-Finns, but given that KEPA should be modelling diversity, more effort is needed.

- 8.23 In the light of the discussion above about the need for more decisive management KEPA should introduce ‘**good management practices**’ in the way managers relate to staff. Currently staff do not regularly experience the three most basic elements of this i.e. regular 1:1 meetings with their manager to discuss work progress; Annual Joint Reviews to assess the overall achievement of work objectives; and a personal Development Plan to identify and monitor their individual training and development needs.

Organisational Sustainability

- 8.24 Of course KEPA does not exist simply to exist (or to provide staff with jobs); KEPA exists to achieve its mission and when that has been achieved it will either disband or find a new purpose. KEPA is still a long way from that stage so the question needs to be asked: in the medium term is it a sustainable organisation? In other words, does it have the ability (and the legitimacy) to achieve its strategic goals?
- 8.25 At least three things need to be taken into account:
- Is it still providing a service that stakeholders want?
 - Are the organisational elements looked at above working well?
 - Is KEPA likely to receive adequate funding to achieve its goals?
- 8.26 KEPA is making an important contribution to strengthening civil society actors and thus enabling them to participate in global responsibility. As the results show most of the key stakeholders believe that KEPA is providing appropriate support. The need for KEPA's services is certainly on-going in the foreseeable future, and in fact there are many opportunities for KEPA to expand both the range of support it provides and the quality of what it does.
- 8.27 A number of critical performance elements have been examined. Though some weaknesses have been identified (and the recommendations will suggest ways that these can be strengthened) the overall picture is of an organisation that is growing in professionalism. Specifically:
- It's being well governed.
 - The team structure is working reasonably well and with more explicit organisational leadership and accountability, improved evaluation and learning, and changes to human resource policies the performance of KEPA will become even more effective.
 - Financial management has been examined separately, and no serious weaknesses have been identified (see Auditors Report July 2005).
- 8.28 In terms of organisational assessments one of the dimensions that evaluators always consider is: diversity of funding. Is the organisation overly reliant on one source of money? At a simplistic level the answer is ‘yes’ because in KEPA's case 95% comes from just one source. But KEPA is a Finnish organisation operating within a Finnish and Northern European context. An important piece of learning for the Evaluation Team (most of whom are not Finnish) is that receiving a high proportion of State funding is both normal, and less ‘dangerous’ than would be the case in most other parts of the world. The KEPA-

MFA relationship will be looked at in the next section but the 'Results' described in this Report give no reason for the Ministry to reduce KEPA's funding, and in fact given some new areas of work, and the general increase in money available to the NGO development sector, there may be a good case for the MFA to increase support in coming years. However, this does not preclude KEPA from continuing to find others sources of funding and income generation. This has been a problem in the past because of the fears of MOs that KEPA will be in competition with them, but KEPA is already, on a small scale, 'selling' some of its expertise to others (e.g. web-page development), and this could be increased.

9. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH MFA

- 9.1 Few would disagree, that at times in recent years, the relationship between MFA and KEPA has been difficult.
- 9.2 The part of the Ministry that KEPA has most dealings with is the Unit for NGOs, though of course it also relates to many other departments and teams (it is interesting to note that many MFA advisors are former KEPA staff). MFA provides the vast bulk of KEPA's funding and is, therefore, by definition a major stakeholder in KEPA. It has a duty of care to be concerned with what KEPA does and how it spends the budget. In other words the Ministry has a **legitimate authority** to ask questions of KEPA and expect answers. But there have been times when, the impression at least, has been given that KEPA is not fully contributing to an open exchange of information. It needs to be said that in the last year this situation has improved greatly and the prospect for a mutually beneficial relationship is now good.
- 9.3 Two main weaknesses in this relationship have emerged during the evaluation:
- Lack of clarity as to expectations
 - Lack of regular discussions and feedback

The first is mainly about KEPA's role and the MFA's perception of what a 'service centre' should be doing. As discussed earlier in the Report there is a problem in KEPA's organisational title. Given this ambiguity it is particularly important that all agreements are very clear and that KEPA's reports to MFA are also unambiguous and succinct. The second weakness is about the need for regular meetings of MFA staff and KEPA in order to share learning. If this was done in a 'spirit of joint learning' some of the resistance (whether real or imagined) to acting on ideas that have come from MFA, would be overcome.

- 9.4 As described earlier (para 7.21) the NGO Unit, as a stakeholder, has certain expectations of what services KEPA should be providing. One of their main concerns is that the quality of project applications from MOs is not adequate, particularly from the small organisations. They are also concerned at the general level of financial management and reporting among MOs. From their perspective it should be a KEPA priority as a service centre to be building the capacity of their members, and taking responsibility for these weaknesses. Another example is gender; many in the Ministry believe that as the FNGO umbrella organisation they need to be much more proactive in ensuring that good practice is followed by the membership.
- 9.5 The NGO Unit believes that the main cause of the past problems has been about the lack of clarity in the agreements. In particular they think that the problem came about because:
- The agreements (programme agreement, financial agreement, agreements on procedures) were unclear and too general, and that KEPA has been reluctant to review them, and make more concrete, because it wants to have a very open mandate and freedom in how it uses its funds.
 - The new Finnish legislation on state grants (2001) forces MFA to be much more objective-oriented and concerned with efficiency. This led the Unit to be more demanding, but this was not fully understood by KEPA.
 - KEPA's role (purpose) is not sufficiently defined in the MFA-KEPA agreements leaving too much room for different interpretations.

- 9.6 The difficulties came to a head with the freezing of some of KEPA's programme work. There are lessons to be learnt here. From the perspective of the NGO Unit staff involved at the time, the causes were clear. KEPA had claimed to MFA that it was not funding its Southern partners. The issue became visible to the NGO Unit when KEPA's budget was analysed by MFA. KEPA said that any funding was not to its partners per se, but as part of its partnership agreements with southern NGOs. MFA asked for clarification on the use of funds and how they were controlled; the Unit felt that no clear explanation was given and because of this the funds were frozen awaiting an external evaluation and clarity as to whether the programmes were relevant.
- 9.7 A specific concern of the NGO Unit at that time was 'double funding'. They noted that some of KEPA's partners were already funded through the MFA's funding to INGOs or through the local development funds managed by the Embassies. Because of this, the Unit was worried that KEPA's funding was duplicating money already given to local NGOs.
- 9.8 Another issue that arose was outsourcing of MFA funding applications. As a pilot KEPA was asked to process a sample of applications from FNGOs for Ministry money. From the KEPA perspective they took this process very seriously, and invested a lot of time consulting with the applicants. From the NGO Units perspective it took too long and that the process needed to be managed in accordance with civil service duties. The pilot ended and was not repeated. KEPA continues to provide advice to MOs about applications, and as referred to above, the Unit feels unhappy that KEPA is not doing this adequately.
- 9.9 What are the lessons to be learned from this difficult period?
- 1) Clear written agreements are essential. In addition to these Agreements KEPA needs to submit a Strategic Plan and Annual Action Plans that are outcome oriented and provide MFA (and others) with an unambiguous description of what is to be done and how performance will be measured.
 - 2) KEPA should communicate with MFA on funding and strategic issues through one focal point: this likely to be the Management Team.
 - 3) Systematic and regular meetings are required to review progress, resolve any areas of concern or misunderstanding. Also thematic meetings/workshops need to take place with relevant MFA teams to share learning, and ad hoc meetings when any 'hot' issues arise.
 - 4) Within the NGO Unit there is a need for an experienced and KEPA-dedicated person who is given the time to read the KEPA reports and manage the relationship.

MFA's Future Relationship with KEPA

- 9.10 There are two issues here; firstly, the nature of future funding to KEPA; and secondly, whether KEPA should take on new functions in relation to FNGO project funding applications. This latter issue was of importance when the Evaluation TOR was first drawn up, and included in the process has been a Comparative Analysis of other European countries and how they support their NGOs. However, recent proposals within the Ministry means that this Evaluation Report does not need to discuss so fully the issues raised by the comparative research.

9.11 This Evaluation Report is making a number of recommendations to KEPA as to how it can improve its organisational performance; in particular achieving greater clarity as to its Mission; the services it provides to MOs; the way that work in the Country Offices is decided and organised; changes to ensure that KEPA becomes more outcome oriented; an emphasis on internal evaluation and learning, and much strengthened culture of leadership and accountability. If these changes are implemented by KEPA, and the lessons discussed above about past difficulties are learned by the NGO Unit and KEPA, then **MFA can be confident** that it should continue to fund KEPA at the current level (and potentially increased levels), and in the same manner i.e. one grant of money for the entirety of its work.

Comparative Analysis

9.12 The original TOR specified that:

‘An essential task of the evaluation is a comparative assessment of the similar NGO organisations, particularly those in Scandinavia and Ireland’.

This has been done. It involved reviewing the mechanisms and principles by which seven European governments support and provide funding to the development cooperation sector. This is principally through NGOs. The study provides an overview of umbrella organisations, and how governments use them to distribute funds or other support services.

The countries studied were:

- Denmark
- Finland
- Ireland
- Netherlands
- Norway
- Sweden
- United Kingdom

9.13 The full Report is presented in Appendix A.13. It provides a comparison of the seven countries; it describes the funding mechanisms, application procedures, key principles, reporting and accounting procedures; finally the report draws out the lessons and implications involved in governments using NGOs and umbrella organisations to outsource services to the sector.

Is there a single good practice model?

9.14 No.

9.15 However, certain principles emerge which could be of relevance to both MFA and KEPA at some future point. They need to be placed against the political realities faced by donors. The most important constraint is probably the restrictions faced by most aid departments on expanding their own capacity through more staff. Therefore, it probably needs to be assumed that although an ideal model might require more staff this may not be a viable option. If this is a constraint, then when considering outsourcing services a number of **best practice principles** should be applied:

- The need for clarity in the criteria for both selecting agencies to be included in framework agreements, and as to how funding decisions are made.
- That framework/partnership/block grant schemes need clear indicators of success.

- The mechanisms chosen must allow for changes in the future to avoid a freezing of historical allocations.
- Umbrella type funding mechanisms often embody more negative than positive elements (e.g. conflicts of interest, long chain of proxy, failure to evaluate) and thus should only be used if they avoid these dangers.
- Contracting out grant management work needs clear criteria and precise lines of accountability.
- Other forms of advice from service centres and consultants may complement a core group of civil servants and make good capacity constraints.
- Too many budget lines can be confusing and expensive to administer. Too few may exclude new ideas and make it difficult to mainstream new ideas such as gender and the environment.
- To make a commitment to agency/partnership/framework/block funding probably needs a degree of organisational assessment not at present found in most schemes. Without such assessments it is difficult for Ministry departments to defend some of their support decisions.
- Several schemes have sacrificed quality, monitoring and evaluation in the face of their need to reduce costs as well as to ensure a certain political profile for their funding.
- The **better schemes** have managed to ensure clarity over choices of allocation of funds, a commitment to quality through participatory development, monitoring and evaluation; and a focus on strategic goals that are relevant to the needs of poor people in the South.

9.16 For a fuller discussion refer to the Comparative Analysis Report (Appendix 14)

10. CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 The terms of reference for this evaluation were very clear in not wanting ‘an academic style of research’ but instead a process that leads to practical recommendations. Given this request the Conclusion Section will not attempt to summarise all the issues raised during the Report but focus on those that have important implications for change in the future. The power to make most of these changes lies with KEPA: specifically the Board, the Management Team and staff. Some can only be implemented by MFA, but in the spirit of partnership, both KEPA and MFA need to work together to achieve their mutual goal of making KEPA an even more effective organisation.
- 10.2 This Conclusion will only focus on the overall organisation and programme concerns. However, the Evaluators spent quite some time with the individual teams within KEPA and many issues and recommendations emerged from this work. The Teams are aware of these suggested changes (a workshop was held with the Evaluators and staff in June). A summary of these team issues and recommendations is presented in Appendix A13.

Eight Areas for Change

- 10.3 There is confusion among many as to KEPA’s organisational purpose. This confusion has led to misunderstandings, frustration and disappointment, not only among people outside the organisation but also among some of those on the inside.

1. *KEPA’s purpose is not understood by many*

- KEPA’s Mission (Purpose) statement does not adequately describe what it does.
- The title “service centre” is causing confusion.

- 10.4 To say that KEPA’s work is ‘...to encourage, support and organise the Finnish civil society to participate in actions that promote global responsibility’ and to call the organisation a ‘service centre’, prescribes a very narrow range of activities. An outsider would assume that it only works in Finland; that it provides specific support to FNGOs and perhaps does some global education and local campaigning.
- 10.5 Since 1995 the organisation has spent a very great amount of time on thinking about its identity. Overall this current evaluation **supports** the role and direction that KEPA is taking: it confirms that the range of activities, and the fact that it works directly in both Finland and the South, are valid strategies. It is impressed by the underpinning conceptual analysis and the ideas that have led to the adoption of the One Global Programme. Importantly, it affirms the view that KEPA should, proactively, take forward development cooperation best practice and learning; not simply be a passive deliverer of services to its members. In fact there are many areas that this Evaluation can suggest that KEPA should be considering: more effort to build the capacity of FNGOs, and an enlarged global education programme, are two examples. One of the Recommendations is that KEPA needs to re-write its Mission Statement so that it more adequately describes the ‘new’ KEPA and consider a more appropriate organisational title. This clarification of the mission needs to be based on KEPA’s distinctive competence to take forward global responsibility.

- 10.6 The confusions as to 'purpose' experienced the past (with MFA but also among others) is not simply about the semantics of what the title 'service centre' means. It has revolved around whether KEPA should be doing certain things and who has the power to decide. The answer to this question needs to be stated unequivocally: the primary stakeholders who 'own' KEPA are the 263 Member Organisations. Their wishes are expressed in a number of ways; through the Board and Annual Meetings, Member Surveys and other methods used by staff to identify member needs. The MFA is an important stakeholder too, and KEPA should more clearly acknowledge the Ministry's legitimate right to ensure that the public money it gives is used correctly, and also to ask questions about programme content, receive clear reports and to have opportunities to influence the content of activities and areas of support.
- 10.7 What can the Evaluation conclude about KEPA's distinctive competence? In other words, where is its organisational niche; the place where it has the potential to really make a difference?

2. *KEPA's distinctive competence*

- is through building the capacity of its membership organisation which are a huge potential force for change.
- is by using its relatively large resources and skilled staff to focus on the key areas that will promote global responsibility.
- is drawing on its overseas work to give a legitimacy to advocate and campaign for change.
- is sharing the learning from its work in Finland and the South with other development actors.

- 10.8 Its 'niche' is located somewhere between a 'service centre' function where KEPA is primarily a provider of support activities specifically requested by its members and MFA (e.g. training, advice, lobbying, information, Market of Opportunities etc) and being a 'development agency' per se. It is not easy to define this continuum, but being a 'development agency' could be characterised as placing the beneficiaries (local partners in the South and poor people) as primary stakeholders and judging one's organisational performance criteria by how well you answer this stakeholder's needs. KEPA's mission needs to be placed between these two extremes. Its primary 'customer' is the MOs, not Southern partners, and as the results of this Evaluation show the membership very clearly want KEPA to be providing the kind of areas of support that it is currently providing in Finland. But at the same time KEPA should be more than a passive supplier of practical services; it is an effective advocacy and campaigning organisation that needs the legitimacy (and knowledge) that working in the South brings; it actively must take initiatives to strengthen the capacity of its FNGOs and this in part requires it to work with partners in the South. This work with local NGOs is about strengthening their organisational capacity so that they in turn 'can contribute to civil society' (and this is of course has a value in its own right) but given KEPA's mission, what it does in the South, must always be making a direct contribution to KEPA's goals and objectives. Some of the problems in defining KEPA's purpose have arisen because of the lack of clarity as to what it is doing in the South and why. This evaluation has recommendations as to how this clarity can be achieved.

10.9 In identifying KEPA's distinctive competence it is also valuable to consider where the organisation is currently having most impact (the difference being that the list of distinctive competencies above represent the 'potential' that KEPA has, whereas the valuation identified what is being achieved in practice). KEPA is doing a lot of valuable work, and it is doing most of the things that it says it does. In some areas of work it is especially effective:

Where KEPA is having the greatest effect:

- Training in basic skills for the medium and smaller sized organisations.
 - As a watch-dog for MOs (the lobbying role).
 - As a provider of information about development cooperation issues and activities
 - Facilitating networking and learning.
 - Campaigning and advocacy around specific issues.
 - Providing opportunities for FNGOs to raise their profile.
 - Being a 'voice' of the South (gaining legitimacy and knowledge from its direct work in the South).
 - Providing learning about development cooperation models for MOs and others.
 - Giving direct practical and logistical support to FNGOs working in the South.
- Supporting local Southern partners to strengthen civil society.

10.10 There are many ways that KEPA can make the things it does even more effective. Suggestions are made elsewhere in the Report as to how the specific teams could improve (see the individual Country Evaluation Reports and the summary of the Team Self Evaluations for those working in Helsinki). In general, KEPA should adopt an even more customer-oriented approach in its service provision. Active identification of MOs needs and collection of feed-back are essential in this respect. The current tendency is to plan actions too much within KEPA. This runs the risk of the services being insufficiently tailored to needs.

10.11 But there are also areas of work that KEPA should be doing more of, either because it is a priority of its stakeholders, or because it needs to be done to fulfil its purpose. Some of these new things arise as a result of KEPA moving along the continuum away from the 'passive service delivery' role. Global education is one example. KEPA's mission includes 'preparing the ground' within Finland that make it possible for politicians and others to change policies. Specifically, this is about public understanding and attitude change (in essence helping citizens understand the notion of impoverishment). KEPA could provide expertise, networks, and strategies for taking forward GE on a much more systematic basis. Connected with this is the way it works with its immigrant MOs. Many feel excluded from full participation. KEPA needs to model how it values diversity.

10.12 Another area is capacity building of MOs in Finland and partners in the South. KEPA has a rather limited understanding of this concept. It should be far more than providing training. Capacity building (organisational development) is about all aspects of an organisation that affect its ability to achieve its goals, and the ways to strengthen these aspects systematically. KEPA should develop analytical tools to use with both its MOs and local partners that will do this. Some of the problems with MFA's NGO Unit could be avoided if the Ministry were confident that KEPA was systematically improving the

NGO sector. It then needs to develop a range of organisational development interventions to use in the North and South. Being a provider of models of best practice should be one of these supporting activities.

10.13 But is this all just more and more change?

3. *New Directions*

The 1995 Evaluation led to a major change in direction, and it has taken KEPA many years to find a new direction.

KEPA needs now to CONSOLIDATE.

10.14 It took more than 7 years of debate, reflection, new initiatives, new staff structures etc, etc to get to where KEPA is today. For those on the inside it has often been very stimulating, but also painful. For those on the outside it has sometimes been seen as ‘naval gazing’ and an excessive preoccupation with internal organisational issues. The Evaluators believe that a period of consolidation is now needed. Not another radical change of direction but a steady period of work over the next three to four years to raise KEPA’s organisational performance. New things and new ways are being suggested in this Report but they are all about building on the current foundations. So all the recommendations in the 2005 Evaluation are concerned with:

- Being more focussed on the things that MOs (and MFA) want, and where KEPA has a distinctive competence.
- Improving the way KEPA is managed.
- Doing things better and being able to learn from what it does.

10.14 KEPA has invested a lot time in understanding the causes of poverty:

4. *KEPA’s Conceptual Framework*

A key strength of KEPA is the clarity of its answer to the basic question: why are people poor?

Its answer is IMPOVERISHMENT.

10.15 During the 1990s KEPA worked to articulate its underpinning development philosophy. This drew on the thinking of many academics and practioners in both the North and South. In essence the concept of impoverishment is the belief that describing poverty only as a condition is not a sufficient basis for a programme that wants to abolish poverty from the world. The concept of impoverishing directs attention to the institutions and processes, which actively cause poverty.

10.16 This analysis has been explained in KEPA publications, and underpins all of what KEPA does. It is a model that is shared by many other major actors in the development cooperation sector in Finland and elsewhere (such as many of the leading INGOs). KEPA needs to continue to develop its conceptual thinking, and the recommendations about

monitoring, evaluation and learning will support this process. A specific area that needs more work is deciding what this conceptual understanding means at the operational level in terms of capacity building, partnership and global education.

10.17 The governance of KEPA was looked at during the evaluation:

5. *Accountability*

KEPA is a complex organisation, and for those on the outside it can be confusing. It is not always clear who is responsible for what, or who holds overall accountability.

10.18 It is a challenge to hold together an organisation that has 263 member agencies, with a great diversity of size, missions, political viewpoints etc. and at the same time, satisfy the needs of other major stakeholders such as MFA. The current Board is doing a good job. The Evaluation is suggesting some improvements that will enable it to do an even better job.

10.19 The membership of the Board should be reviewed to ensure that the composition is reflecting both the nature of the current member organisations (it is growing each year and the relative proportion of some groups such as immigrant organisations is changing the profile); and a set of Board Members that collectively have the range of competencies needed to govern a 4.8 million euro organisation with over 90 staff. The Board should focus much more on **policy issues** and not be tempted to dabble in the operational. To achieve this it must be able to have greater confidence in the management of KEPA to be effectively running the work, and later recommendations are about strengthening internal accountability and leadership. Finally, the staff need to acknowledge the Board's right and obligation to hold overall accountability for what KEPA does and provide the Board with information (especially papers that go the Board) that is both digestible to non staff members, and decision-focussed. Board Members themselves identified a further number of ways the working of the meetings could be improved (see Appendix A11). To ensure openness and accountability, the annual meetings should be organised in a way that is attractive to MOs and easy to attend especially for volunteer-based MOs outside the Helsinki region.

10.20 The TOR specifically asked that the way KEPA operates as an organisation should be reviewed, not just how it carries out its programmes. Much of the evaluation activities were concerned with the management of KEPA, and there are more recommendations addressing this than any other.

6. *Organisational Culture*

KEPA does not need major new directions or a new organisational structure but it does need to improve the way it works internally.

10.21 The KEPA 'team' way of working (in effect a matrix) is not an easy system to understand or to manage to achieve greatest efficiency or effectiveness. Traditional line management is much simpler. However, there are good reasons for the structure KEPA has today and

if it can be made to work well, the rewards in terms of delivering a 'one global programme' will be worth the investment of effort. There is an underlying logic: the OGP requires different parts of the organisation to be making contributions to most, if not all, the components of what KEPA does. For example, the advocacy team cannot run a really successful campaign without inputs from the Country Teams, those coordinating the membership, the trainers who provide skills in advocacy techniques, those responsible for information, or the organisers of the big public events. Most staff like the team structure but there are problems: the excessive amount of time spent in meetings, the lack of clarity as to priorities and who is doing what, the difficulty for those on the outside of KEPA (but also some on the inside) to know who to ask for information (for example there is no South Desk so where do you find the focus point for KEPA's knowledge about Nicaragua or Indonesia?), but most worrying of all, there is a lack of clear accountability. The Evaluators believe that KEPA should continue with the current structure but make some important improvements in both how the teams work and how the organisation overall is managed.

10.22 The simplest way to explain these changes is to think of KEPA in terms of an effective organism where the 'soul', 'head' and 'heart' work as one:

- **KEPA's soul** is its purpose, vision, values and conceptual explanation for the causes of poverty. KEPA has invested a lot of effort to achieve a common organisational understanding and they are well articulated in a number of documents. The only additional work is to agree a form of words that more accurately encompasses KEPA's mission, and an organisational title that conveys this purpose.
- **KEPA's head** is its leadership and decision-making processes. There are weaknesses in prioritisation, learning and accountability. As reported above the Board should have a stronger oversight of policy, but it also needs the staff to stop being afraid of the word 'management'.

KEPA is no longer a few staff. It has more than 90 and with a complex programme and locations in five countries. It is now a **professional organisation**. If KEPA is to be both efficient and effective it requires it to have staff with high levels of management competence that ensure objectives are achieved, and take difficult decisions when necessary. In many ways 'good management practice' is even more important in the current team structure than it would be in a traditional hierarchical structure. For example, holding together the policy work and quality services work relies on network staff and forum meetings; this places huge responsibility on people without line management power.

The three Directors need to be more confident in directing the organisation and perform as 'a **management team**' who hold overall operational accountability. Consideration should be given to the appointment of a Deputy Programme Director, reporting to the Programme Director, and being responsible for the work in the South (including the management of the country coordinators). The teams currently have rotating team leaders (many take on the task reluctantly). KEPA needs to find ways to strengthen these positions. The Evaluation Team initially suggested appointing permanent 'team-leaders' who are managers, with management power (with this responsibility being reflected in their salary scale). KEPA is worried that this, along with a Deputy Director of South Programmes post, will add two extra layers. This is a valid concern, and therefore the Evaluation can

do no more than highlight the current weakness in effective decision-making and accountability, and recommend that KEPA find ways to strengthen the management of the teams.

One easy-to-introduce improvement is the implementation of a **Management Charter** that very simply lists the things that each staff member can expect in terms of being managed well: regular one to one meetings with their manager, monitored work objectives and regular negotiations to adjust work priorities, an Annual Performance Review and a Personal Development Plan. Creating the Charter is the easy thing to do; the challenge for KEPA is to have in place those with the skills and motivation to manage staff according to this good-practice list.

- **KEPA's heart** is how it pumps learning around the organisation and throughout the member organisations. KEPA is developing a monitoring and evaluation system. This system needs to embrace the whole of what KEPA does and how it does it i.e. not be applied only to the programme work but to overall organisational performance. The purpose of this M&E system, will in part, be to demonstrate accountability, but far more important is that it is used for **learning**. Learning is KEPA's life- blood. As was shown earlier one aspect of KEPA's distinctive competence is its potential to extend good development co-operation practice, and good capacity building practice, among MOs and other actors.

The Resources Team working with others (e.g. Quality Network, Training and Advice Team) could have an explicit, and enlarged role as KEPA's Learning Team. They would be both a focal point for learning from around the organisation, but also a facilitator that works with the Senior Management Team to introduce new ways for staff to reflect on their performance and achievement of goals, and to 'distil' this learning into digestible forms that can be shared with others. There are many examples of INGOs doing this, and as such models of good learning practice could be modified from other organisations. The development of KEPA's own M&E system should also provide useful models/ approaches for the MOs. Therefore, while developing its own M&E system, KEPA should actively develop relevant approaches for its MOs and disseminate via the training etc. In the South, KEPA should more actively support the MOs in project monitoring .

10.23 The One Global Programme needs to be written and implemented in a way that enables it to be monitored and evaluated.

7. One Global Programme

Is an imaginative means of conceptualising KEPA's work but is not currently in a form that enables achievements to be judged in any systematic way.

10.24 This Evaluation has been able to identify some areas where KEPA is having an impact; but it has been **hard work** to do this, and in some of KEPA's programmes and services it was not possible to give a comprehensive assessment of achievements because the data was simply not available. To some extent the Evaluation Team has been able to draw on KEPA's own evaluation material (and those commissioned by KEPA but undertaken by external people) but at times it had to collect primary data itself or design new tools (e.g. the Team Self Evaluation templates).

10.25 In a really effective organisation it should be very easy for an external evaluation to make an overall assessment of performance, because all it has to do is to conduct some research to validate the organisation's own results from its monitoring, evaluation and learning processes. KEPA does not have these in place, though it is working towards them. One of KEPA's difficulties is that the organisation thinks in terms of 'we did this', not 'we had this effect'. The goals and objectives of the OGP are global ambitions (more about beliefs than end points), and they have few outcomes or indicators of what success will look like. This is compounded by the fact that there are many different levels of goals (and in recent years KEPA has expressed its strategic direction in many different forms and documents). Moreover KEPA is a complex organisation operating at many different levels and with diverse approaches. In the outh many of the activities with partners also involve other INGO partners, causal links between KEPA's work and the changes is not a simple attribution. This complexity does not lend itself easily to results-based management and alternatives need to found. KEPA needs to bear the different needs this in mind when developing their monitoring and evaluation systems. This Evaluation recommends that the OGP should remain as the main expression of KEPA's programme but that a major piece of work is undertaken to operationalise it so that each part is achievable, and that the objectives are written in a way that enables answers to be given to the questions: Has the OGP done what it said it would do? What difference has it made? If this is done, then in 2 to 3 years, the OGP as a method of expressing KEPA's strategic intent should be reviewed. If at that time (2007/2008) it is still confusing and not conducive to measurement, then consideration needs to be given to returning to a more traditional form of expressing strategic goals; ones that are more clearly related to the specific 'packages' of services and work that KEPA is doing.

10.26 One of the continuing challenges for the OGP is how it fits with the country **programmes in the South**. As discussed earlier, KEPA needs to position itself in an appropriate place (inline with its mission) along a continuum. In the case of its work in the South, at one end of the continuum it would limit KEPA to being primarily a reactive provider of services to FNGOs; at the other, to being a development agency in its own right, and with local partners and poor people as the primary stakeholder. KEPA should be between these extremes. In other words it should provide support to FNGOs with projects in-country, it should analyse local situations and support advocacy in the North and South, it should collect models of good development practice and it should work directly with local partners (in fact all the types of things it is doing now). But where there is a need for clarification is in the rationale for why it is directly 'doing development'.

10.27 The rationale is the achievement OGP. All the things it does in the South must be directly contributing to the one programme; the country teams, in this respect, should be no different from the teams based in Helsinki. In other words they are building the capacity of a partner, or supporting a project, or conducting an activity, because these are explicitly needed in order to contribute to the achievement of a specific OGP objective. Although the OGP is a step in the right direction and should in the future provide more coherence currently identifying contributions is a problem. In part because the OGP is too vague; in part because of lack of management and accountability; in part because of poor communication between the different KPA teams, and in part, because each country has a different context and set of needs.

10.27 The **solution** is to implement the changes described earlier in this chapter but also to make explicit what the country programmes are meant to be achieving. Two things should be done:

- 1) Each country office needs a set of **strategic objectives**. These must be developed within the framework of the OGP but mould the actual activities and areas of work to achieve the OGP's objectives around the specific country situation i.e. the needs and opportunities identified from the Country Teams' own situational analysis. The benefit is that there will be an appropriate local strategy that provides some on-going consistency, is contributing to national needs, is a base for monitoring and evaluation and enables the country coordinators to manage their whole.
- 2) Each country has a '**service agreement**' with the teams in Finland. This should be a negotiated process, and done each year. It would set out what contributions are needed from the Country teams in order that the Helsinki teams can fulfil their OGP objectives, and vice versa. The Deputy Director (South Programmes) could be the person holding accountability for ensuring that all the country teams fulfil their agreement; the Director of Programmes would have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Helsinki teams fulfilled their obligations in providing support to the South teams.

10.28 This way of working has the potential to ensure that stakeholder needs and concerns are more clearly met (especially those of the MOs and MFA); that all of KEPA's work is effectively contributing to the one programme; that the work in the South is addressing local needs, and at the same time, can be justified in terms of achieving KEPA's mission; and finally, it will lead to greater accountability.

10.29 KEPA has many different stakeholders and it must ensure that their needs are centre stage:

8. Being customer- focussed

KEPA has the potential to be an even greater force for change if it more systematically builds on the needs and motivations of its stakeholders.

10.30 KEPA already does a lot to monitor what its membership want in terms of services. But given the diverse range of MOs it does not meet all needs. For example, it provides good basic training in project management but is not seen by many of the larger and more experienced NGOs as being able to offer anything more advanced. There is a danger of being stuck in a mindset and doing what KEPA has always done. It needs to be innovative in delivering capacity building (some ideas are identified for individual teams (Appendix A14).

10.31 The relationship with MFA has been up and down. MFA is an important 'customer' for KEPA; not simply because it provides funding but also because it is a major player in development and has much expertise and support to offer. So there needs to be a new spirit of cooperation.

10.32 Being customer-focussed does not mean being 'passive' (and only doing those things that are rated highly in MO surveys). KEPA has a legitimate right to try new things even if not specifically requested by the membership (the 'Initiatives in the South' in the 1990s are an example of KEPA being proactive). It will not always get it right. The skill lies in the judgements of the staff, and how well they identify opportunities and needs. Being 'professional' is not a swear word in the dictionary of the Evaluators. It is important that staff use their professionalism to identify the things that are holding back innish civil society from taking forward global responsibility, and focus the KEPA strategies around these vital interventions.

Concluding Remarks

10.33 KEPA is fulfilling an important function in Finnish civil society. It went through a difficult period after the 1995 Evaluation, but in the last few years it has become increasingly focussed. The Evaluation Team has been impressed by much of what it has seen, and though measuring impact in any systematic way has proved difficult, this Report does provide evidence of where KEPA's work is making a positive difference.

10.34 It has become a professional organisation that has not lost its original values or its vision of a better world. It is an organisation that has grown in size and complexity. Most of the recommendations are about consolidating this good work, and how KEPA's management and accountability can be strengthened further.

11. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 11.1 Most of the recommendations are addressed to KEPA, because it is primarily the Board and staff of KEPA that have the power to introduce change within the organisation. During the course of the evaluation process, and the work with individual teams, a number of issues and recommendations were identified and discussed. In this section only the organisation-wide recommendations are listed (for the individual team-changes see Appendix A14).
- 11.2 The reasoning for most recommendations has been presented somewhere in the Report (a reference is given that will help the reader to remind themselves of the rationale) but some are a logical consequence of the overall findings and discussion.

To:	Recommendation:	Reference:
MFA	MFA1. That MFA should continue to fund KEPA to the same level and under the same arrangements (i.e. one grant of money for the entirety of its work).	9.11
	MFA 2. That if MFA, at some future date, should consider outsourcing project funding it follows the 'good practice' principles identified in the Comparative Analysis Study.	9.14 to 9.16 Appendix A14
	MFA 3. That the lessons learned from the former difficult NGO Unit/KEPA period be implemented to ensure a future cooperative relationship.	9.3 to 9.9
KEPA	KEPA 1. That the Mission Statement is revised to more accurately describe KEPA's purpose, and that consideration be given to changing the title 'service centre'.	8.8 to 8.10 10.3 to 10.6
	KEPA 2. That the Board ensures that the way it works enables it to focus on policy, and not operational issues.	
	KEPA 3. That membership of the Board is reviewed to ensure that its composition is reflecting the nature of the Member Organisations, and the skills needed to govern an organisation of this complexity.	8.3 to 8.6 10 to 10.19 Appendix A11
	KEPA 4. That KEPA needs a period of consolidation (not new major changes of direction) and that as part of this consolidation it develops its work around its distinctive competence.	7.3 to 7.11; 10.7 to 10.14
	KEPA 5. That even more effort is put into monitoring the needs of the main stakeholder group (i.e. MOs) and that innovative ways (e.g. active networking and cooperation with MOs) are found to build the capacity of this diverse group. Capacity building should spread out good practices among the MOs as well as ensure the mainstreaming of issues such as gender and environmental sustainability in the operations of the MOs.	7.13 to 7.16 10.29–10.32 Appendix A10 A14

	KEPA 6. That KEPA takes steps to build a strong, cooperative relationship with MFA's NGO Unit, and enters into regular feedback meetings with relevant MFA teams.	7.21 to 7.22 9.2 to 9.9 10.31
	<p>KEPA 7 That the internal accountability and leadership processes be strengthened. Specifically:</p> <p>7.1 That the Management Team more explicitly function as a 'senior' management team; overall operational accountability being held by the Executive Director</p> <p>7.2 That consideration be given to appointing a Deputy Programmes Director with management responsibility for the South Programme.</p> <p>7.3 That the leadership of the teams be strengthened.</p> <p>7.4 That a Management Charter is implemented that forms the basis for how staff are managed following 'good practice' standards.</p> <p>7.5 That the current team structure is reviewed in 2 years time to asses whether the above changes have enabled it to work in an effective way.</p> <p>7.6 That the current high rate of staff turnover is reduced; this may involve changes to staff terms and conditions currently operating.</p>	8.11 to 8.14 10.20 to 10.22 Appendix A12. 8.21
	KEPA 8. That greater priority is given to establishing a monitoring and evaluation system that is tailored to KEPA's needs and that enables it to demonstrate accountability and organisational effectiveness.	8.15 to 8.18 10.22
	KEPA 9. That learning is recognised as the core 'life-blood' of KEPA and that consideration is given to strengthening both internal learning processes, and how KEPA extends development cooperation learning among MOs.	10.22 Appendix A14.
	KEPA 10. That the One Global Programme remains as the main expression of what KEPA is trying to achieve but that it is revised to ensure that objectives are achievable and that outcomes can be evaluated.	4.10 to 4.14; 10.23 to 10.25
	KEPA 11. That KEPA must ensure that the work in the Country Offices is congruent with its Mission and is directly contributing to the achievement of the OGP?	6.31 to 6.37; 10.26 to 10.28
	KEPA 12. That KEPA study the recommendations, that relate to specific teams (in the Country Offices and Helsinki), and implement where appropriate.	Appendix A7, A8, A9, and A14 and Section 6.

KEHITYSYHTEISTYÖN PALVELUKESKUKSEN ARVIOINTI

Suomenkielinen lyhennelmä – Finnish summary

Paul Silfverberg

2005

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1. Arvioinnin tausta

Ulkoasiainministeriö (UM) teetti keväällä ja kesällä 2005 arvioinnin Kehitysyhteistyön palvelukeskuksesta (KEPA). Arvioinnin laatimisesta vastasivat brittiläinen INTRAC (International NGO Training and Research Centre) sekä INTRACin alihankkijana Konsulttitoimisto Planpoint Oy.

Arviointi tehtiin käytännössä helmikuun ja elokuun välisenä aikana vuonna 2005. Arviointiprosessi koostui seuraavista vaiheista ja selvityksistä:

- Keskeisten sidosryhmien haastatteluita Suomessa (UM, KEPAn toimisto, KEPAn puheenjohtajiston ja hallituksen jäseniä, jäsenjärjestöjä)
- Raporttialyysi (KEPAn strategiat, suunnitelmat, toimintaraportit, muita raportteja, aiemmat KEPAn itsensä ja UM:n teettämät arvoinnit jne.)
- Ryhmäkeskusteluita KEPAn eri toimijoiden kanssa
- Itsearviointiprosessi KEPAn kaikkien tiimien kanssa
- KEPAn kenttätöimistöjen arvoinnit (Mosambik, Sambia, Nicaragua)
- Vertaileva selvitys kansalaisjärjestörahoituksen menettelytavoista (Ruotsi, Tanska, Norja, Irlanti, Iso-Britannia, Alankomaat)

Nyt tehty arviointi on järjestyksessään toinen ulkoasiainministeriön teettämä laajamittainen KEPAA koskeva arviointi. Edellisen, vuonna 1995 toteutetun arvioinnin jälkeen KEPAn organisaatio ja toimintamallit ovat radikaalisti muuttuneet. Arviointitoimeksianto kattoi sen vuoksi KEPAn koko organisaation ja toiminnan. Pääasiallisena tavoitteena oli löytää eväitä KEPAn jatkokehittämiseen. Evaluation peruskysymyksiksi muodostuivat seuraavat:

1. Onko KEPAssa tehty se, mitä on luvattu? (Suunnitelmien toteutuminen 1995-2005)
2. Onko toiminnalla ollut vaikutusta? (Vaikuttavuuden arviointi)
3. Onko KEPAssa tehty oikeita asioita? (Toiminnan tarkoituksenmukaisuus ja linjakuus)

Seuraavassa on esitetty tiivistettynä arvioinnin huomiot ja suositukset.

2. KEPAn toiminta ja organisaatio

KEPA on vuonna 1985 perustettu suomalaisten kehitysyhteistyön kanssa toimivien kansalaisjärjestöjen kattojärjestö. Ensimmäiset kymmenen vuotta KEPAn päätehtävänä oli hoitaa suomalaista kehitysyhteistyön vapaaehtoishjelmaa. Edellisen, vuonna 1995 toteutetun arvioinnin jälkeen vapaaehtoishjelma päätettiin ajaa alas, minkä vuoksi KEPAn toiminnalle alettiin hakea uusia suuntia. Erilaisten kokeilujen ja jäsenjärjestöjen tarpeiden selvittelyn jälkeen KEPAn strategiat uudistettiin. Vuonna 1997 hyväksytyyn periaatejulistuksen mukaan ”KEPAn perustehtävä on rohkaista, tukea ja organisoida suomalaista kansalaisyhteiskuntaa osallistumaan toimintaan maailmanlaajuisen yhteisvastuun puolesta”.

Nykyisin KEPA on lähes 270 jäsenjärjestön organisaatio, jolla on päätoimisto Helsingissä ja kenttätöimistöt Mosambikissa, Sambiassa, Tansaniassa ja Nicaraguassa. KEPAlla on yhteensä lähes 90 työntekijää ja sen vuotuinen budjetti noin 5 miljoonaa euroa. Tärkeimmät toimintamuodot ovat:

- Kehitysyhteistyöhön liittyvä vaikuttaminen ja kampanjointi (vaikuttaminen Suomen kehitysyhteistyöpolitiikkaan, sen rahoitukseen ja yhteistyön mekanismeihin; kansalaisjärjestöjen edunvalvonta; vaikuttaminen kansainvälisillä foorumeilla jne.)
- Suomalaisen kehitysyhteistyötä tekevien järjestöjen toimintaedellytysten vahvistaminen (hankekoulutus, hanke- ja rahoitusneuvonta, teemakohtainen koulutus jne.)
- Kansalaisjärjestöjen verkostoitumisen edistäminen Suomessa ja kansainvälisesti
- Tiedotus ja tietopalvelut (lehdet, muut julkaisut, www-sivut, sähköpostilistat jne.)
- Kansainvälisyyskasvatus (tapahtumat, kampanjat, materiaalin tuottaminen, jäsenjärjestöjen tukeminen ja verkostoitumisen edistäminen jne.)
- Toiminta etelässä (etelän järjestöjen tukeminen, yhteiset hankkeet, yhteys- ja tukipalvelut suomalaisille järjestöille)
- Etelän vapaaehtoisohjelman hallinnointi

Toiminnot on jaettu kahteen pääluokkaan: **laatupalveluihin** (suurin osa koulutuksesta, neuvonnasta, informaatiopalveluista ja verkostoitumisen tukemisesta) ja **politiikkatyöhön**. Nykyisessä toiminnassaan KEPA pyrkii kytkemään eri toiminnot yhtenäisen ohjelmapolitiikan (One Global Programme, OGP) alle. Sen tavoitteena on vahvistaa eri toimintojen koordinaatiota ja varmistaa, että eri toiminnot perustuvat KEPAn strategioihin. Teoreettiseksi viitekehyykseksi KEPA on kehittänyt käsitteen **köyhdyttäminen** (Impoverishment); näkemyksen siitä, että köyhyys johtuu poliittisista ja rakenteellisista tekijöistä, joihin voidaan vaikuttaa. Vaikuttamisen peruslähestymistapana KEPA pyrkii edistämään etelän ja pohjoisen (Suomen) kansalaisyhteiskuntien – käytännössä kansalaisjärjestöjen – mahdollisimman tasavertaista kumppanuutta.

KEPAn organisaatioita on viime vuosina muokattu tiimiorganisaatioiksi. Tällä pyritään vahvistamaan yhtenäisen ohjelmapolitiikan toteutumista sekä edistämään osallistuvaa ja johtamishierarkioiltaan matalaa toimintakulttuuria. Tiimit heijastavat KEPAn tärkeimpiä toimintamuotoja (koulutus- ja neuvontatiimi, Kumppani-tiimi, Maailma kylässä –tiimi, nettitiimi, resurssitiimi, vaikuttamistiimi, verkostotiimi sekä johto-, hallinto- ja taloustiimi).

3. Tekeekö KEPA oikeita asioita oikealla tavalla?

KEPalla on monia sidosryhmiä ja asiakkaita. Viime kädessä KEPAn toiminta pyrkii vahvistamaan etelän kansalaisyhteiskuntia tukemalla etelän kumppaneita sekä suoraan että vahvistamalla suomalaisten kehitysyhteistyöjärjestöjen osaamista ja toimintaa. KEPAn välittömiä asiakkaita ovat:

- Suomalaiset jäsenjärjestöt: metodien kehittäminen, koulutus, neuvonta, informaatiopalvelut, verkostoitumisen tukeminen, järjestöjen edunvalvonta, etelän toimistojen yhteys- ja tukipalvelut, jne.
- Etelän yhteistyökumppanit: organisaatioiden vahvistaminen, tuki partnereiden hankkeille, verkostoituminen pohjoisen suuntaan
- Ulkoasiainministeriö: suomalaisten järjestöjen hankeosaamisen vahvistaminen

KEPAn vaikuttamistoiminta kohdistuu lisäksi suoraan mm. poliittikkoihin, minkä lisäksi osa järjestön kansainvälisyyskasvatuksesta (Maailma kylässä -tapahtuma ja mahdollisuuksien torit, kampanjat, materiaalit) pyrkii vaikuttamaan suoraan kansalaisiin.

KEPAn toiminnan tarkoituksenmukaisuuden arviointi edellyttää vastauksen hakemista kysymykseen, tekeekö KEPA oikeita asioita sidosryhmiensä ja kohderyhmiensä kannalta. Kysymyksen voi asettaa myös toisella tapaa: onko KEPA ensi sijassa nimensä mukainen jäsenjärjestöjensä palvelukeskus vai omaehtoinen kehitysyhteistyön toimija?

3.1 KEPAn toiminta jäsenjärjestöjen kannalta

KEPAn toimintaa jäsenjärjestöjen kannalta arvioitiin järjestöille lähetetyn kyselyn, haastattelujen ja ryhmäkeskustelun avulla. Erittäin hyödylliseksi arviointimateriaaliksi osoittautui myös KEPAn itsensä teettämä jäsenjärjestöselvitys. Selvitykset osoittivat selkeästi, että KEPAn nykyiset toiminnot ovat varsin hyvin linjassa jäsenjärjestöjen tarpeiden ja näkemysten kanssa.

Sekä KEPAn oman järjestöselvitykset että arvioinnin yhteydessä tehdyn kyselyn tulokset osoittivat, että kaikki KEPAn toimintamuodot ovat tarkoituksenmukaisia ainakin melko suurelle joukolle jäsenjärjestöjä:

Toimintamuoto	Toiminnan tärkeys (skaala 1–4)
Vaikuttaminen poliittisiin päättäjiin	3,53
Jäsenjärjestöjen edunvalvonta	3,49
Tiedotus	3,41
Seminaarit ja koulutus	3,41
Kansainvälisyyskasvatuksen ja monikulttuurisuuden tukeminen	3,41
Yhteistyön ja verkostoitumisen tukeminen	3,39
Tapahtumat (Maailma kylässä, mahdollisuuksien torit jne.)	3,34
Hankeneuvonta	3,30
Kirjasto- ja tietopalvelut	3,00
Muu neuvonta	2,99
KEPAn ja suomalaisten järjestöjen yhteistyö etelässä	2,90
Tuki etelän järjestöille	2,88
Etelän vapaaehtoisohjelma ETVO	2,72

Skaala: 4-Erittäin tärkeä, 3-Tärkeä, 2-Ei kovin tärkeä, 1-Ei lainkaan tärkeä

Lähde: Jäsenjärjestöjen kokemuksia ja näkemyksiä Kepasta, Kepa 2005

Keskimääräisesti jopa vähiten tärkeimmät toimintamuodot olivat erittäin tärkeitä noin 20 %:lle jäsenjärjestöistä. Arvioinnin oman, hieman suppeamman kyselyn tulokset olivat hyvin samankaltaisia. Vastaukset avoimeen kysymykseen ”nimetkää KEPAn tärkeimmät toiminnot” korostivat kuitenkin enemmän KEPAn suorittamia palveluita jäsenjärjestöille:

KEPAn tärkeimmät toiminnot	Mainintoja (otos 69 järjestöä)
Koulutus (projektisuunnittelu, projektin hallinta, rahoitus jne.)	41
Tiedotus ja tietopalvelut	36
Vaikuttaminen kehityspoliittisiin kysymyksiin ja Suomen kehitysyhteistyörahoitukseen	26
Hankeneuvonta	25
Järjestöjen edunvalvonta	20
Verkostoitumisen tukeminen	12
Maailma kylässä –tapahtuma	13
Kansainvälisyyskasvatuksen tukeminen	8
KEPAn kenttätoimistojen palvelut	7

Kaiken kaikkiaan KEPAn nykyistä toimintaa voidaan pitää jäsenjärjestöjen kannalta tarkoituksenmukaisena. Palveluihin tyytyväisyydessä on sen sijaan hieman enemmän kirjoa:

- Tyytyväisimpiä jäsenjärjestöt olivat KEPAn järjestämiin tapahtumiin. Erityisesti Maailma kylässä –tapahtuma ja mahdollisuuksien torit koettiin hyvin järjestetyiksi. Myös koulutusta ja tiedotusta pidettiin hyvinä. Eniten kritiikkiä saivat verkostoitumisen tukeminen sekä järjestöjen edunvalvonta, joita kritisoivat erityisesti pienet jäsenjärjestöt. Pääsyyinä tähän on pelko siitä, että kehitysyhteistyön nykyiset trendit ovat vahvistamassa suurten kumppanuusjärjestöjen asemaa pienten, vapaaehtoistoimintaan perustuvien järjestöjen jäädessä marginaaliasemaan.
- Vaikka käytännön palveluihin (koulutus, hankeneuvonta, tietopalvelut) oltiinkin melko tyytyväisiä, oli kaikkien palveluiden laadussa selvästi myös parantamisen varaa. Monissa kommentteissa todettiin, että KEPAn koulutus ja neuvonta toimivat hyvin perustasolla, mutta että KEPA ei pysty räätälöimään palveluitaan riittävästi erilaisiin tarpeisiin.
- Helsingin seudun ulkopuolella toimivat järjestöt ovat jo vuosia kritisoineet KEPAn liiallista Helsinki-keskeisyyttä. Arvioinnissa saadun palautteen mukaan tämä näyttää edelleen olevan ongelma.
- Uusiksi tai nykyistä laajemmiksi toimintamuodoiksi ja palveluiksi ehdotettiin mm. vaihtoehtoisten rahoitusmahdollisuuksien neuvontaa, järjestöjen kehitysyhteistyöhankkeiden arviointimenetelmien ja -osaamisen kehittämistä, UM:n rahoitushakemusten arviointia, kohderyhmille enemmän räätälöityjä koulutustapahtumia sekä neuvonnan ja koulutuksen järjestämistä enemmän myös muualla Suomessa.
- KEPAn maatoimistojen palvelut olivat tärkeitä monille niistä järjestöistä, joilla oli hankkeita a.o. maissa. Maatoimistojen toivottiin jatkossa pystyvän tukemaan paremmin hankkeiden seuranta- ja arviointia, vahvistamaan verkostoitumista sekä järjestämään luotettavia ja tehokkaita logistiikkapalveluita.

Arviointi ei siten anna aihetta lopettaa mitään KEPAn nykyisistä suomalaisia jäsenjärjestöjä palvelevista toiminnoista. Sen sijaan arviointi toi esiin monia kehittämismahdollisuuksia, kuten räätälöidympiä palveluita tai aktiivisemmän verkostotoiminnan, minkä kautta voitaisiin edistää järjestöjen keskinäistä oppimista ja tukemista. Olennaista on entistä parempi asiakassuuntautuneisuus: aktiivisen tarpeiden kartoittamisen sekä osallistuvien suunnitteluprosessien ja syste-

maattisen palautteen keruun tulisi olla läpileikkaavina lähestymistapoina myös jäsenjärjestöjen palvelussa. Vaikka pitkälti näin jo toimitaankin, on yhteistyön aktiivisuutta ja asiakaslähtöisyyttä vielä selvästi mahdollisuus parantaa.

3.2 KEPAn ja UM:n suhteet

Ulkoasiainministeriö odottaa KEPAlta toimenpiteitä erityisesti kehitysyhteistyöhankkeita toteuttavien järjestöjen projektiosaamisen parantamiseksi. KEPAn hankekoulutukselta ja neuvonnalta odotetaan paljon, koska UM:llä itsellään on vain rajallisesti kapasiteettia kouluttaa ja neuvoa järjestöjä. Parempien hanke-esitysten ja selkeämmän raportoinnin lisäksi UM odottaa KEPAn koulutuksen ja neuvonnan parantavan myös järjestöhankkeiden koordinoivia, tuloksellisuutta ja tulosten kestävyyttä.

Vaikka järjestöt ovatkin kokeneet KEPAn koulutuksen ja neuvonnan pääosin hyväksi, ei tämä ole näkynyt riittävästi UM:lle jätettyjen hakemusten laadussa. Osin ongelma johtuu siitä, että kaikki koulutusta ja neuvontaa tarvitsevat järjestöt eivät käytä niitä hyväkseen. Koulutuksen ja neuvonnan markkinoinnissa, sisällössä (räätälöinti) ja järjestämisessä (aika ja paikka) on kuitenkin myös parantamisen tarvetta. Koska UM erityisesti odottaa hankeosaamisen vahvistamista, on koulutuksen ja neuvonnan kehittäminen olennaista myös UM:n ja KEPAn välisten suhteiden kannalta.

UM:ssä nousee aina välillä esiin kysymys, onko KEPA palveluorganisaatio vai itsenäinen kehitysyhteistyöorganisaatio. Kyse on osin UM:n ja KEPAn keskinäisten sopimusten ja kommunikaation epämääräisyydestä, mikä jättää liikaa tilaa erilaisille tulkinnoille. Arviointi suosittaa sopimusten ja raportointimenettelyiden uudistamista, säännöllisten neuvonpitojen järjestämistä sekä selkeiden kontaktitahojen määrittelyä molemmin puolin. Tämän ei pitäisi olla vaikeaa, koska yleisellä tasolla suhteet ovat kunnossa.

3.3 KEPAn toiminta etelässä

KEPA oli avannut toimistot Mosambikiin, Sambiaan ja Nicaraguuan jo vapaaehtoisohjelman aikana ennen vuotta 1995. Ohjelman alasajo johti siihen, että KEPAn etelän toimipisteiden tehtäviä ja rooleja jouduttiin miettimään uudelleen. Aikaa vuodesta 1995 vuoteen 2004 voidaankin luonnehtia KEPAn kumppanuuskokeilujen ajanjaksoksi. Erilaisia yhteistyömuotoja kokeiltiin yhteensä yhdeksässä maassa (yhteistyö Brasilian kuminkerääjien kanssa, Karibian alueen tiedottaja ja yhteystoimitsija, Ugandan yhteystoimitsija, yhteistyö Intian Lokayan ja Indonesian INSIST -järjestöjen kanssa jne.), minkä lisäksi jo olemassa olleita Mosambikin, Sambian ja Nicaraguan maaohjelmia alettiin kehittää pitkäjänteisemmin.

Vaikka kumppanuuskokeilut tuottivatkin näkökulmia ja kokemuksia kehityskysymyksiin liittyvään keskusteluun, jäivät niiden annit kuitenkin usein vaatimattomiksi. Tämä johtui osin kokeilujen heikohkosta suunnittelusta ja valmistelusta, osin selkeän strategisen näkemyksen puuttumisesta, minkä vuoksi osa kokeiluista kaatui käytännön ongelmiin, osa puolestaan siihen, että toimintamuodot eivät lopulta olleetkaan tarkoituksenmukaisia. Kokemusten keruu, analysointi ja syöttäminen laajempaan oppimisprosessiin jäivät myös vähäiseksi. Parhaiten ovat toimineet edelleen jatkuvat yhteistyösuhteet Lokayanin ja INSISTin kanssa. Muut kumppanuuskokeilut ovatkin käytännössä jo päättyneet.

Sinällään vuoden 1995 jälkeen oli hyvinkin perusteltua lähteä rohkeasti kokeilemaan uudenlaisia toimintamuotoja. Tämä voi olla KEPAn roolina myös tulevaisuudessa; kokeilut on kuitenkin suunniteltava huomattavasti perusteellisemmin ja kytkettävä selkeästi osaksi KEPAn perustehtävää ja ohjelmapolitiikkaa.

Arvioinnin yhteydessä tehtiin selvitysmatkat Mosambikiin, Sambiaan ja Nicaraguaan. Näiden maiden osalta arviointi vahvisti käsityksen, että maaohjelmia on toteutettu kohtuullisen hyvin KEPAn globaalien ohjelman puitteissa: kaikissa maissa on tehty vaikuttamistyötä, paikallisten kumppaneiden kapasiteettia on vahvistettu, minkä lisäksi suomalaisille järjestöille on tarjottu yhteys- ja muita tukipalveluita. Puutteeksi havaittiin, että KEPAlla ei ole ollut selkeää ja yhtenäistä lähestymistapaa kumppanien tarpeiden selvittämiseen, minkä vuoksi yhteistyön suunnittelu on ollut liian sattumanvaraista. Kokemusten syöttämistä laajempaan oppimisprosessiin ja suomalaisen järjestökentän kapasiteetin kehittämiseen voidaan myös vahvistaa. Maatoimistojen johtamista ja toiminnan tehokkuutta pidettiin kenttäselvityksissä hyvänä.

Kysymykseen ”onko KEPAn etelän toiminnoilla vaikutusta?” ei löydy selvää vastausta, koska KEPAn oma seuranta ei ole riittävästi tuottanut tähän aineistoa. Syynä tähän ovat jo edellä mainitut puutteet toimintojen suunnittelussa (liian epämääräiset tavoitteet), minkä vuoksi systemaattinen laadun ja vaikuttavuuden seuranta ei ole kunnolla edes mahdollista. Arvioinnin yhteydessä tehdyt selvitykset osoittivat kuitenkin positiivista vaikuttavuutta: Nicaraguan ohjelma on mm. vahvistanut paikallisten organisaatioiden kykyä työskennellä Karibian alueen ihmisten hyvinvoinnin edistämiseksi. Myös muualla kumppanit korostivat KEPAn kanssa tehtävän yhteistyön merkitystä: KEPAn kokemukset ovat toimineet mallina ao. organisaatioiden kehittämiseksi, minkä lisäksi KEPAn konkreettinen tuki on ollut useissa tapauksissa merkittävää kumppanien toimintaedellytysten parantamisessa. KEPA-yhteistyö on myös parantanut järjestöjen asemaa keskusteluissa maiden omien hallinto-organisaatioiden ja kansainvälisten rahoittajien kanssa.

Onko KEPAn nykyinen toiminta etelässä sitten perusteltua? Viime kädessä vastaus riippuu siitä, mikä on maaohjelmien rooli KEPAn globaalien ohjelman (OGP) toteuttamisessa: Tuovatko ne sellaista lisäarvoa, että KEPAn perustehtävän toteuttaminen kärsisi ilman läsnäoloa etelässä; synnyttääkö KEPAn toiminta merkittävää lisäarvoa etelässä? Arvioinnin ajankohta oli vielä liian varhainen antamaan tähän kunnollista vastausta, koska yhden yhtenäisen ohjelman konsepti on käytännössä vielä kehitysvaiheessaan. Positiivisia merkkejä ohjelman toimivuudesta kuitenkin löytyi: KEPAn oma etelän toiminta ja sen tuomat suorat kokemukset tuovat vakuuttavuutta KEPAn kampanjointiin, minkä lisäksi KEPAn etelän yhteistyössä voidaan kehittää ja testata lähestymistapoja, joita voidaan aktiivisesti levittää KEPAn jäsenkenttään. Tällä hetkellä kokemusten syöttäminen jäsenjärjestöille on kuitenkin vielä puutteellista.

KEPAn kenttätoimistojen käytännön palvelut jäsenjärjestöille ovat myös tärkeitä, joskin niitä on syytä selkeyttää ja tehostaa. Ei esimerkiksi ole tarkoituksenmukaista, että KEPAn työntekijät toimivat autonkuljettajina järjestöjen selvitysmatkoilla; tätä varten voidaan etsiä luotettavat paikalliset palveluntarjoajat ja tehdä heidän kanssaan selkeät palvelusopimukset, joiden pohjalta järjestöt voivat hankkia tarvitsemansa palvelun. Jäsenjärjestöjen hankkeiden seuranta ja arviointi on sen sijaan tärkeä palvelumuoto, jota voidaan entisestään kehittää.

3.4 KEPAn organisaatio

KEPAn organisaatiota on vuosien aikana uudistettu vastaamaan paremmin KEPAn nykyistä toiminnallista sisältöä ja toimintatapaa. Tyypillisestä linjaorganisaatiosta on siirrytty matriisimaiseen tiimiorganisaatioon, jossa yksi tiimi vastaa omasta tehtävälueestaan kokonaisohjelman puitteissa. Tällä on pyritty matalaan organisaatiomalliin, jossa vastuu ja valta ovat pääosin kyseisistä toiminnoista vastaavilla tiimeillä. Tiimien työtä linjaavat tiimisopimukset. Tiimit valitsevat itse keskuudestaan määräaikaiset vetäjänsä. Toimintoja johtaa, koordinoi ja valvoo kolmihenkinen johtotiimi. Ylintä päätöksentekovaltaa kantaa jäsenjärjestöjen vuosikokouksessaan valitsema KEPAn hallitus, jonka operatiivisesta työstä vastaa puheenjohtajisto.

Organisaation muutosvauhti on ollut erittäin suuri KEPAn perustamisesta lähtien. Alkuaikojen vapaaehtoistoimintaan perustuva toimintamalli on muuttunut vapaaehtoistyötä hallinnoineen organisaation kautta laaja-alaiseksi kehitysyhteistyötoiminnaksi, joka edellyttää ammattitaitoista henkilöstöä, selkeitä suunnitelmia, menettelytapoja ja johtamista. Nykyinen tiimiorganisaatio on johtamisen kannalta erittäin haastava: toimivatko vastuun hajauttaminen ja koordinaatio käytännössä, kulkeeko tieto tiimien välillä? Arviointi osoitti, että vaikka henkilöstö pitääkin nykyistä organisaatiomallia hyvänä, on erityisesti johtamisessa, tavoitteiden asettamisessa ja eri toimintojen koordinoimisessa puutteita. Organisaation sisäinen seuranta ja arviointi eivät myöskään anna johtamiselle riittäviä eväitä.

Organisaation toimintaa on haitannut henkilöstön suuri vaihtuvuus. Osin tämä on johtunut siitä, että moni KEPAn työntekijöistä on hakeutunut muihin kehitysyhteistyötehtäviin, osin monista määräaikaisista virkavapauksista ja niiden aiheuttamista sijaisjärjestelyistä. Vaikka kohtuullinen henkilöstön vaihtuvuus onkin organisaatiolle usein vain hyväksi, on vaihtuvuus KEPAn tapauksessa liian suuri, mikä johtaa sisäisen oppimisen ongelmiin sekä voimavarojen turhan suureen uhraamiseen rekrytointiin ja perehdyttämiseen.

KEPAn hallituksen toimintaan ollaan pääsääntöisesti tyytyväisiä, joskin myös hallituksen kokoonpanoa ja toimintatapaa on syytä kehittää. Ylintä päätösvaltaa edustavia yleiskokouksia tulisi myös kehittää siten, että kaikki kiinnostuneet järjestöt voisivat kohtuullisen helposti lähettää edustajansa kokouksiin. Maahanmuuttajajärjestöjen tulkkaus- ja muut erityistarpeet tulisi myös huomioida paremmin.

Organisaation oikeutus ja kestävyys testataan sen kyvyssä hoitaa perustehtäväänsä ja toteuttaa strategiaansa. KEPAn nykyinen organisaatio täyttää melko hyvin nämä kriteerit: KEPAn palvelut ja toiminnot vastaavat varsin hyvin jäsenkunnan tarpeita ja sille on muotoutunut laajemminkin selkeä oma rooli suomalaisessa kehitysyhteistyökentässä.

4. Johtopäätökset

Arviointi nosti esiin johtopäätöksiä kahdeksalla eri osa-alueella:

4.1 KEPAn perustehtävä ja rooli

KEPAn merkittävimpiä vahvuuksia ovat:

- Kyky vahvistaa suomalaisten järjestöjen kapasiteettia (osaamista, toimintatapoja ja resursseja)
- Tunnustettu rooli ja laajat verkostot, joiden avulla voidaan mm. tehdä menestyksellistä vaikuttamisyötä
- Varsin mittavat henkilöstöresurssit, joita voidaan käyttää suomalaisen yhteiskunnan globaalin vastuuntunnon vahvistamiseen
- Mahdollisuus saada konkreettisia kokemuksia työskentelystä etelän kumppaneiden kanssa. Omia kokemuksia voidaan hyödyntää sekä vaikuttamistyössä, kansainvälisyyskasvatuksessa että jäsenjärjestöjen osaamisen ja verkostojen vahvistamisessa.
- Rooli merkittävänä partnerina monissa verkostoissa, mikä edesauttaa oppimista ja kokemusten vaihtoa sekä Suomessa että etelän ja muiden kansainvälisten kumppaneiden kanssa.

Kaiken kaikkiaan KEPAn kaksi keskeistä roolia ovat toimia palvelukeskuksena (jäsenjärjestöjen edunvalvonta ja niiden sekä UM:n tarpeiden mukaisten palveluiden tuottaminen) ja toisaalta innovatiivisena kehitysyhteistyöorganisaationa (KEPAn omat ohjelmat etelän partnereiden kanssa).

Arvioinnin näkemyksen mukaan jäsenjärjestöt ovat viime kädessä KEPAn tärkein asiakasryhmä. Niiden tarpeiden palveleminen – järjestöjen osaamisen, toimintatapojen ja resurssien vahvistaminen – on KEPAn perustehtävä. Toiminnallisesti tämän tehtävän toteuttaminen voi sisältää suoraan järjestöille kohdistettua koulutusta, neuvontaa ja tiedottamista mutta myös politiikkatyötä ja suoraa yhteistyötä etelän kumppanien kanssa. Etelän ohjelmien kokemukset on kuitenkin syötettävä takaisin Suomessa tehtävään perustyöhön. Näin KEPAn työ etelässä ei jää irralliseksi vaan vahvistaa uusien toimintatapojen kehittämisen ja levittämisen kautta myös suomalaisen jäsenjärjestökentän osaamista. Tuki etelän kansalaisyhteiskunnan kehittämiseen voi tällöin moninkertaistua.

KEPAn perustehtävän ja strategioiden nykyiset kuvaukset eivät anna oikeata kuvaa KEPAn toiminnasta ja vahvuuksista. Strategian uudistaminen onkin jo meneillään KEPAssa. Strategiatyö ei saa kuitenkaan jäädä vain ylätasolle, ne on myös konkretisoitava eri toimintamuotoihin sekä jalkautettava jäsenjärjestökenttään, jotta järjestöjen omistajuus vahvistuisi. UM:n kanssa käytävällä dialogilla on lisäksi varmistettava, että myös UM:ssä päästään perehtymään KEPAn uudistettuun strategiaan.

Kaiken kaikkiaan arviointi suosittaa, että KEPAn toimintaa ei lähdetä tässä vaiheessa radikaalisti muuttamaan. Sen sijaan on syytä systemaattisesti kehittää ja vahvistaa KEPAn nykyisiä toimintamuotoja.

4.2 KEPAn näkemys kehityksestä

KEPAssa on tehty paljon työtä köyhyyden syiden ymmärtämiseksi. Näkemykset on kiteytetty käsitteeseen köyhdyttäminen: köyhyys on seuraus poliittisista, taloudellisista ja muista globaaleista ja kansallisista ratkaisuista. Köyhyyden syihin voi siten puuttua vaikuttamalla näihin tekijöihin.

Arviointi pitää tätä mallia varsin hyvänä strategisena lähtökohtana. Tämä sinällään selkeä kehitysnäkemykseen edellyttää kuitenkin käsitteen konkretisointia. Tarvitaan käytännön toimintamalleja, joiden avulla köyhdyttämiseen päästään pureutumaan myös todellisuudessa: kehittämällä järjestöjen toimintaa, verkostoitumalla, kansainvälisyyskasvatuksella jne.

Kaiken kaikkiaan KEPAssa hallitaan varsin hyvin kehityskysymyksiin liittyvät teoriat ja käsitteet. Haasteena onkin saada näkemykset myös käytännön toiminnaksi. Esimerkiksi sukupuoliroolien tai ympäristökysymysten huomioiminen läpileikkaavina teemoina on vielä puutteellista sekä KEPAn omassa toiminnassa että KEPAn koulutuksessa ja neuvonnassa

4.3 KEPAn hallinto

Arviointi osoitti selvästi tarpeen vahvistaa ja selkeyttää KEPAn hallintoa ja johtamista. KEPA ei ole enää vapaaehtoistoimintaan perustuva aktivistiorganisaatio, vaan lähes viiden miljoonan euron vuosibudjetilla toimiva yli 90 työntekijän ammattiorganisaatio. Jo suuren volyymin vuoksi johtamisen on oltava kaikilla tasoilla selkeää ja ammattitaitoista.

Ulkopuolisesta KEPAn organisaatio näyttää nykyisin erittäin monimutkaiselta ja sen rakenteen ja vastuutahojen hahmottaminen on vaikeaa. Myös sisäisesti on välillä epäselvää, kuka lopulta vastaa eri toiminnoista. Vastuutahojen selkeä määrittely ja kuvaaminen asiakkaille on tärkeä käytännön kehittämistoimenpide, joka on syytä toteuttaa välittömästi.

KEPAn hallituksen toimintaan ollaan suurelta osin tyytyväisiä. Hallituksen kokoonpano ei kuitenkaan täysin vastaa jäsenkunnan koostumusta; pienet järjestöt ovat hieman aliedustettuja, minkä lisäksi hallituksesta on puuttunut maahanmuuttajajärjestöjen edustus, vaikka ne edustavat jo yli kymmentä prosenttia KEPAn jäsenjärjestöistä. Hallitustyöskentelyn tulisi lisäksi keskittyä enemmän strategiaan kysymyksiin. KEPAn toimiston on puolestaan valmisteltava hallituksen käsittelemä tulevat asiat riittävän selkeästi.

Sekä yleiskokousten järjestämisessä että hallituksen työssä on huolehdittava, että vapaaehtoistyöhön perustuvien pienten järjestöjen mahdollisuudet osallistua ja vaikuttaa toteutuvat myös käytännössä. Arkinen päiväaikaan järjestettävät kokoukset ovat erittäin hankalia muualla työskenteleville.

Vaikka arvioijat kokivatkin KEPAn tiimiorganisaation monimutkaiseksi, organisaatiomalli on linjassa KEPAn toimintamallin kanssa. Tiimiorganisaatio mahdollistaa matalan organisaatiorakenteen, mutta edellyttää samalla jopa vielä selkeämpää johtamista ja vastuiden määrittelyä kuin perinteinen linjaorganisaatio. Mikäli vastuut eivät ole selkeät, on erityisesti hankalien päätösten tekeminen vaikeaa. Arviointi tunnisti seuraavia mahdollisuuksia KEPAn toimistoorganisaation kehittämiseksi:

- Johtotiimin tulisi ottaa selvemmin vastuu toiminnan kokonaisuudesta ja koordinoinnista
- Tiimien johtajuutta on syytä vahvistaa. Yksi mahdollisuus on nimittää tiimeille pysyvät vetäjät.
- Ohjelmajohtajan tehtäväkuva on nykyisellään erittäin laaja. Ohjelmajohtajan alaisuudessa toimivan uuden johtajan nimeäminen etelän ohjelmalle voisi vahvistaa ohjelman koordinaatiota ja johtamista.
- Henkilöstölle on syytä kehittää selkeä johtosääntö.
- Kaikille toiminnoille ja palveluille on syytä määritellä vastuuhenkilöt.

4.4 KEPAn ohjelma

Vuodesta 2004 lähtien KEPA on pyrkinyt yhdistämään etelän ja pohjoisen toimintansa yhteisen globaalin ohjelman alle (One Global Programme, OGP). Tavoitteena on, että eri toimintojen kokemukset pystytään jakamaan oppimisprosessina sekä KEPAn eri tiimeissä että ennen kaikkea jäsenjärjestöissä. Toimintamalli on kuitenkin vielä niin nuori, että sen vaikuttavuudesta ei vielä ole kunnollista näyttöä, minkä vuoksi arvioinnissa ei kyetty luotettavasti arvioimaan konseptin toimivuutta.

Teoreettisena viitekehyksenä OGP tarjoaa KEPAlle selkeän strategisen toiminta-ajatuksen. Toimintamallia ja sen tavoitteita on kuitenkin konkretisoitava KEPAn kullakin toiminta-alueella. Tämä edellyttää myös KEPAn seuranta- ja arviointijärjestelmän kehittämistä siten, että globaali ohjelman vaikuttavuutta pystytään jatkossa arvioimaan sekä kokonaisuutena että sen toteutumisena KEPAn eri toiminnoissa ja palveluissa.

Erityisesti globaali ohjelman tulee näkyä etelän ja Suomen toimintojen yhteensovittamisessa. KEPAn kaiken etelän toiminnan tulee olla perusteltua ohjelmastrategian (OGP) kautta eikä maatiimien aseman tule tässä suhteessa erota KEPAn Helsingin tiimeistä. Toimintamallin tulisi olla selkiintynyt ja konkretisoitunut KEPAn uuden strategian käyttöön ottoon mennessä vuoden 2006 aikana. Tällä hetkellä ohjelmakonseptin toteutumisessa maaohjelmissa on kuitenkin monia heikkouksia, koska sekä itse toimintamalli että siihen liittyvät johtamisvastuut ovat vielä liian epämääräisiä. Yhteisen näkemyksen luomista estää osaltaan myös se, että kunkin maatoimiston intressit ja tarpeet ovat erilaisia. Maatoimistojen osalta tarvitaan seuraavia toimenpiteitä:

- Kullekin maatoimistolle on määriteltävä selkeät strategiset tavoitteet, jotka yhdistävät globaali ohjelman strategian maan erityisilanteeseen.
- Kullakin maatoimistolla on oltava lisäksi selkeät palvelusopimukset KEPAn Helsingin tiimien kanssa. Sopimusten tulee määritellä mahdollisimman konkreettisesti maatiimien tuottamat palvelut Helsingin tiimeille, jotta nämä voivat täyttää oman roolinsa globaali ohjelman toteuttamisessa, sekä päinvastoin.

Selkeiden strategioiden ja palvelusopimusten tarkoituksena on, että etelän toiminnot kytkeytyvät kokonaisuuteen eivätkä jää irrallisiksi maaohjelmiksi. Hyvin johdettuina ja koordinoituina etelän ohjelmat palvelevat tällöin sekä paikallisia tarpeita (kansalaisyhteiskunnan vahvistaminen) että suomalaisten jäsenjärjestöjen tarpeita (koulutus, tiedotus, vaikuttamistoiminta, verkostoituminen, hankkeiden laadun parantaminen jne.). Tämä voi vahvistaa KEPAn toimintaa myös suhteessa UM:n tarpeisiin.

Aiempaan verrattuna tavoitteena on varmistaa, että eri toiminnot ovat paremmin toisiinsa kytkeytyviä ja paremmin perusteltuja, mikä edistää myös parempaa vaikuttavuutta. 1990-luvun loppupuolen ja 2000-luvun alkuvuosien kokeilut (Brasilia, Guatemala, Uganda jne.) olivat toki aikanaan perusteltuja, koska KEPAn piti hakea ja testata uusia toimintamalleja. Toiminnot osoittautuivat kuitenkin kokonaisuuden kannalta epätarkoituksenmukaiseksi, eikä niitä voisi enää perustella yhden globaalin ohjelman pohjalta. Nyt KEPAn on syytä keskittyä vahvistamaan nykyistä ohjelmaansa. Uusiakin toimintamuotoja voidaan ottaa mukaan ohjelmaan, mutta ne on pystyttävä selkeästi perustelemaan yhden globaali ohjelman strategian kautta.

4.5 Asiakasnäkökulman vahvistaminen

KEPAn toimistosta on kehittynyt vuosien mittaan varsin hyvin resursoitu ammattimainen kehitysyhteistyöorganisaatio. Vastaavatyypisissä organisaatioissa on kuitenkin vaarana, että ne tulevat itseriittoisiksi: toimintaa suunnitellaan ja toteutetaan organisaatioin sisältä käsin. Jotta KEPA pysyisi terveenä organisaationa, jolle on todellinen tarve, ja jotta omistajuus KEPASTA vahvistuisi jäsenjärjestöjen piirissä, on KEPAn entisestään vahvistettava asiakassuuntautuneisuuttaan. Jollei KEPA pysty jatkuvasti vastaamaan erilaisten asiakkaidensa muuttuviin tarpeisiin, uhkaa organisaatiota sisäänpäin kääntyminen, minkä kautta sen olemassaolon oikeutus tulee kyseenalaiseksi. Tarpeiden systemaattinen selvittely ja aktiivinen palautteen hakeminen voivat sen sijaan entisestään vahvistaa KEPAn roolia suomalaisena kehitysyhteistyöorganisaationa.

KEPAlla on jo tällä hetkellä hyviä keinoja tarpeiden kartoittamiseen ja palautteen hankkimiseen. Vuosina 2004-2005 toteutettu jäsenjärjestökysely oli hyvä esimerkki lähestymistavasta, jota tulee vahvistaa. Tarpeiden kartoittaminen ei kuitenkaan ole mikään itseisarvo; tarpeista saatavalla informaatiolla on pystyttävä parantamaan palveluita ja sen kautta tukemaan jäsenjärjestöjen vahvistamista. Myös UM on KEPAn tärkeä asiakas. Sen lisäksi, että se on KEPAn ja koko kansalaisjärjestöjen kehitysyhteistyön merkittävin rahoittaja, se on myös hallinnon tärkein asiantuntijaorganisaatio kehitysyhteistyökysymyksissä. UM:llä onkin sekä järjestöjen osamiseen liittyviä kehittämistarpeita että annettavaa järjestöjen kehitysyhteistyölle. KEPAn ja ministeriön aktiivinen yhteistyö on siten paitsi välttämätöntä, myös hyödyllistä.

Asiakassuuntautuneisuus ei tarkoita passiivista reagoitua tarpeisiin. KEPAlla on paitsi oikeus myös velvollisuus itse kehittää uusia toimintamuotoja ja palveluita. Ei ole syytä pelätä, että KEPASTA tulisi liian ammattitaitoinen: KEPAn tärkeänä roolina on kehittää toimintamuotoja ja palveluita suomalaisen yhteiskunnan globaalin vastuun lisäämiseksi. Tätä ei kuitenkaan pidä tehdä yksin: osallistuvien menetelmien hallinta ja käyttö suunnittelussa ja toteutuksessa on ammattitaidon ja asiakasherkkyyden oleellinen osa.

4.6 Lopuksi

Kaiken kaikkiaan arviointitiimi vakuuttui, että KEPAlla on tärkeä rooli suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa. Vaikka KEPAn oman aiemman seurannan ja arvioinnin puutteet aiheuttivatkin sen, että myöskään tässä ulkoisessa arvioinnissa ei kyetty osoittamaan toiminnan yksiselitteistä vaikuttavuutta, osoitti arviointi kuitenkin monissa kohdin, että KEPAn työllä on todellista merkitystä ja konkreettista positiivista vaikutusta. KEPASTA on tullut ammattitaitoinen ja hyvin resursoitu organisaatio, mutta se on samalla onnistunut säilyttämään alkuperäiset arvonsa ja visionsa tasa-arvoisemmasta maailmasta. Arviointi ei suosita KEPALLE radikaalisti uutta toimintamallia. Sen sijaan KEPAn on syytä keskittyä ydintehtäviensä vahvistamiseen ja toiminnan laadun parantamiseen. Tämä edellyttää erityisesti suunnittelun, johtamisen mutta myös seurannan ja arvioinnin kehittämistä. Nämä vahvistavat sekä KEPAn roolia että lopulta myös KEPAn olemassaolon oikeutusta.

5. Suositukset

Arviointiraportissa ja sen liitteissä on useita konkreettisia KEPAn tiimejä ja toimintamuotoja koskevia suosituksia ja ehdotuksia. Seuraavaan listaan on koottu tärkeimmät arvioinnissa esiin nousseet yleistason suositukset:

5.1 Suositukset ulkoasiainministeriölle:

1. UM:n on syytä jatkaa KEPAn tukemista nykyisellä tasolla. Myöskään rahoitusmallia (rahoitus yhtenä kokonaisuutena) ei ole syytä tällä hetkellä muuttaa.
2. Mikäli UM tulevaisuudessa harkitsee kansalaisjärjestörahoituksen ulkoistamista, ei tähän ole olemassa yhtä ainoaa parasta mallia. Arvioinnin yhteydessä tehtiin vertaileva tutkimus Ruotsin, Norjan, Tanskan, Iso-Britannian, Irlannin ja Hollannin rahoitusjärjestelmistä. Selvityksessä esitetyt ”hyvät käytännöt” voivat olla lähtökohtana, jos ulkoistamista suunnitellaan myöhemmin.
3. UM:n ja KEPAn yhteistyösuhteita on selkeytettävä ja kehitettävä aidon yhteistyösuhteen aikaansaamiseksi. Tämä edellyttää rahoitusta koskevien sopimusten täsmentämistä, säännöllistä yhteydenpitoa ja raportoinnin selkeyttämistä.

5.2 Suositukset KEPAlle

1. KEPAn periaatejulistus (”Mission Statement”) ja strategiat on syytä uudistaa vastaamaan paremmin Kepan toiminnan tarkoitusta ja sisältöä. Palvelukeskus-termi KEPAn nimessä voi aiheuttaa vääränlaista tulkintaa KEPAn roolista, minkä vuoksi nimen uudistamista tulisi harkita.
2. KEPAn hallituksen tulee varmistaa, että se toimii tavalla, joka mahdollistaa keskittymisen linjakysymyksiin operatiivisiin kysymyksiin juuttumisen sijaan.
3. Hallituksen kokoonpanossa on varmistettava, että hallituksessa heijastuvat koko jäsenjärjestökentän tarpeet ja intressit. Hallituksella on myös oltava monimuotoisen organisaation johtamiseen tarvittavat taidot ja toimintaresurssit.
4. KEPAn on nyt ennen kaikkea keskityttävä toimintansa vakauttamiseen ja laadun parantamiseen uusien toimintamuotojen käynnistämisen sijaan. Toiminnan kehittämisessä on siten keskityttävä KEPAn erityisosaamisen ja vahvuuksien hiomiseen.
5. KEPAn tulee aiempaa enemmän selvittää ensisijaisen kohderyhmänsä eli jäsenjärjestöjen tarpeita ja keskittyä kehittämään innovatiivisia tapoja, joilla tämän monimuotoisen ryhmän toimintavalmiuksia voidaan vahvistaa. Tämä edellyttää entistä aktiivisempaa vuorovaikutusta ja verkostoitumista jäsenjärjestöjen kanssa. Systemaattisella kapasiteetin kehittämisellä tulee levittää kokemuksia ja hyviä käytäntöjä järjestöjen piiriin sekä edistää kehityksen läpileikkaavien teemojen parempaa huomioon ottamista järjestöjen kehitysyhteistyötoiminnassa.

6. KEPAn tulee pyrkiä luomaan vahva yhteistyösuhde ulkoministeriöön ja sen kansalaisjärjestöyksikköön sekä sopia säännölliset palautemekanismit (tapaamiset) ministeriön asianomaisten tiimien kanssa.
7. KEPAn sisäisen vastuunjaon ja johtamisen prosesseja tulee vahvistaa.
 - a. Johtotiimin tulisi toimia entistä vahvemmin koko organisaation johtajana. Päävastuu johtamisesta on toiminnanjohtajalla.
 - b. Uuden apulaisohjelmajohtajan tehtävän perustamista kannattaa harkita. Apulaisohjelmajohtaja vastaisi etelän ohjelmien johtamisesta ohjelmajohtajan tukena ja ohjauksessa.
 - c. Tiimien johtajuutta tulee vahvistaa.
 - d. KEPAn johtosäännöstä tulee kehittää selkeä pohja ”hyvien käytäntöjen” mukaiselle henkilöstön johtamiselle.
 - e. Nykyisen tiimiorganisaation toimivuutta ja tehokkuutta on syytä arvioida kahden vuoden kuluttua.
 - f. Työntekijöiden suurta vaihtuvuutta tulee vähentää, muun muassa työehtoja ja -olosuhteita tarkistamalla.
8. Toiminnan vaikuttavuutta ja tarkoituksenmukaisuutta on arvioitava systemaattisesti. Tätä varten on edelleen kehitettävä seuranta- ja arviointijärjestelmiä sekä niiden käyttöä eri toimintojen laadun parantamisessa.
9. Oppiminen tulee tunnistaa KEPAn elinehdoksi. Seurannan ja arvioinnin tuottamat opetukset ja kokemukset on syötettävä aktiivisesti sekä organisaation sisäiseen oppimisprosessiin että jäsenjärjestöjen vahvistamiseen.
10. Globaali ohjelman (OGP) periaate on syytä säilyttää KEPAn toiminnan lähtökohtana ja toimintatavan kuvauksena. Sitä on kuitenkin tarkistettava ja konkretisoitava, jotta varmistetaan, että sen tavoitteet ovat saavutettavissa ja tulokset mittavissa.
11. Kenttätoimistojen rooleja kehitettäessä on varmistettava, että niiden toiminnot ovat linjassa KEPAn perustehtävän kanssa ja että ne kytkeytyvät selkeästi yhteisen globaalin ohjelman toteutukseen.
12. Kuussakin tiimissä ja kenttätoimistossa on syytä käydä läpi tiimejä ja kenttätoimistoja koskevat raportin yksityiskohtaisemmat suositukset ja ryhdyttävä tarkastelun edellyttämiin toimiin.

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