

# Evaluation

## Finnish NGO Foundations



**Evaluation report 2008:5**

**MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND**

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# **Evaluation**

## **FINNISH NGO FOUNDATIONS**

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## FINNISH NGO FOUNDATIONS

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Merja Mäkelä

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## PREFACE

Three NGO Foundations were established in 1998: Abilis to work with people with disabilities, KIOS to promote human rights, and Siemenpuu to support sustainable environmental projects. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) uses these NGO Foundations as one of a number of funding instruments in support of local development efforts in developing countries.

The Foundations receive funding from MFA and they award grants to their partner organisations or groups. By the end of 2007, the three Foundations had supported local development by means of 1545 small and medium size grants (500 € – 140 000 €).

The work of the Foundations has been evaluated now for the first time. Simultaneously, also an audit of the activities was carried out. The purpose of these measures has been to improve the capacity of the Foundations to manage their development programmes as well as the capacity of their partner organisations to implement the planned projects. In addition, the evaluation aimed at improved capacity in MFA to administer funding of local level activities. It also aimed at better observance of the cross-cutting themes of the Finnish development cooperation.

According to the evaluation the Foundations are true experts in their sectors. The evaluation concludes that the entire Finnish development cooperation function could better draw upon and benefit from this expertise in order to implement the cross-cutting themes in the development interventions. The partner organisations and networks of the Foundations could and should serve as wider platforms of dialogue in development issues in their respective sectors. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs should more actively participate in this dialogue.

The evaluation report lists several measures which should be taken to decrease bureaucracy and improve efficiency, effectiveness and transparency in the administration of the grants. Especially the capacity building of partner organisations is seen as a major focus area in future work of the Foundations in order to prepare the way for the empowerment of local actors.

Helsinki, 8 December 2008

Aira Päivöke  
Director  
Evaluation and Internal Auditing of Development Cooperation

## ACRONYMS

ACODEV	Action for Community Development
AGOI	Almatynshoe Goradskoe Obchestro Invalidou (Almaty City Society of People with Disabilities)
AHURIO	Association of Human Rights Organisation
ARuPA	Aliansi Relawan untuk Penyelamatan Alam (Volunteers Alliance for Saving Nature)
ARN	Africa Rivers Network
ASF	Asian Social Forum
BBA	Blind But Able
BMU	Beach Management Units
CAPPA	Community Alliance for Pulp and Paper Advocacy
CBFM	Community-Based Forest Management
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CDPO	Cambodian Disabled People's Organisation
CEDAW	Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIFOR	Center for International Research on Forestry
CSDS	Center for Study of Developing Societies
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee of OECD
DBS	Direct Budget Support
Danida	Danish International Development Agency
DFID	Department for International Development, the UK
DPO	Disabled Peoples' Organization
EC	European Commission
ECDD	Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development
EHAHRDP	East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project
EU	European Union
FHRI	Foundation for Human Rights Initiative
FIDIDA	Finnish Disabled people's International Development Association
FWI	Forest Watch Indonesia
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GNI	Gross National Income
GOF	Government of Finland
HQ	Headquarters
HURINET-U	Human Rights Network – Uganda
ICD	Information Center on Disability
INFID	International NGO Foundation on Indonesian Development
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IO	Implementing Organization
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
IWG	Indonesia Working Group (of Siemenpuu)
JASUL	Joint Action for Sustainable Livelihood
JIKALAHARI	Jaringan Kerja Penyelamat Hutan Riau (Forest Rescue Network Riau)
KADIWOD	Kasese District Women with Disabilities

KADUPED	Kasese District Union of Persons with Disabilities
KIOS	Kansalaisjärjestöjen ihmisoikeussäätiö (The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights)
KEPA	Kehitysyhteistyön Palvelukeskus (NGO Service Centre for Development Cooperation)
LCF	Local Cooperation Funds (of the Finnish Embassy)
LEISA	Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture
MBO	Medborgarorganisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland
MFP	Mali-Folkecenter-Nyetaa
MUDIWA	Mubende Women with Disabilities Association
NAA	National Adivasi Alliance
NAPE	National Association of Professional Environmentalists (Uganda)
NGDO	Non-Governmental Development Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
NUDIPU	National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda
NUWODU	National Union of Women with Disabilities in Uganda
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PO	Partnership Organisation
PRDP	Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda
SADED	South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy
SHIVYAWATA	Shirikisho La Vyama Vya Watu Wenge
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
SIGAB	Sasana Integrasi Dan Adokansi Difabel
SINFPAD	Southern Initiative NGO Forum for Participatory Development
SIPU	The Siemenpuu Foundation
SGPPTF	Small Grant Programme to Promote Tropical Forestry
SPI	Indonesian Peasants' Union
SUDEWATCH	Sustainable Development Watch-Uganda
SWAp	Sector-wide approach
TNEC	Tamil Nadu Environmental Council
ToR	Terms of Reference
UFFCA	Uganda Fisheries and Fishconservation Association
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Cooperation Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations' International Children's Emergency Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations' Development Fund for Women
UPM	United Paper Mills
US\$	United States dollar
VSO	Voluntary Service Overseas (the UK)
WSF	World Social Forum
YDWA	Young Deaf Women's Association
€	Euro



# Suomalaisten Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden Evaluaatio

*Paula J Williams, Raisa Venäläinen ja Ruth Santisteban sekä  
Alice Nankya Ndidde, Dwi R Muhtaman ja Merja Mäkelä*

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## TIIVISTELMÄ



Kolme suomalaista kansalaisjärjestösäätiötä – Abilis, KIOS ja Siemenpuu – hoitavat joustavaa, pienimuotoista rahoitusta lahja-apuna kansalaisjärjestöille, yhteisöpohjaisille järjestöille ja ruohonjuuritason ryhmille kehitysmaissa. Säätiöt on perustettu vuonna 1998 ja ne tukevat vammaisuuteen, ihmisoikeuksiin ja ympäristöön liittyviä aloitteita ja pyrkivät myötävaikuttamaan kansalaisyhteiskunnan rakentamiseen kehitysmaissa. Säätiöt saavat tukea Suomen ulkoasiainministeriöltä (UM). Evaluointi on tehty säätiöiden kautta annettavan kansalaisjärjestötuen poliittisen johdonmukaisuuden, tehokkuuden, tuloksellisuuden ja vaikuttavuuden arvioimiseksi.

Evaluointi vahvistaa, että kansalaisjärjestösäätiöt ovat relevantteja pienimuotoisen kansalaisjärjestötuen hallinnoinnissa. Säätiöt tukevat Suomen kehityspolitiikan toteutusta jakamalla rahoitusta tärkeille poikkileikkaaville teemoille ja tukemalla ihmisoikeusperustaista lähestymistapaa kehitykseen.

Kapasiteetin vahvistaminen kehitysmaissa on erityisen merkittävää, koska säätiöt ovat sitoutuneet pitkäaikaiseen suhteeseen tiettyjen kumppaneiden kanssa. Kaikki kolme säätiötä ovat siirtymässä kohti maantieteellisesti keskittyneempiä yhteistyöohjelmia edistääkseen paremmin kohdennettuja ja pitkäaikaisempia suhteita kumppaneidensa kanssa.

Vastuun laajempi delegointi säätiöiden hallituksilta kumppaneille tai maakohtaisille työryhmille voisi lisätä toimenpiteiden tehokkuutta. Etelän kumppanien kapasiteetin vahvistamiseen hankkeiden suunnittelussa, toteutuksessa ja seurannassa sekä koulutuksessa ja organisaation kehittämisessä tarvitaan keskittyneempiä ponnistuksia. Järjestöt tarvitsevat myös lisäkapasiteettia läheisempään yhteistyöhön muiden kehityskumppanien kanssa.

Säätiöiden rahoittamisen lisäarvoa tuovia piirteitä ovat niiden kapasiteetti käydä hankkeiden laatua koskevaa vuoropuhelua Etelän kumppaneiden kanssa sekä kumppanien



avustaminen kapasiteetin kehittämisessä, verkostoitumisessa ja kansainvälisten kokemusten jakaminen.

Evaluaatio antaa suosituksia säätiöille ja Ulkoasiainministeriölle rahoitusmuodon parantamiseksi.

*Avainsanat:* kansalaisjärjestöt, kehitysyhteistyö, kansalaisjärjestösäätiöt, pienimuotoinen lahja-apu



## Utvärdering av Finländska MBO-fonder

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med bidrag från Alice Nankya Ndidde, Dwi R Muhtaman och Merja Mäkelä*

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### ABSTRAKT

Tre finländska MBO-fonder – Abilis, KIOS och Siemenpuu – tillhandahåller flexibel finansiering i form av gåvobistånd till icke-statliga organisationer, samfundsbaserade organisationer och grupperingar på gräsrotsnivå i utvecklingsländer. Fonderna, som grundades år 1998, stödjer initiativ som anknyter till olika handikapp, de mänskliga rättigheterna och miljöfrågor samt strävar efter att stötta uppbyggnaden av civila samhällen i utvecklingsländerna. Fonderna stöds av finska utrikesministeriet. Föreliggande evaluering utfördes i syfte att utvärdera den politiska koherensen, effekten, verkningarna och resultaten av denna typ av bistånd till olika medborgarorganisationer.

Evalueringen bekräftar att MBO-fonderna är relevanta för hanteringen av småskaligt stöd till medborgarorganisationer. Fonderna medverkar till verkställandet av Finlands utvecklingspolitik genom att de fokuserar på centrala övergripande frågor och utgår från de mänskliga rättigheterna i sin verksamhet.

Då fonderna medverkar i långsiktigare samarbetsprojekt med specifika partners har uppbyggandet av kapacitet större betydelse än vid kortsiktigare interventioner. De tre fonderna kommer att rikta in sig på mer geografiskt avgränsade program i syfte att främja bättre fokuserade långsiktiga samarbetsförhållanden.

Den operationella effektiviteten skulle gynnas av om stiftelsernas styrelser delegerade mer av ansvaret till samarbetsparterna eller till landsspecifika arbetsgrupper. Mer insatser behövs för att stärka de sydliga samarbetsparternas kapacitet för planering, hantering och uppföljning av projekten samt för utbildning och den organisatoriska och institutionella utvecklingen. Det behövs även mer kapacitet för närmare samarbete med andra utvecklingsparter.



Det viktigaste mervärdet är fondernas förmåga att föra en dialog med de sydliga samarbetsparterna för att höja kvaliteten på interventionerna samt hjälpa dem att höja sin kapacitet, nätverka och ta del av internationella erfarenheter.

Evalueringen ger rekommendationer till fonderna och utrikesministeriet för hur denna form av utvecklingssamarbete kunde förbättras.

*Nyckelord:* Medborgarorganisationer (MBO), utvecklingssamarbete, MBO-fonder, gåvobistånd

## Evaluation of Finnish NGO Foundations

*Paula J Williams, Raisa Venäläinen and Ruth Santisteban  
with contributions from Alice Nankya Ndidde, Dwi R Muhtaman and Merja Mäkelä*

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### ABSTRACT

Three Finnish NGO Foundations – Abilis, KIOS, and Siemenpuu – manage flexible, small-grant funding for non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations, and grassroots groups in developing countries. Established in 1998, they support initiatives relating to disabilities, human rights, and environmental issues, and seek to contribute to the building of civil society in developing countries. The Foundations are supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA). This evaluation is undertaken to assess the policy coherence, efficiency, effectiveness and impacts of this modality of NGO support.

The evaluation confirms that the NGO Foundations are relevant for providing small-scale NGO support. The Foundations assist implementation of Finnish development cooperation policy by supporting key cross-cutting issues and the human-rights based approach to development.

Overall, capacity-building is more significant where the Foundations are engaged in longer-term relationships with specific partners, as compared with shorter interventions. To promote more focused, longer-term relationships, all three Foundations are moving towards more geographically-focused cooperation programmes.

Greater delegation of responsibility from the Foundation Boards to the partners or country-based working groups could improve operational efficiency. More focused efforts are needed to build the Southern partners' capacities in project planning, management, and monitoring; training, and organizational and institutional development. Capacity for greater collaboration with, development partners is needed.

The most important “added value” is the Foundations' capacity to dialogue with their Southern partners to improve the quality of interventions, assist them with capacity development, networking and sharing international experience.



Recommendations are provided for the Foundations and Ministry for Foreign Affairs to improve this modality of development cooperation.

*Keywords:* Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Development Cooperation, NGO Foundations, small grants

## YHTEENVETO

### *Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden evaluointi*

Suomen ulkoasiainministeriö (UM) tukee kolmen suomalaisen kansalaisjärjestösäätiön antamaa pienrahoitusta kehitysmaissa toimiville kansalaisjärjestöille. Kaikki kolme säätiötä on perustettu vuonna 1998. Kukin säätiö keskittyy erilaiseen aihepiiriin – Abilis vammaisiin, KIOS (*Kansalaisjärjestöjen ihmisoikeussäätiö*) ihmisoikeuksiin ja Siemenpuu (SIPU) ympäristökysymyksiin. Säätiöt raportoivat UM:n kansalaisjärjestöyksikölle, joka on myös vastuussa niiden monitoroinnista.

UM:n sisäisen tarkastuksen ja evaluoinnin yksikkö antoi tehtäväksi Impact Consulting Oy Ltd:lle kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden toimintojen, tehtävien suorittamisen ja vaikutusten evaluoinnin vuodesta 1998 nykyhetkeen saakka. Tämä arviointi on ensimmäinen suurempi evaluointi tästä kansalaisjärjestöjen rahoitusmuodosta. UM on myös antanut tehtäväksi KPMG Finland Oy Ab:lle säätiöiden toiminnan tarkastuksen vuosina 2004 ja 2008.

Evaluaation tarkoituksena oli kapasiteetin parantaminen. Sen tuloksena tulisi olla Säätiöiden, niiden kumppanijärjestöjen ja UM:n parantunut kapasiteetti tuen hoidossa ja hallinnoinnissa. Lisäksi pyritään poikkileikkaavien teemojen (ihmisoikeudet, vammaisuus, ympäristö) lisääntyneeseen soveltamiseen suomalaisessa kehitysyhteistyössä. Evaluaatiotiimi työskenteli joidenkin avainsidosryhmien kanssa arvioidakseen yhdessä säätiöiden saavutuksia ja tulevaisuuden vaihtoehtoja.

Evaluaatio tehtiin vuoden 2008 toukokuun ja syyskuun välillä. Evaluaatiotiimi järjesti kokouksia ja haastatteluja Säätiöiden henkilökunnan ja hallitusten jäsenten, UM:n työntekijöiden ja muiden sidosryhmien kanssa Suomessa. UM:n pyynnöstä kenttäarviointeja tehtiin kahdessa maassa, joissa kaikki kolme säätiötä työskentelevät: Indonesiassa ja Ugandassa. Evaluaatiotiimi käytti semistrukturoitua rakennetta tiedon keräämisessä ja analysoinnissa. Tarpeellista tietoa saatiin dokumenteista, internetistä, hankkeiden tiedostoista ja muista kirjoitetuista lähteistä, sidosryhmien kanssa järjestetyistä haastatteluista ja kokouksista, sekä kenttävierailuista.

### *Yleiskatsaus Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöihin*

Abilis ja KIOS saivat UM:n rahoitusta ja antoivat ensimmäiset avustuksensa vuonna 1998, kun taas Siemenpuu sai ensimmäistä kertaa UM:n rahoitusta vuonna 2001 ja antoi ensimmäisen avustuksensa 2002. UM:n rahoitus Säätiöille on noin viisi prosenttia koko valtion kansalaisjärjestöille kohdentamasta kehitysapurahoituksesta. Kokonaisuudessaan valtion Säätiöille kohdenneet avustukset olivat yli 16,7 miljoonaa euroa vuosina 1998–2007 ja kokonaissumma kasvaa lähes 20,5 miljoonaan euroon 2008.

Vuoden 2007 loppuun mennessä Säätiöt olivat antaneet yhteensä 1545 avustusta. Abilis on työskennellyt 60 eri maassa, KIOS 33 maassa ja Siemenpuu 39 maassa. Viime vuosina kaikki Säätiöt ovat siirtyneet kohti maantieteellisesti ja temaattisesti kohdistettua tukea. Tällä hetkellä Abilis työskentelee kahdeksan kumppanijärjestön kanssa seitsemässä maassa ja se suunnittelee kumppanuuden kehittämistä kahdessa muussa maassa. KIOS keskittää työnsä kahdelle alueelle, jotka käsittävät 20 maata. Siemenpuulla on tällä hetkellä kolme maayhteistyöohjelmaa, ja se suunnittelee kahden muun alueellisen (useaa maata käsittävän) ohjelman kehittämistä.

Kullakin Säätiöllä on oma vapaaehtoistyöhön perustuva hallituksensa ja pieni kokopäivätoiminen palkattu henkilökunta. Säätiöt jakavat yhteisen toimistotilan ja ne tekevät yhteistyötä neuvotellen UM:n kanssa ja kehittäen hankehallinto-ohjeistuksia. Siemenpuulla on talouspäällikkö, joka palvelee tarvittaessa myös kahta muuta säätiötä. Kaikki kolme säätiötä käyttävät samaa tiloimistoa. Niillä on samankaltaiset käytännöt avustuksen hakemiseen, valintaan ja raportointiin. Tuen saajien edellytetään laativan hankkeen edistymistä ja talustilannetta koskevat puoliväli- ja loppuraportit. Seuranta perustuu pääasiallisesti raportteihin, vaikkakin sekä henkilökunta että hallituksen jäsenet tai muut kollegat saattavat tehdä seurantamatkoja arvioidakseen tilannetta kentällä. Säätiöt puolestaan raportoivat hallituksilleen ja kansalaisjärjestöyksikölle. Säätiöt ovat myös aktiivisia: ne verkostoituvat muiden samantapaisten järjestöjen kanssa ja tukevat yhteyksiä avunsaajien välillä sekä suomalaisen kansalaisyhteiskunnan kanssa.

Kullakin säätiöllä on oma visionsa ja strategiansa. Vaikkakin niitä voidaan pitää ”sisarsäätiöinä”, niiden toimintatavoissa ja avustamisen muodoissa on tärkeitä eroja.

### *Abilis Säätiö*

Abilis pyrkii ”rahoittamaan kehityksissä tapahtuvia hankkeita, joiden tarkoituksena on parantaa kehitysmaiden vammaisten henkilöiden kykyä vaikuttaa oman elämänsä laatuun”. Se kohdistaa tukensa pienille kansalaisjärjestöille, yhteisöpohjaisille järjestöille (CBO), ja ruohonjuuritason ryhmille, joita kutsutaan toteutusjärjestöiksi (implementing organisations, IOs). Tuen saamiseksi ryhmien pitää koostua vammaisista tai vammaisten lasten vanhemmista. Avustusten määrä vaihtelee 500 Eurosta 10 000 Euroon. Avustukset ovat yleensä kerta-avustuksia toiminnoille, jotka valmistuvat 10–12 kuukaudessa. Yleisiä aiheita ovat organisaation kehitys, tietoisuuden ja tiedon levittäminen, liikkumisen kehittäminen, tulonhankinta, koulutus ja HIV / AIDS. Noin puolet avustuksista annetaan siemenrahaksi tulonhankintaprojekteihin. Abilis hallinnoi vuosittain 160–200 hanketta.

Vuodesta 2003 Abilis on työskennellyt kumppanijärjestöjen kanssa (POs), jotka saavat rahoitusta tukeakseen toteutusjärjestöjä fasilitaattoreiden avulla. Vuosina 2005–2009 kumppanijärjestöt saivat keskimäärin 15 000 Euroa vuodessa. Tällä hetkellä noin puolet Abiloksen avustuksista menee seitsemään maahan (Kamputsea, Bangladesh, Kazakhs-tan, Intia, Uganda, Etiopia ja Tansania). Tulevaisuudessa Abilis toivoo kehittävänsä ohjelmalähestymistavan tuelleen. Abiloksen uuden strategian 2006 – 2011 (”Pieni kool-

taan, suuri vaikutukseltaan”) mukaan se pyrkii lisäämään kumppanien määrää, keskittämään tukensa kumppanimaihin ja perustamaan uuden toimiston Aasiaan vuoteen 2011 mennessä.

#### *Kansalaisjärjestöjen ihmisoikeussäätiö (KIOS)*

KIOS pyrkii ”edistämään ihmisoikeuksien toteutumista kehitysmaissa sellaisina kuin ihmisoikeudet on määritelty YK:n ja Euroopan neuvoston ihmisoikeussopimuksissa ja -asiakirjoissa sekä muissa alueellisissa ihmisoikeusasiakirjoissa”. Yleisimmät KIOS:in tukemat aktiviteetit liittyvät ihmisoikeuskoulutukseen, tiedotukseen, kampanjointiin ja vaikuttamistyöhön lainsäädännöllisin keinoin. Ihmisoikeuksia suojelevat hankkeet puolestaan sisältävät mm. monitorointia, dokumentointia, oikeussuojan vahvistamista, oikeusturvakeinojen saatavuuden edistämistä ja oikeusavun takaamista. Lisäksi KIOS joissain tapauksissa tukee ihmisoikeusjärjestöjen kapasiteetin vahvistamista. KIOS antaa avustuksia jotka vaihtelevat 5 000 Eurosta 50 000 Euroon ja kestävät yleensä vuoden. Jotkut järjestöt ovat pitkäaikaisia kumppaneita ja saavat eri avustuksia useiden vuosien aikana. KIOS saa vuosittain 300–400 hakemusta, mutta se voi hyväksyä ja rahoittaa alle 10 prosenttia niistä.

KIOS:in tämänhetkinen strategia määrittelee kolme temaattista työn painopistettä: demokratiaoikeudet, tasa-arvo ja oikeus koulutukseen. KIOS hyväksyy hakemuksia kaikista kehittyvistä maista Afrikassa, Aasiassa, Latinalaisessa Amerikassa, Lähi-Idässä ja Euroopassa. Vuodesta 2004 alkaen KIOS on keskittänyt tukensa kahdelle alueelle: Itä-Afrikkaan ja Etelä-Aasiaan. Vuonna 2006, KIOS laajensi määritelmänsä näistä alueista sisältämään 20 maata. KIOS suunnittelee ohjaavansa 70 prosenttia avustuksista näille alueille ja varaavansa 30 prosenttia niistä vastataksaan polttaviin kysymyksiin missä tahansa niitä ilmenee. KIOS perustanut vuonna 2007 pienavustusrahaston, joka antaa 10 000 Euron tai pienempiä avustuksia, ja se on aloittanut kumppanuusohjelman Keniassa vuonna 2008.

#### *Siemenpuu Säätiö*

Siemenpuu pyrkii tukemaan ”kestäviä ympäristöhankkeita kehitysmaissa”, tarkemmin määriteltynä tuki kohdistuu ”kansalaisyhteiskunnan toimijoille kehitysmaissa ekologisen demokratian, ympäristönsuojelun ja ympäristöuhkien torjumisen hankkeisiin”. Alussa Siemenpuu hyväksyi hakemuksia kaikista kehitysmaista ja se on tukenut hankkeita 39 maassa. Säätiö on tukenut hyvin erilaisia hankkeita yhteisöpohjaisista aktiviteeteista ympäristöhallintaan sekä myös tietoisuuden lisäämistä, tiedottamista ja vaikuttamistyötä lainsäädännöllisin keinoin. Avustuksia on käytetty työhön paikallisella, kansallisella ja jopa kansainvälisellä tasolla. Siemenpuu on myös aktiivisesti osallistunut Maailman Sosiaalifoorumiin.

Tämänhetkinen strategia keskittyy: (1) ympäristöasioihin liittyvään aktivismiin, vaikuttamistyöhön ja käytäväpolitiikointiin; (2) tukeen metsään ja maahan liittyvälle ekologiselle demokratiatyölle; ja (3) 3–5 yhteistyöohjelman luomiseen. Yhteistyöohjelmia

on kehitetty Indonesiassa, Malissa ja Intiassa, joista kussakin maassa Siemenpuu on työskennellyt vuodesta 2002. Kukin ohjelma ja ala-ohjelma työskentelee eri tavalla.

Vuodesta 2002 vuoteen 2007 Siemenpuu myönsi avustuksia, jotka vaihtelivat 914 Eurosta 140 022 Euroon; keskimääräinen avustus oli noin 20 000 Euroa. Tulevaisuudessa korkeampia avustuksia voidaan myöntää tärkeille kumppanijärjestöille jotka tukevat yhteistyöohjelmia. Tällä hetkellä 70 prosenttia rahoituksesta annetaan yhteistyöohjelmamaihin. Siemenpuun suunnitelmat sisältävät alueellisen ohjelman luomisen Mekongin alueelle alkaen vuonna 2009, sekä myöskin Latinalaisen Amerikan ohjelman, jonka on suunniteltu alkavan 2010 tai 2011.

#### *Tärkeimmät arviointikysymykset*

**Poliittinen koherenssi.** Kaikki kolme Säätiötä toimivat yhdenmukaisesti Suomen kehityspoliittikan yleisten linjausten kanssa. Kukin Säätiö keskittyy tärkeään kehityspoliittikan läpileikkavaan teemaan. Tasa-arvo on ehdoton kriteeri Abiliksen ja KIOS:in avustuksille ja se otetaan huomioon myös Siemenpuun avustuksia myönnettäessä. Kaikki kolme Säätiötä ovat myöntäneet avustuksia naisten ryhmille, ja jotkut Abiliksen avustuksista ovat kohdistuneet ihmisoikeuskysymyksiin. Siemenpuun työ koskien ekologista demokratiaa maa- ja metsäkysymyksissä liittyy ihmisten oikeuksiin maahan ja resursseihin.

Säätiöiden työ täydentää muiden kehityskumppaneiden työtä niissä maissa, joissa ne työskentelevät. Täydentävyyttä voisi kuitenkin edelleen parantaa syventämällä maatalouden analyysiä sekä panostamalla enemmän yhteistyöhön muiden kumppanien kanssa kussakin maassa. Säätiöt ovat siirtymässä kohti ohjelmatukea keskittyen tiettyihin aihepiireihin ja maantieteellisiin alueisiin.

Tukemalla vaikuttamistyötä ja tietoisuuden lisäämistä poliittisissa kysymyksissä Säätiöt tukevat monilla rahoittamallaan toiminnoilla olemassaolevia kansallisia ohjelmia; osa toiminnoista taas pyrkii muuttamaan ohjelmia kansallisella, alueellisella ja jopa paikallisella tasolla. Paikalliset kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöt saattavat yrittää parantaa vallitsevaa poliittista tilannetta käytännön kokemusten avulla, kansainvälisten parhaiden käytäntöjen esimerkin mukaan tai painostamalla maan hallitusta toteuttamaan jo vahvistettuja kansainvälisiä sopimuksia.

**Tehokkuus ja tuloksellisuus.** Säätiöt tekevät yhteistyötä monilla tavoilla. Ne keskustelevat usein yhdessä tärkeistä asioista ja jakavat keskenään tietoa, joka liittyy toimiin ja sopimuksiin UM:n kanssa. Perustamisestaan lähtien Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöt ovat asteittain parantaneet avustushakemusprosesseja ja hankkeiden toteutuksen hallinnointia ja seurantaa. Säätiöt ovat kehittäneet yhdessä hankehallinto-ohjeiston. Ne ovat oppineet toistensa kokemuksista kehittäessään sisäisiä toimintamuotoja ja lähestymistapoja.

Suurin parannus toiminnoissa on ollut siirtyminen yksittäisistä hankkeista kohti maantieteellisesti ja temaattisesti keskittyntä tukea. Säätiöiden tuen keskittämistä voitai-



siin edelleen kehittää Etelän kumppanien kapasiteetin lisäämiseksi. Pienavustusten kehitystavoitteet ja niiden saavuttamisen taso vaihtelevat suuresti. Joissakin arviointitietämin tutkimissa tapauksissa oli selvää, että alkuperäiset tavoitteet oli saavutettu ja jopa ylitetty. Joissakin muissa tapauksissa pienavustusten alkuperäiset tavoitteet olivat liian kunnianhimoisia tai hankkeet eivät olleet riittävän hyvin suunniteltuja. Tavoitteiden saavuttamisen taso vaihtelee riippuen kumppanijärjestöstä, hanke-ehdotuksen laadusta, hankkeen toteutuksesta ja seurannasta. Jotkut avustukset on annettu suurehkoille kansalaisjärjestöille, jotka ovat vakiintuneempia ja kehittyneempiä. Kaikki Säätiöt haluavat tavoittaa joitakin pienempiä, uusia tai vähemmän kehittyneitä kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjä, jotka tarvitsevat enemmän tukea ja neuvoja, mikä lisää tällaisen hankkeen toteutukseen tarvittavaa aikaa.

Säätiöiden seurantajärjestelmät perustuvat pääasiassa hankkeen edistymistä ja tilannetta koskeviin puoliväli- ja loppuraportteihin sekä seurantamatkoihin, joita tekevät Säätiöiden henkilökunta ja hallituksen jäsenet tai muut henkilöt heidän puolestaan. Hankkeiden suunnittelua ja seurantaa voitaisiin joissakin tapauksissa parantaa, esimerkiksi parantamalla perus- ja tilanneanalyysiä, tulos pohjaista suunnittelua ja seurantajärjestelmiä (esim. looginen viitekehys) sekä määrittelemällä selkeästi seurantaindikaattorit. Säätiöiden tulisi siis tukea joitakin Etelän kumppaneista näiden suunnittelu- ja seurantataitojen kehittämisessä.

**Kapasiteetin kehittämiseen liittyvät vaikutukset.** Vuosien kuluessa Säätiöt ovat selkeytäneet tukemiaan teemoja, kriteereitä ja maantieteellisiä alueita. Kapasiteettia kasvatetaan Etelän kumppaneiden kanssa tehtävän työn kautta samoin kuin osallistamalla työpajoihin ja verkostoihin sekä työskentelemällä yhdessä muiden järjestöjen kanssa. Säätiöiden pitää keskittyä selkeämmin Etelän kumppaneiden kapasiteetin kasvattamiseen. Niiden pitää miettiä, kuinka ne voisivat saavuttaa enemmän tuloksia kumppanijärjestöjensä organisaation kehittämisessä. Kumppanijärjestöt tarvitsevat tukea Säätiöiltä toteuttaakseen avunsaajiensa kapasiteetin vahvistamiseen johtavia toimenpiteitä, kuten koulutusta ja organisaation kehittämistä. Tarpeellisia selvityksiä olemassaolevasta kapasiteetista on tehtävä ja käytettävä niitä hyvin suunniteltujen kehitysstrategioiden laatimiseen.

**Muut vaikutukset.** Säätiöiden työllä on ollut joitakin merkittäviä vaikutuksia oleellisissa ihmisoikeus-, vammais- ja ympäristökysymyksissä. Säätiöt saattavat olla ylpeitä joistakin saavutuksista ja vaikutuksista kentällä. KIOS:in kumppanit ovat tehneet työtä ihmisoikeusrikkomusten kirjaamiseksi, ihmisoikeuskoulutukseksi sekä lakiavun antamiseksi; ne ovat antaneet terapiaa, apua ja muuta tukea kidutuksen uhreille ja lisänneet ihmisoikeussopimusten ymmärtämistä ja toteuttamista. Abiliksen avustukset ovat suoraan parantaneet lukuisten vammaisten ihmisten elämää lisäämällä heidän tulonsaantimahdollisuuksiaan ja vaikuttamalla kansallisten ohjelmien muutokseen. Siemenpuun tukemat toimet ovat avustaneet luonnonmetsien, metsämaiden ja muiden ekosysteemien suojelussa, lisänneet yhteisöjen osallistumista luonnonvarojen hoitoon, tukeneet paikallisyhteisöjen painoarvoa neuvotteluissa hallituksen ja muiden sidosryhmien kanssa ja lisänneet tietoa, joka on tarpeen ohjelmien tekemisessä ja ympäristöön liitty-

vien päätösten teossa. Joissakin tapauksissa on ilmennyt suunnittelemattomia, kielteisiä vaikutuksia. Esimerkiksi joillakin alueilla paikalliset kansalaisjärjestöt, yhteisöpohjaiset järjestöt tai ruohonjuuritason ryhmät tuntevat, että ne kilpailevat toistensa kanssa Säätiöiden avusta sen sijaan että ne työskentelisivät yhdessä jaettuina päämääriä kohti. Kokemusten parempi vertaileva analyysi on tarpeen, jotta voitaisiin vetää johtopäätöksiä erilaisista lähestymistavoista opituista asioista.

**Säätiöiden lisäarvo.** Säätiöt takaavat arvokkaan ja joustavan tavan antaa avustuksia ja tukea kehitysmaiden kansalaisjärjestöjä, yhteisöpohjaisia järjestöjä ja ruohonjuuritason ryhmiä. Ne ovat saavuttaneet menestyksellisesti heikossa asemassa olevia ihmisiä, myös vammaisia ja alkuperäiskansoihin kuuluvia ihmisiä. Ne tukevat ihmisoikeuksia ja kiinnittävät huomiota tärkeisiin ympäristöasioihin. Kaikki avustukset ottavat huomioon tasa-arvoasiat ja useat avustukset tukevat naisten ryhmiä. Avustukset ovat saavuttaneet joitakin pieniä – jopa syrjäseutujen – paikallisia järjestöjä, joilla on vähemmän mahdollisuuksia saada muunlaista tukea.

Säätiöt eivät kuitenkaan ole vain mekanismi pienavustusten hoidossa. Ne antavat teknisiä neuvoja, opastusta, ja mielipiteiden vaihtoa substanssiasioissa, kapasiteetin rakentamisessa ja verkostoitumisessa. Säätiöiden lisäarvo perustuu niiden henkilökunnan, hallitusten jäsenten, paikallisten kumppanijärjestöjen ja työryhmien sekä niitä avustavien laajempien järjestöverkostojen ammattitaitoon ja kokemukseen. Ne pystyvät työskentelemään poliittisesti arkaluontoisissa ihmisoikeuskysymyksissä, joita muut Suomen kehitysyhteistyömuodot eivät pysty koskettamaan. Ne pystyvät myös jakamaan kokemuksiaan kehitysyhteistyöstä suomalaisen kansalaisyhteiskunnan kanssa ylläpitämiensä kontaktien kautta, ja ne auttavat kehityskysymysten tiedottamisessa. Säätiöt edistävät dialogia Etelän ja Pohjoisen kansalaisyhteiskunnan järjestöjen välillä.

#### *Yhteenveto suosituksista*

**Suositus 1.** Säätiöitä kannustetaan tarkistamaan avustusten valintaan liittyvät kriteerit, menettelyjärjestykset, strategiat ja tähän asti saadut kokemukset ja miettimään, kuinka lisätä työn yhdenmukaisuutta Suomen kehityspolitiikan, asianmukaisten kansainvälisten sopimusten ja kehitysohjelmien sekä niiden toteutuksen kanssa.

**Suositus 2.** Säätiöiden pitää työskennellä hallitustensa ja UM:n kanssa sekä sopia, millä tavoin niiden toimet saavuttavat paremmin tuloksia ja tulevat tehokkaammiksi, esim. parantamalla hallintojärjestelmiä, hankkeiden suunnittelua ja hoitoa sekä seuranta ja yhteistyötä.

**Suositus 3.** Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden pitää korostaa enemmän kapasiteetin kehittämistä sekä niiden omista toimista että eteläisten kumppanien toimista, jotta toiminta tukisi paremmin kehitysmaiden kansalaisjärjestöjä.

**Suositus 4.** Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden pitää keskittyä enemmän kokemusten ja opittujen asioiden analysoimiseen ja jakamiseen, jotta työn myönteisiä vaikutuksia tuetaan ja mahdolliset kielteiset vaikutukset minimoidaan.

**Suositus 5.** Sekä Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden että UM:n pitää hyödyntää paremmin Säätiöiden vahvuuksia – erityisesti niiden kykyä tukea suoraan pienhankkeita kehitysmaissa, niiden asiantuntemusta sekä niiden lisäarvoa Suomen kehityspolitiikan toteutuksessa ja kansalaisyhteiskunnan rakentamisessa kehitysmaissa.

Evaluaatio suosittelee, että ulkoasiainministeriö jatkaa Kansalaisjärjestösäätiöiden avustamista.

## SAMMANFATTNING

### *Evaluering av MBO-stiftelserna*

Finska utrikesministeriet stödjer tre finländska MBO-stiftelser som beviljar gåvobistånd till medborgarorganisationer i utvecklingsländerna. De tre stiftelserna, som grundades år 1998, fokuserar på var sitt specialområde – Abilis på handikappfrågor, KIOS (Medborgarnas stiftelse för mänskliga rättigheter) på de mänskliga rättigheterna och Siemenpuu på miljöfrågor. Stiftelserna rapporterar till och övervakas av enheten för medborgarorganisationer vid utrikesministeriet.

Ministeriets enhet för intern revision och utvärdering gav Impact Consulting Oy Ltd i uppdrag att utvärdera MBO-stiftelserna med avseende på deras verksamhet, prestationer och resultat från år 1998 till idag. Denna evaluering är den första bredare utvärderingen av denna typ av MBO-finansiering. Utrikesministeriet har även anlitat KPMG Finland Oy Ab för effektivitetsrevision av stiftelserna åren 2004 och 2008.

Själva evalueringen var avsedd att fungera som en kapacitetsuppbyggande övning i syfte att höja stiftelsernas, deras partnerorganisationers och utrikesministeriets förmåga att hantera och styra anslagen och rikta in dem på övergripande teman (t.ex. mänskliga rättigheter, handikapp och miljö) inom ramen för det finska utvecklingssamarbetet. Evalueringsgruppen samarbetade med vissa centrala intressenter för att tillsammans utvärdera verksamheten och framtidsalternativen.

Evalueringen genomfördes mellan maj och september 2008. Evalueringsgruppen arrangerade workshoppar och intervjuer med stiftelsernas medarbetare och styrelsemedlemmar, ministeriets medarbetare och andra intressenter i Finland. På ministeriets begäran genomfördes fältstudier i två länder där samtliga tre stiftelser har varit verk samma, nämligen Indonesien och Uganda. Evalueringsgruppen tillämpade ett semi-strukturerat tillvägagångssätt vid insamlingen och analysen av data. Relevant information har hämtats från dokument, internet, projektdokument och andra skriftliga källor, samt genom intervjuer och möten med intressenter och fältbesök.

### *Allmänt om MBO-stiftelserna*

Abilis och KIOS fick finansiering från utrikesministeriet och delade ut sina första anslag år 1998, medan Siemenpuu fick ministeriefinansiering år 2001 och delade ut sitt första bidrag år 2002. Utrikesministeriets finansiering till stiftelserna står för omkring fem procent av de utvecklingsmedel i statsbudgeten som allokeras till medborgarorganisationer. Sammanlagt har MBO-stiftelserna fått statsanslag för över 16,7 miljoner euro vid slutet av 2007, nästan 20,5 miljoner euro år 2008 och förväntas uppnå 24,4 miljoner euro år 2009.

Vid slutet av 2007 hade de tre stiftelserna delat ut sammanlagt 1 545 anslag. Till dags dato har Abilis verkat i 60 länder, KIOS i 33 länder och Siemenpuu i 39 länder. Under de senaste åren har stiftelserna emellertid börjat koncentrera sitt bistånd till vissa geografiska områden och kring vissa teman. Abilis arbetar för nuvarande med åtta partnerorganisationer i sju länder och har planer på att bygga upp partnerskap i ytterligare två länder. KIOS fokuserar sin verksamhet på två regioner som omfattar 20 länder. Siemenpuu har tre landspecifika samarbetsprogram och planerar att bygga upp ytterligare två regionala samarbetsprogram (som involverar flera länder).

Varje stiftelse har en egen styrelse, som arbetar på frivillig basis, och en liten heltidsavlönad personal. Stiftelserna verkar i gemensamma lokaliteter, samarbetar vid förhandlingarna med utrikesministeriet samt samråder om sina riktlinjer för projekthantering. Siemenpuu har en ekonomichef som vid behov även bistår de andra stiftelserna. De tre stiftelserna anlitar samma bokföringsbyrå. De tillämpar liknande förfaranden för biståndsansökan, urval av projekt och rapportering med halvtids- och slutrapporter om projektets framskridande och ekonomi. Uppföljningen sker huvudsakligen utgående från rapporterna, men medarbetare och/eller styrelsemedlemmar eller andra kolleger kan göra kontrollbesök för att bedöma situationen på ort och ställe. Stiftelserna rapporterar vidare till sina styrelser och till enheten för medborgarorganisationer. De tre stiftelserna nätverkar också aktivt med liknande organisationer och stödjer kontakter mellan biståndsmottagarna och det finska civilsamhället.

Varje stiftelse har likväl sin egen vision och strategi. Trots att de kan ses som varandras ”systerstiftelser”, finns det några viktiga skillnader i hur de agerar och delar ut anslagen.

### *Stiftelsen Abilis*

Abilis mål är att ”höja kapaciteten hos handikappade personer på det södra halvklotet i syfte att förbättra deras livskvalitet”. Stiftelsen riktar in sina anslag till mindre medborgarorganisationer, samfundsbaserade organisationer och grupperingar på gräsrotsnivå som den betecknar ”implementeringsorganisationer”. För att en grupp ska beviljas anslag ska den bestå av handikappade personer eller föräldrar till handikappade barn. Beloppen varierar från 500 till 10 000 euro. Normalt beviljas engångsbelopp för åtgärder som genomförs under 10–12 månader. Bidrag ges till verksamhet med teman som organisatorisk utveckling, medvetenhet och engagemang, tillgänglighet, inkomstgenerering, utbildning och HIV/AIDS. Omkring hälften av bidragen är stödmedel för inkomstgenererande projekt. Abilis hanterar 160–200 olika projekt varje år.

Abilis har sedan år 2003 arbetat med partnerorganisationer som erhåller finansiering för att stödja implementeringsorganisationer genom facilitatorer. Under åren 2005–2009 fick partnerorganisationerna i medeltal inemot 15 000 euro per år. För nuvarande delas omkring hälften av Abilis anslag ut till sju länder (Kambodja, Bangladesh, Kazakstan, Indien, Uganda, Etiopien och Tanzania). Stiftelsen vill i framtiden dela ut biståndet i mer programriktade former. Enligt sin strategi för åren 2006–2011, ”Liten

till formen, stor effekt”, vill Abilis öka antalet partnerskap, koncentrera sitt bistånd till sina partnerländer och öppna ett nytt kontor i Asien senast år 2011.

#### *Medborgarnas stiftelse för mänskliga rättigheter (KIOS)*

KIOS mål är att ”främja de mänskliga rättigheterna i utvecklingsländerna, så som de mänskliga rättigheterna definieras i Förenta nationernas, Europarådets och andra regionala organisationers konventioner och andra dokument.” KIOS stödjer främst verksamhet som anknyter till engagemang och samarbete med statsmyndigheter, uppföljning och dokumentering, kampanjer och människorättsaktivism, människorättsutbildning, rättshjälp, rådgivning och rehabilitering till tortyroffer, nätverk och kapacitetsutveckling. KIOS bidragsbelopp varierar mellan 5 000 och 50 000 euro och riktas normalt till ettåriga projekt. Vissa organisationer är långvariga samarbetsparter som tilldelas bidrag under flera år. KIOS får 300–400 ansökningar varje år men kan godkänna och finansiera endast mindre än 10 procent av dem.

I KIOS nuvarande strategi fastställs tre temaområden för biståndet: demokratiska rättigheter, jämställdhet mellan könen och rätt till utbildning. KIOS tar emot ansökningar från utvecklingsländer i hela världen, från såväl Afrika, Asien, Latinamerika, Mellanöstern som Europa. Sedan år 2004 har KIOS fokuserat sitt bistånd till två regioner: Östafrika och Sydasiens. År 2006 utvidgades definitionen av dessa regioner till att omfatta 20 länder. KIOS planerar att rikta in 70 procent av sitt bistånd till dessa regioner och reservera återstående 30 procent för akuta åtgärder oavsett var dessa behövs. År 2007 grundade KIOS en fond för små bidrag, med belopp under 10 000 euro, och år 2008 lanserade man ett partnerprogram i Kenya.

#### *Stiftelsen Siemenpuu*

Siemenpuu avser att stödja ”hållbara miljöprojekt i utvecklingsländer”, närmare bestämt genom stöd till ”civilsamhällsorganisationer i utvecklingsländerna som arbetar för ekologisk demokrati, miljöskydd och förebyggande av miljöhot”. I början antog Siemenpuu ansökningar från grupper från alla utvecklingsländer – stiftelsen har finansierat projekt i 39 olika länder. Stiftelsen har understött olika slags initiativ, från samfundsbaserade program för miljöstyrning till medvetenhetsväckande, informationsspridning och engagemang i miljöfrågor. Anslagen har använts till verksamhet på lokal, nationell och till och med internationell nivå, och Siemenpuu har även medverkat aktivt i World Social Forum.

Stiftelsens nu gällande strategi fokuserar på 1) aktivism, engagemang och lobbning för miljöfrågor, 2) stöd till ekologiskt demokratiarbete för skogs- och markfrågor och 3) uppbyggande av 3–5 samarbetsprogram. Samarbetsprogram finns i tre länder – Indonesien, Mali och Indien – där Siemenpuu har varit aktiv sedan år 2002. Vart och ett av programmen eller underprogrammen har sin egen verksamhetsmetodik.

Under åren 2002–2007 beviljade Siemenpuu anslag för belopp som varierade mellan 914 euro och 140 022 euro; medelbeloppet låg på omkring 20 000 euro. I framtiden kommer anslag att beviljas till de viktigaste partnerorganisationerna i samarbetsprogrammen. För nuvarande riktas 70 procent av medlen till de länder som omfattas av samarbetsprogrammen. I stiftelsens framtidsplaner ingår utveckling av ett regionalt program för Mekongregionen, med planerad start år 2009, och ett program för Latinamerika, med start år 2010 eller 2011.

#### *Bedömning av nyckelfrågorna för evalueringen*

**Politisk koherens.** De tre stiftelsernas arbetar inom ramen för de allmänna målen för Finlands utvecklingspolitik. De fokuserar på var sitt centrala övergripande tema inom utvecklingspolitiken. Dessutom är jämställdhet mellan könen ett explicit kriterium för Abilis och KIOS anslag, vilket också tas också i beaktande i Siemenpuus anslag. Alla tre stiftelser har beviljat anslag till kvinnogrupper, medan vissa av Abilis anslag har riktats till människorättsfrågor. Siemenpuus verksamhet för ekologisk demokrati i mark- och skogsfrågor har en stark anknytning till människors rätt till land och tillgångar.

Stiftelsernas verksamhet kompletterar andra utvecklingspartners insatser i de länder där de arbetar. Denna kompletterande funktion kunde stärkas ytterligare genom att man djupare analyserar situationen i landet och satsar mer på samarbete med andra parter i dessa länder. Stiftelserna är på väg att allt mer rikta in sina anslag genom program med tematisk och geografisk avgränsning.

Genom stiftelsernas bidrag till engagemang och medvetenhetsväckande i politiska frågor har vissa projekt som beviljats anslag stött befintliga nationella program, medan andra har syftat till att ändra på nationella, regionala och lokala program. De lokala civilsamhällsorganisationerna kan sträva efter att förbättra den gällande politiska situationen med stöd av praktiska erfarenheter, internationella ”bästa förfaranden” eller genom att yrka på att den nationella ledningen ska införa internationellt undertecknade och ratificerade överenskommelser.

**Effektivitet och verkningar.** De tre stiftelserna samarbetar på många sätt. De diskuterar ofta olika frågor och informerar varandra om sin verksamhet och överenskommelserna med utrikesministeriet. Alltsedan de grundades har MBO-stiftelserna stegvis utvecklat sina system för handläggningen av anslagsansökningar och för hanteringen och styrningen av bistånd. De har också tillsammans utarbetat riktlinjerna för projektadministrationen. De har kunnat ta lärdomar av varandras erfarenheter vid utvecklingen av sina interna rutiner och förfaringssätt.

En viktig förbättring i verksamheten har varit att stöd till enskilda projekt allt mer har ersatts av geografiska och tematiska fokusområden. Denna fokusering av stiftelsernas anslag kunde utvecklas vidare för att öka kapaciteten hos de sydliga samarbetsparterna.

Utvecklingsmålen för gåvobistånden – och i den mån de har uppnåtts – varierar mycket. I en del fallen som evalueringsgruppen tog del av stod det klart att de ursprungliga målen hade uppnåtts och till och med överträffats. I andra fall hade de ursprungliga målen ställts alltför högt eller projekten hade inte lagts upp tillräckligt väl. Verksamhetens effekter beror på hurdan samarbetsorganisation man arbetat med, kvaliteten på projektunderlaget samt verkställandet och uppföljningen av projektet. Vissa anslag har givits till större medborgarorganisationer med mer etablerad och utvecklad verksamhet. Samtliga tre stiftelser strävar efter att även nå ut till mindre, nyare eller mindre utvecklade civilsamhällsorganisationer som behöver mer stöd, rådgivning och handledning, varigenom projektet tar mer tid.

Stiftelsernas uppföljningssystem baserar sig främst på halvtids- och slutrapporter om projektens verksamhet och ekonomi, samt på kontrollbesök som kan göras av stiftelsernas medarbetare eller styrelsemedlemmar eller av andra parter på uppdrag av dessa. Kvaliteten på projektunderlagen och uppföljningen kunde i vissa fall höjas genom noggrannare analyser av utgångsläget och förhållandena, resultatbaserade system för planering och uppföljning (logiska ramar) och tydlig definiering av indikatorerna för uppföljningen. Stiftelserna bör således stödja vissa av sina sydliga samarbetsparter med att bygga upp sådana färdigheter för planering och uppföljning.

**Verkningar för kapacitetsutveckling.** Stiftelserna har med tiden skärpt sina definitioner på sina teman, kriterier och geografiska områden för bistånd. Kapaciteten utvecklas genom samarbete med sydliga partners samt genom medverkan i workshopar, nätverk och samarbete med andra organisationer. Stiftelserna behöver fokusera mer på att uttryckligen utveckla kapaciteten hos sina sydliga samarbetsparter. De måste begrunda hur de bättre kunde stödja den organisatoriska utvecklingen hos sina partnerorganisationer. Dessa behöver stiftelsernas stöd för att utföra mer kapacitetsutvecklande åtgärder (utbildning och organisationsutveckling) hos anslagsmottagarna. Det behövs tillräckligt ingående utvärdering av den befintliga kapaciteten till grund för väl underbyggda utvecklingsstrategier.

**Andra effekter.** Stiftelsernas verksamhet har haft betydande effekter med avseende på de grundläggande mänskliga rättigheterna, handikappfrågor och miljöfrågor. De kan vara stolta över en del av det som de uppnått och åstadkommit på fältet. KIOS samarbetsparter har arbetat med dokumentering av brott mot de mänskliga rättigheterna, tillhandahållit rättshjälp, rådgivning och annan handledning av tortyroffer samt bidragit till insikterna i och verkställigheten av människorättskonventionerna. Abilis anslag har haft en omedelbar positiv inverkan på många handikappade personers liv genom att förbättra deras möjligheter till inkomst och yrka på ändringar i nationella politiska program. Genom Siemenpuus anslag har det varit möjligt att bevara naturskogar, skogsmarker och andra ekosystem, stärka samfundens medbestämmande i hanteringen av naturtillgångarna, hjälpa lokala gemenskaper att få sin röst hörd vid förhandlingar med statsmyndigheter och andra instanser samt att stärka den informations- och kunskapsgrund som behövs för informerade politiska diskussioner och beslut i miljöfrågor. I vissa fall har det uppstått oväntade negativa resultat. I vissa områden har de



lokala medborgarorganisationerna, samfundsbaserade organisationer och grupperingarna på gräsrotsnivå upplevt att de konkurrerar med varandra om stiftelsernas stöd, i stället för att samarbeta för att uppnå gemensamma mål. Det behövs bättre jämförande analys av erfarenheterna av anslagen för att man ska kunna dra lärdom av hur de olika förfaringssätten fungerar.

**Mervärde av stiftelserna.** Stiftelserna utgör en värdefull och smidig kanal för anslag och för stöd till utvecklingen av medborgarorganisationer, samfundsbaserade organisationer och grupperingar på gräsrotsnivå i utvecklingsländerna. De har på ett framgångsrikt sätt nått ut till utsatta människor, bland dessa handikappade personer och ursprungsfolk. De stödjer de mänskliga rättigheter och tar upp viktiga miljöfrågor. Jämställdheten mellan könen beaktas vid beviljande av anslagen och många anslag riktas till kvinnogrupper. Anslagen har nått en del mindre, lokala organisationer – även i avsidens belägna områden – med sämre möjligheter att få andra former av stöd.



Stiftelserna är ändå inte enbart en mekanism för hanteringen av gåvobistånd. De tillhandahåller teknisk handledning och rådgivning samt samråder i substansfrågor, kapacitetsuppbyggande och nätverk. Stiftelsernas mervärde bygger på den sakkunskap och erfarenhet som finns hos deras medarbetare och styrelsemedlemmar, de lokala samarbetsparterna och arbetsgrupperna samt de bredare nätverken som de anlitar. De kan arbeta med politiskt känsliga människorättsfrågor som kan vara svårare att ta upp genom Finlands andra kanaler för utvecklingssamarbete. Vidare kan stiftelserna, genom sina länkar till det finska civilsamhället, dela med sig av sina erfarenheter av utvecklingssamarbete och informera allmänheten i Finland om utvecklingsfrågor. Stiftelserna främjar den ömsesidiga dialogen mellan civilsamhällsorganisationer på både det södra och det norra halvklotet.

#### *Sammandrag av rekommendationerna*

**Rekommendation 1.** MBO-stiftelserna uppmanas att se över sina kriterier, förfaranden och strategier för beviljande av anslag samt sina erfarenheter hittills. Dessutom bör de överväga hur de bättre kunde samordna sin verksamhet med den finska utvecklingspolitiken som helhet, med internationella konventioner och utvecklingspolitiska program och deras verkställande.

**Rekommendation 2.** MBO-stiftelserna bör samarbeta med sina styrelser och utrikesministeriet och enas om sätt för att höja effekten och verkningfullheten i deras verksamhet, som till exempel vidareutveckling av de administrativa systemen och förbättringar i uppläggnings, styrningen och uppföljningen av projekten samt arbetet.

**Rekommendation 3.** MBO-stiftelserna bör fokusera mer på kapacitetsutveckling inom både sin egen och sina sydliga samarbetspartners verksamhet samt i högre grad stödja utvecklingen av civilsamhällsorganisationer i utvecklingsländerna.



**Rekommendation 4.** MBO-stiftelserna bör fokusera mer på att analysera och dela med sig av sina erfarenheter och lärdomar, höja de positiva effekterna av sin verksamhet och minimera eventuella oavsedda negativa effekter.

**Rekommendation 5.** Både MBO-stiftelserna och utrikesministeriet bör i högre grad tillvarata stiftelsernas starka sidor, i synnerhet deras förmåga att förmedla direkt stöd till småskaliga initiativ i utvecklingsländerna, deras gedigna erfarenhet och det mervärde som de ger till både verkställandet av Finlands utvecklingspolitik och uppbyggandet av civilsamhällen i utvecklingsländerna överlag.

Det rekommenderas sålunda att utrikesministeriets fortsätter sitt stöd till MBO-stiftelserna.

## SUMMARY

### *Evaluation of NGO Foundations*

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) supports three Finnish NGO Foundations to provide small grants to non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in developing countries. All three Foundations were established in 1998. Each foundation focuses on different issues – Abilis on disability issues, KIOS (*Kansalaisjärjestöjen ihmisoikeussäätiö*) on human rights issues, and Siemenpuu (SIPU) on environmental issues. The Foundations report to, and are monitored by, the NGO Unit of the MFA.

The MFA Evaluation Unit commissioned Impact Consulting Oy Ltd to evaluate the NGO Foundation modality, covering the activities, performance, and impacts of the three Foundations from 1998 until the present. This assessment is the first major evaluation of this NGO funding modality. The MFA has also commissioned KPMG Finland Oy Ab to undertake performance audits of these Foundations in 2004 and 2008.

The evaluation exercise itself was intended to be a capacity-building exercise resulting in improved capacity of the Foundations, their partner organisations, and MFA, in terms of management and administration of such support, and in terms of increased application of cross-cutting themes (i.e., human rights, disabilities, and environment) in Finnish development cooperation. The Evaluation Team worked with some key stakeholders to collaboratively assess their performance and options for the future.

This evaluation was conducted from May to September 2008. The Evaluation Team undertook workshops and interviews with Foundation staff and Board members, MFA staff, and other stakeholders in Finland. As requested by MFA, field assessments were conducted in two countries where all three Foundations have worked – Indonesia and Uganda. The Evaluation Team used a semi-structured approach to its data collection and analysis. Relevant information has been obtained from documentation, information on the internet, project files, and other written sources, interviews and meetings with stakeholders, and site visits.

### *Overview of NGO Foundation Modality*

Abilis and KIOS received MFA funding and awarded their first grants in 1998, whereas Siemenpuu first received funding from the MFA in 2001 and awarded its first grant in 2002. MFA funding for the Foundations is an estimated five percent of the total state development cooperation budget allocated to NGOs. Altogether, the combined state grants to the NGO Foundations have amounted to more than Euros (€) 16.7 million through 2007, almost € 20.5 million by 2008, and are projected to reach € 24.4 million by 2009.

As of the end of 2007, the three foundations had provided a total of 1545 grants. To date, Abilis has worked in 60 different countries, KIOS in 33 different countries, and Siemenpuu in 39 different countries. In recent years, however, the Foundations have all been moving towards more geographically and thematically focused support. Currently, Abilis works with eight partnership organisations (POs) in seven countries, and plans to develop partnerships in two more countries. KIOS focuses its work on two regions, comprising 20 countries. Siemenpuu currently has three country cooperation programmes, and plans to develop two more cooperation programmes on a regional (multi-country) basis.

Each Foundation has its own Board, i.e. Board of Directors or Executive Board, which works on a voluntary basis, and a small full-time paid staff. The Foundations share office space and collaborate on their negotiations with the MFA, and jointly developing their project administration guidelines. Siemenpuu employs a financial officer, who also works for the other two Foundations when needed. All three Foundations use the same accounting firm. They have similar procedures for grant application, screening, and reporting, with mid-term and final progress and financial accounts. Monitoring is primarily on the basis of the submitted reports, although staff and/or Board members, or other colleagues, may make “monitoring trips” to assess the activities in the field. The Foundations, in turn, report to their Boards and to the NGO Unit upon their activities. The three Foundations are also active in networking with similar organisations, supporting contacts among their grant recipients, and with Finnish civil society.

Each foundation has, however, its own vision and strategy. Although they may be considered “sister foundations,” there are some important differences in how the three Foundations operate and how they provide support.

#### *Abilis Foundation*

Abilis aims to “build the capacity of people with disabilities in the global South to improve the quality of their lives.” It targets the support to small NGOs, community-based organisations (CBOs), and grassroots groups, which it terms “implementing organisations (IOs).” To be eligible for support, these groups must be comprised of persons with disabilities, or parents of children with disabilities. The grant funding level is € 500 – 10 000. Grants are normally provided on a one-time basis, for activities intended to be completed within 10–12 months. The grants are provided for activities dealing with organisational development, awareness and advocacy, accessibility, income generation, education, and HIV / AIDS. Approximately half of the grants provide seed money for income-generation projects. Each year, Abilis manages 160–200 projects.

Since 2003, Abilis has worked with partnership organisations (POs), which are funded to provide support to the implementing organisations (IOs) through hired facilitators. During 2005–2009, the partnership organisations received, on average, just under € 15 000 in funding per year. Currently approximately half of the Abilis grants go to seven countries (Cambodia, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, India, Uganda, Ethiopia, and

Tanzania). In the future, Abilis wishes to develop a more programmatic approach to its support. According to its 2006 – 2011 strategy, “Small in Size, Big in Impact,” Abilis aims to increase the number of partnerships, concentrate its support on partnership countries, and establish a new office in Asia by 2011.

#### *Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights (KIOS)*

KIOS aims “to promote human rights in developing countries, as human rights are defined in the treaties and other instruments of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and other regional organisations.” The most common activities supported by KIOS are advocacy and cooperation with government officials, monitoring and documenting, campaigning and raising human rights awareness, human rights training and education, legal assistance and aid, counselling and rehabilitation of torture victims, and networking and capacity building. KIOS provides grants ranging between € 5 000–€ 50 000, with a normal project duration of one year. Some organisations are long-term partners, receiving a series of grants over the years. In any given year, KIOS gets 300–400 applications each year, but it can only approve and fund less than 10 percent of them.

The current strategy of KIOS identifies three thematic areas for support: democratic rights, gender equality, and right to education. KIOS accepts applications from developing countries worldwide, in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Middle East and Europe. Beginning in 2004, KIOS focuses its support in two regions, Eastern Africa and South Asia: as of 2006, KIOS expanded its definition of these two regions to include 20 countries. KIOS plans to provide 70 percent of its grants to these two regions, and reserve 30 percent for responding to urgent issues wherever they may arise. In 2007, KIOS developed a Small Grant Scheme, with grants of € 10 000 or less, and in 2008 has launched a partnership programme in Kenya.

#### *Siemenpuu Foundation*

Siemenpuu aims to support “sustainable environmental projects in developing countries,” which is further specified as support to “civil society organisations in developing countries working on ecological democracy, environmental protection and prevention of environmental threats.” Initially Siemenpuu accepted applications from groups throughout the developing world: it has supported projects in 39 countries. The Foundation has supported a range of different initiatives, including community-based initiatives for environmental management, and awareness-raising, information dissemination, and advocacy on environmental issues. The grants have been used to work at the grassroots, national, and even international levels, and Siemenpuu has also been active in engaging with the World Social Forum.

The current strategy focuses on: (1) activism, advocacy and lobbying connected to environmental issues; (2) support for ecological democracy work on forest and land issues; and (3) establishment of 3–5 cooperation programmes. Cooperation programmes

have been developed in Indonesia, Mali, and India, all countries where Siemenpuu has been working since 2002. Each programme or sub-programme operates in a different manner.

From 2002 through 2007, Siemenpuu provided grants ranging from € 914 to € 140 022, with the average grant around € 20 000. Future larger grants may be provided to the key partner organisations supporting the cooperation programmes. Currently 70 percent of the funding is going to the cooperation programme countries. Siemenpuu plans include development of a regional programme for the Mekong region, intended to start in 2009, and also one for Latin America, planned for start-up in 2010 or 2011.

#### *Assessment of Key Evaluation Issues*

**Policy Coherence.** Overall, the three Foundations are “coherent” with the general aims of Finnish development cooperation policy. Each Foundation focuses on a key “cross-cutting issue” of Finnish development cooperation. Addressing gender issues is also an explicit criterion for Abilis and KIOS grants, and it is considered in making Siemenpuu grants. All three Foundations have provided some grants to women’s groups, while some of the Abilis grants have addressed human rights issues. Siemenpuu’s work on ecological democracy in land and forest issues is very much related to issues of human rights to land and resources.

The Foundations’ work complements that of other development partners in the countries where they work. Nonetheless, complementarity could be further enhanced through more thorough analysis of the country situation, and greater efforts to collaborate with other partners in those countries. The Foundations are evolving to shift more of their support towards programmes, with more targeted themes and geographical locations.

Through Foundation assistance to advocacy and awareness-raising on policy issues, some grant-funded activities support existing national policies, whereas others may try to change such policies, on a national, regional, or even local level. The local civil society organizations may aim to improve the existing policy situation, by considering field experience, drawing from international “best practices,” or advocating that their national government implement international agreements that have been signed and ratified.

**Efficiency and Effectiveness.** The three Foundations collaborate in numerous ways. They often jointly discuss issues and share information relating to their operations and agreements with the Ministry. Since their establishment, the NGO Foundations have been gradually improving their systems for processing grant applications, as well as managing and monitoring grant implementation. All three Foundations have been jointly developing their project administration guidelines. In developing internal operating procedures and approaches, they have been able to learn from each other’s experiences.

A major improvement in operations has been the move from individual projects towards more geographically- and thematically-focused support. The approach of increasingly focusing the Foundation support could be further developed to increase the capacity of Southern partners.

The development objectives of small grants – and the extent to which they have been achieved – are highly variable. In some cases examined by the Evaluation Team, it was clear that the original objectives had been met or even surpassed. In other cases, the original objectives of the small grants were overly ambitious or the projects were not well enough designed. The effectiveness of activities varies with the type of partner organization, and the quality of the proposal, its implementation, and follow-up. Some grants have gone to larger NGOs, which are more established and developed. All three Foundations aim to reach some of the smaller, newer, or less-developed civil society organizations, which require more support, guidance, and coaching, taking longer time for project implementation

The monitoring systems of the Foundations rely primarily upon the mid-term and final substantive (activity) reports and financial reports, as well as monitoring trips that may be made by the Foundation staff or Board members, or others on their behalf. The quality of some project design and monitoring could be improved, i.e., through improved baseline and situational analyses, result-based planning and monitoring systems (i.e., logical framework) and clear definition of monitoring indicators. Thus, the Foundations may need to support some of their Southern partners to develop such planning and monitoring skills.

**Capacity Building Impacts.** Over time, the Foundations have defined clearer ideas of their themes, criteria and geographical areas for support. Capacity is built through their work with their Southern partners, as well as participation in workshops, networks, and collaboration with other organizations. The Foundations need to focus more on explicit capacity building of their Southern partners. They need to consider how to support more effectively the organizational development of their partner(ship) organizations. In turn, the partner(ship) organizations need Foundation support to carry out more capacity building (training and organizational development) with their grantees. Adequate assessments of existing capacities need to be undertaken, and used to develop well thought-out development strategies.

**Other Impacts.** In terms of the substantive human rights, disability issues, and environmental issues, the Foundations' work has had some significant impacts. The Foundations can be proud of some of their achievements and impacts in the field. KIOS partners have worked on documentation of human rights violations, human rights training, legal aid, providing counselling and other support for torture victims, and contributed to greater understanding and implementation of human rights conventions. Abilis grants have directly improved the lives of a large number of people with disabilities through increases in their income-earning potentials, or influencing policy changes. Siemenpuu grant activities have been contributing to the conservation



of natural forests, forest lands, and other ecosystems, enhancing community participation in natural resource management, supporting local communities to have more of a “voice” in negotiating with government or other stakeholders, or increasing the information and knowledge base necessary for informed policy deliberations and decision-making vis-à-vis environmental issues. In certain cases, unintended negative impacts have occurred. For example, in some areas the local NGOs, CBOS, or grassroots groups feel that they are competing with each other for support from the Foundations, rather than collaborating towards some shared goals. Better comparative analysis of the experiences with grants is needed, to draw “lessons learned” regarding the usefulness of different approaches.

**Added-Value of the Foundations.** The Foundations provide a valuable and flexible means of providing grants and supporting the development of NGOs, CBOS and grassroots groups in developing countries. They have successfully reached vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples. They are supporting human rights and addressing important environmental issues. All the grants consider gender issues and many grants support women’s groups. The grants have been able to reach some smaller local organizations, even in some remote rural areas, that are less likely to gain other forms of support.



The Foundations are not, however, merely a mechanism for small-grant management. The Foundations provide technical advice, guidance, and dialogue on substantive issues, capacity building, and networking. The added value of the Foundations builds upon the professional expertise and experience of the foundation staff and Board members, their local partner organizations and working groups, as well as the larger networks upon which they can call. They are able to work on politically-sensitive human rights issues, which may be more difficult for Finland to address directly through other modes of development cooperation. They are also able, through their links with Finnish civil society, to share their experiences in development cooperation in Finland, and help to inform the public regarding development issues. They promote two-way dialogue between civil society organisations in the South and the North.

#### *Summary of the Recommendations*

**Recommendation 1.** The NGO Foundations are urged to review their grant selection criteria, procedures, strategies, and experience to date, to consider how to increase the coherence of their work with the entire Finnish development policy, relevant international conventions and development policies, and their implementation.

**Recommendation 2.** The NGO Foundations need to work together with their own Boards and the MFA to agree upon the ways in which their activities can become more effective and efficient, such as through further improvements in administrative systems, project design and management, monitoring, and collaboration.





**Recommendation 3.** The NGO Foundations need to focus more on capacity development, of both their own operations and those of their southern partners, to support better the development of civil society organisations in developing countries.

**Recommendation 4.** The NGO Foundations need to focus more on analyzing and sharing their experiences and lessons learned, to increase the positive impacts of their work, and to minimize any possible unintended negative impacts.

**Recommendation 5.** Both the NGO Foundations and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs need to better draw upon the strengths of the Foundations, particularly their ability to support directly small-scale initiatives in developing countries, their substantive expertise, and the value that they add to both implementation of Finnish development policy and the broader goals of building civil society in developing countries.

The MFA, therefore, is encouraged to continue support to the NGO Foundations.

POLICY COHERENCE AND CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES		
Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
Overall, the work of the NGO Foundations supports the Finnish development cooperation policy, but tends to focus on the particular sector of the Foundation's work – human rights, disabilities, or environmental issues. Relatively little attention is focused on mainstreaming other cross-cutting issues, the human rights-based approach, or other emerging development issues, etc.	The foundations provide a complementary mechanism for focusing on a specific thematic issue that is an essential element (cross-cutting issue) in Finnish development cooperation policies, i.e., human rights, disabilities, and environmental issues. But further efforts are needed to implement a more holistic and integrated approach.	The Foundations are urged to review their grant selection criteria, procedures, strategies, and experience to date, to consider how to increase the coherence of their work with the entire Finnish development cooperation policy, relevant international conventions and development policies, and their implementation.
The NGO Foundation activities vary in the degree to which they support international commitments and agreements.	More could be done to support international commitments and agreements, such as Paris Declaration, i.e., through harmonisation, alignment, coordination with other development partners, etc.	
Some Foundation grants activities are coherent with existing national policies. Some of the Foundations' grants go to support work on advocacy, or awareness-raising on policy issues. Other grants have supported work for local-level or national policy change.	The Foundations could review their experience of local networks and facilitate the good practices and lessons learned to better understand how best to support advocacy work.	
Limited collaboration exists with other forms of Finnish development support.	Possibilities for greater collaboration – with other forms of Finnish development support and other development partners -- should be explored.	
EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY		
Findings	Conclusions	Recommendations
In working with their Southern partners, the Foundations stress the project design and application process, with less attention devoted to project management / implementation, monitoring and evaluation.	More explicit frameworks for project design, management, and monitoring need to be incorporated into the working approaches of the foundations with their Southern partners.	The Foundations need to work together with their own Boards and the MFA to agree upon ways in which their activities can become more effective and efficient, such as through further improvements in administrative systems, and supporting capacity-building of their Southern partners in project design and management, monitoring, and collaboration.
Many grants are taking considerably longer than their original agreed duration to reach completion, i.e., one-year grants needing two or three years for completion.	Greater support is needed in project design, implementation, and monitoring to ensure more realistic time frames, yet still retain flexibility. More follow-up is needed on the implementation and monitoring of grants.	

Administrative systems have been improved over the years, and the Foundations have learned from each others' experiences in this regard. Such systems, however, are not localized in the countries where they work, but administration is based in Finland. Guidelines for reporting on grant implementation have been developed but need further improvements and application.	If the quality of the reporting by partners could be improved, then the capacity of the Southern partners would be improved and administrative workload of the Foundation staff could be reduced. More efforts could be made to "localize" administrative systems.	
The efficiency and effectiveness of grant preparation, implementation, and reporting seems to vary by type of partner.	Greater attention is needed to undertaking systematic analysis of grant experience by type of partners, to learn how to improve future cooperation.	
<b>CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IMPACTS</b>		
<b>Findings</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
Capacities of Southern partners, or grant recipients, are being built through: learning-by-doing, i.e., how to prepare and implement projects; how to handle project financing; increased personal and organizational capacities; etc. The Foundations do, however, need to undertake more comprehensive capacity assessment of their applicants, assist them to prepare capacity development plans, and provide more follow-up focused on capacity-building.	More explicit capacity-building efforts and organizational development of Southern partners and grant recipients is needed to ensure the sustainability of their activities and diversification of financial support.	The NGO Foundations need to focus more on capacity development, of both their own operations and those of their Southern partners, to better support the development of civil society organisations in developing countries.
Many relationships are short-lived, as Southern partner may received only one small grant, i.e., for 1-2 years of support, with no follow-up.	Longer-term relationships, including a series of grants, and / or larger grants allow for more opportunities for capacity-building. Efforts of the Foundations to move towards longer-term partnerships and country programmes offer possibilities for such improvements.	
<b>OTHER IMPACTS</b>		
<b>Findings</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
The Foundations are having some substantive impacts on disability, human rights, and environmental issues, but such impacts are variable and often localized.	Networking and sharing experiences and lessons learned among the grantees in a given country and across the foundation supported organizations are not yet adequately supported.	The NGO Foundations and the MFA can negotiate how the Foundations could better support networking, sharing experiences and lessons learned among the grantees. Thus, they should ensure that adequate resources are available for these strategic activities.

<p>The grants often have both positive and negative unanticipated impacts, which may at times be more significant than the original objectives.</p>	<p>Efforts are needed by the Foundations and their partners to place greater emphasis on “lessons learned” and impacts, rather than merely monitoring progress towards intended objectives. Lessons can also be learned from less successful efforts, to improve future ones.</p>	<p>The NGO Foundations need to focus more explicitly on analyzing and sharing their experiences and lessons learned, to increase the positive impacts of their work, and to minimize any unintended negative impacts.</p>
<p>It is difficult to obtain an overall view of the impacts of the Foundations’ work. More comparative analysis, thematic evaluation, and improved reporting are needed.</p>		
<b>ADDED VALUE OF FOUNDATIONS</b>		
<b>Findings</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<p>The Foundations “add value” to implementation of Finnish development cooperation, by providing not only small-grant management, but technical advice, guidance, and networking, and build links between civil society organizations in both the South and the North.</p>	<p>The identity of the Foundations needs to be perceived as more independent of the official development policy.</p>	<p>Both the NGO Foundations and the MFA need to better draw upon the strengths of the Foundations, particularly in terms of their ability to support directly small-scale initiatives in developing countries, their substantive expertise, and the value that they add to both implementation of Finnish development policy and the broader goals of building civil society in developing countries.</p>
<p>The NGO Foundations have some highly experienced personnel among their staff and Boards, with good technical and language skills, and geographical experience. The NGO Foundations – staff and Board members –and the MFA’s NGO Unit tends to focus primarily on administrative issues, with inadequate time for discussion of substantive issues. Many grantees would welcome greater dialogue and support from Foundation staff and Board members on substantive and technical issues.</p>	<p>Technical/substantive expertise of staff and Board members may be under-utilized, due to their focus on administrative issues and project management. Board members devote much of their time to approval of individual grants, and lack sufficient time for focusing on more strategic issues. The Foundations also need to better publicize these additional values of their work, and diversify their sources of support.</p>	<p>MFA is encouraged to continue to support the work of the NGO Foundations.</p>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Finnish Government Support to NGOs

The Finnish civil society has a long history of development cooperation with developing countries. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, most of this support was provided by Finnish churches, through their missionary and development work. Since 1974, Finland's Ministry for Foreign Affairs has provided some support for development cooperation through non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Government of Finland (GOF) provides development funding through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) via several different funding modalities. There are three major mechanisms for funding: the NGO Partnership Scheme, which currently has framework agreements with 10 large NGOs; project-based funding for another 140 Finnish NGOs; and funding provided to three NGO foundations, which make small-scale grants to support activities in developing countries. Other Ministry for Foreign Affairs (MFA) support to local Civil Society Organizations is provided in 62 countries through the Local Cooperation Funds (LCF) managed by Finnish Embassies. In addition, MFA supplies funding to international NGOs, *Kehitysyhteistyön Palvelukeskus* (KEPA, the NGO Service Centre), which provides services to an estimated 270 Finnish NGOs, and KEHYS RY, the Finnish non-governmental development organization (NGDO) Platform to the EU, offering services to NGOs on EU development policy issues.

As part of a plan to improve the quality of NGO projects, MFA outsourced some administrative services related to NGO project management to Finnish Disabled People's International Development Association (FIDIDA) in 2004. These services include the assessment of the disability projects applications by Finnish Non-governmental Organisations to the Ministry and oversight of disability projects of Finnish NGOs. As such, then, FIDIDA itself is not a mechanism for channelling MFA funding to development activities or projects in developing countries. FIDIDA, which was established in 1989 by seven Finnish disabled persons' organisations, does, however, have some small development projects of its own. Building upon this experience with FIDIDA, the MFA's NGO Unit has developed a proposal for further outsourcing of NGO project management, which is under consideration by the Ministry leadership.

Several evaluations have been conducted of these various NGO funding mechanisms. Evaluations have been conducted of KEPA (1995, 2005), support to international NGOs (2005), the NGO Partnership Scheme (2002, 2008), the Local Cooperation Funds (2003, 2008), and the Development Cooperation Capacity of Finnish NGOs (2006). The first cycle of outsourcing of assessment of project applications to FIDIDA was evaluated in 2004. Evaluations of Finnish NGO activities and use of Local Cooperation Funds have been undertaken on a country level for some of Finland's

development partners, such as Kenya (2002) and Tanzania (2004). Evaluations of KEHYS ry and FIDIDA were undertaken in 2008.

Support to NGOs has also been addressed, to varying degrees, within country programme evaluations, such as seven such studies undertaken in 2001 (Vietnam, Zambia, Nepal, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Nicaragua, and Kenya), and some subsequent studies. MFA has also commissioned a wide number of sectoral or other thematic evaluations, some of which have touched on NGO development activities. For example, an evaluation on cross-cutting issues in development cooperation — such as human rights, gender issues, and governance and democracy — is currently ongoing.

## **1.2 Three Finnish NGO Foundations: Abilis, KIOS, and Siemenpuu**

Through its NGO Foundation modality, the MFA supports three Finnish NGO foundations that each provides small grants to NGOs in developing countries. Each foundation focuses on different issues – Abilis on disability issues, KIOS (*Kansalaisjärjestöjen ihmisoikeussäätiö*) on human rights issues, and Siemenpuu (SIPU) on environmental issues. All three foundations were established in 1998.

Each foundation was established by a group of Finnish NGOs and /or civil society activists. Abilis was created by disability activists. KIOS was established by eleven Finnish NGOs working with human rights and development issues while fifteen different NGOs and Foundations created Siemenpuu. KEPA was a founding member of both KIOS and Siemenpuu.

Abilis and KIOS received MFA funding and awarded their first grants in 1998, whereas Siemenpuu first received funding from the MFA in 2001 and awarded its first grant in 2002. Each of these three foundations has a Board, i.e., a Board of Directors or an Executive Board, which makes decisions on the awarding of grants, and a small number of staff members in Helsinki. The foundations report to, and are monitored by, the NGO Unit of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The foundations were originally established with the idea that all their funding would be provided by MFA grants. Usually the MFA support for NGOs requires that the NGOs provide a contribution, in cash or in kind, to the total funding. For the three foundations this requirement has, however, been waived. Instead, it is considered that the contribution is made by the partners who receive the small grants.

Recently the Foundations have begun to explore diversification of their funding. The Abilis Foundation has received two grants from a private multi-donor foundation in the United States for supporting work linking disability issues with human rights. KIOS has begun to explore the idea of seeking additional outside funding. They recently

collaborated with the Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights in preparing a joint application for EU funding, but unfortunately this proposal was not funded. Siemenpuu has received a small grant from the Ministry for Environment, as well as some individual donations.

Subsequently, efforts have been taken to establish similar foundations dealing with other issues. For example, the Finnish Foundation for Media, Communication and Development (VIKES) was established by 26 Finnish organizations in 2005. It does not receive support from the MFA through the NGO Foundation funding modality. Instead, it has received support from MFA for a number of individual NGO projects. In the future it may be considered for inclusion in the NGO Partnership Scheme.

## 2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation is intended to focus on the usefulness of the NGO Foundation arrangement as a specific modality for supporting and building the capacity of small NGOs in developing countries. As specified in the Terms of Reference (Annex 1), the *specific objectives* of the evaluation are to promote: (1) the improved capacity of the Foundations for managing their funding activities, (2) the improved capacity of the partner organizations (for performance and financial administration), (3) the improved capacity of the MFA for administering the funding for small NGO projects, and (4) the increased observation of the cross-cutting themes (sectors of the Foundations) in Finnish development cooperation.

The evaluation has a broad *scope*, covering the period since the establishment of the foundations in 1998, and their overall global activities. The evaluation mission was asked to undertake field missions in two partner countries, Indonesia and Uganda, to examine the activities of the three foundations in those countries. The evaluation is also intended to assess the cooperation of the foundations with organizations having similar mandates.

Key issues for the evaluation include assessment of the policy coherence of the Foundations' activities with respect to Finnish development policies, and the efficiency and effectiveness of the management activities of the Foundations in Finland. In the two country field assessments, focus is put on the choice of partner organizations, the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities, outcomes and impacts, and policy coherence. Overall, the evaluation is to consider the "added value" of the foundations as an instrument, or modality, for Finnish development cooperation, and the "added value" in the two countries examined.

Parallel to this evaluation, the MFA also commissioned KPMG Finland Oy Ab to undertake a performance audit of the three foundations covering the period 2006–2007, with

field assessments in Kazakhstan and Uganda. KPMG had undertaken a prior performance audit of the three foundations covering the period 2003–2004. The current audit aimed, among other things, to assess what changes have been made since the previous audit, especially with regard to the recommendations of the previous audit. As the 2008 performance audit focused more explicitly on the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of financial management, this evaluation has focused on other issues.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

The evaluation exercise itself was intended to be a **capacity-building exercise**, to result in improved capacity of the Foundations, their partner organisations, and MFA, in terms of management and administration of such support, and in terms of increased application of cross-cutting themes (i.e., human rights, disabilities, and environment) in Finnish development cooperation. Therefore, the Evaluation Team aimed to conduct the evaluation in a participatory manner, working with some of the key stakeholders to collaboratively assess their performance and options for the future.

#### Data Collection

The Evaluation Team has used a semi-structured approach to its data collection and analysis. Relevant information has been obtained from a review of documentation, information on the internet, project files, and other written sources, interviews and meetings with stakeholders, and selected site visits. (For more information, see References and Annexes 2 and 3)

The field visits involved a variety of interviews, meetings and discussions with selected partner organizations and other key resource people. In the field visits, the selection of grants reviewed was based upon several criteria:

- Selection of some key partners with whom the foundations have been working over a longer time, to assess capacity-building issues;
- Grants that have been concluded or are still ongoing; and
- Geographical location, i.e., choosing in both countries sites where it was possible to examine activities of a selected number of local partners supported by each of the Finnish NGO foundations.

#### Participatory Capacity-Assessment Workshops

The Evaluation Team facilitated three major workshops, one with each Foundation, to assess in a participatory manner their capacities, performance to date, ideas and options for the future. These workshops were conducted in Helsinki for the foundation staff members and Board members. Following these workshops, the Evaluation Team held two joint meetings with representatives of the foundations and key staff in the MFA NGO Unit to discuss their collaboration.



**Table 1** Work Plan and Timetable for the Entire Evaluation Period.

Time Period & Benchmark	Tasks and Delivery Dates
Mid-May to mid-June: Initial meetings with MFA, Foundations and stakeholders Inception Report prepared	Initial meeting with MFA Evaluation Unit 26.5.08 Initial meetings with Foundations and selected stakeholders 19.5.08 – 12.6.08 Inception Report submitted 9.6.08 Feedback on Inception Report via email by 24.6.08
Mid-June to end July: Fieldwork in two countries	Field work in Uganda 13.7.08 – 23.7.08 Field work in Indonesia 16.7.08 – 24.7.08
August: Capacity assessment of Foundations	Additional meetings with MFA, Foundations and stakeholders in Helsinki Foundation workshops 20–22.8.08
September: Draft Report submitted	Data analysis and drafting report Draft report submitted 26.9.08
October: Feedback on Draft Report and Finalization of Report	Final draft submitted, 13.10.08 Feedback on draft report and finalization of report Meeting to discuss the final report with MFA and the Foundations, 4.12.08

### Limitations

Each of the three NGO Foundations has worked in a large number of different countries over the past 10 years. A total of 1545 grants had been provided by the end of 2007. The Evaluation Team was, however, able to make only short field visits to two countries, and assess a limited number of grants. One core Evaluation Team member visited Indonesia, where most of the grants had been provided by Siemenpuu Foundation. Another team member visited Uganda, where the vast majority of the grants had been provided by Abilis. Each field team did assess grants from all three foundations. Nonetheless, fewer KIOS grants were examined in the field, as the field teams met with 5 organizations that had received KIOS grants, compared to 8 Siemenpuu grant recipients (plus the Indonesian Working Group) and 12 Abilis grant recipients (plus the partner organization in Uganda). Some of the KIOS and Siemenpuu grant recipients were longer-term partners, having received more than one grant.

## 4 THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY CONTEXT

### 4.1 Changing Development Policies and Priorities

Finland issued has issued a number of important development policies over the past 15 years, which have shaped the context for Government budgetary support to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society organizations (CSOs). The policies have also been influenced by international agreements, conventions, and other dialogue on development priorities and approaches.

In 1993, MFA issued *Finland's Development Cooperation in the 1990s: Strategic Goals and Means*. This document noted that Finnish NGOs and missionary organizations offer alternative development cooperation possibilities, making it possible to implement projects in countries where there is no official development cooperation or in countries where official cooperation would be difficult. It also underscored the importance of such work to provide personal experience of development cooperation. The policy then went on to state that "Finland therefore implements some of its development cooperation activities through non-governmental organizations as long as the projects conform to the current rules and do not conflict with the general goals of the strategy." The general aims of this policy were to support economic development and poverty reduction; environment, population and development; and democracy and human rights. The policy also explicitly mentions the goal of raising the status of women.

In 1996, the *Cabinet Decision-in-Principle on Finland's Development Cooperation* continued these policy aims, but also emphasized Finland's commitments to support the development goals of the European Union and Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation's Development Assistance Committee (OECD / DAC). Among other issues, this document emphasized support for issues including women's participation, the status of disabled persons, environmental issues, human rights, democracy and good governance.

In 1998, the development policy was revised through the issuance of *Finland's Policy on Relations with Developing Countries*. The policy reflected global dialogue on development issues. This document emphasized human rights, including the rights of women, the disabled, minorities, and indigenous peoples. It also continued to stress the importance of environment and poverty and food security issues.

In 2001, another Government Decision-in-Principle, *Operationalisation of Development Policy Objectives in Finland's International Development Cooperation*, was released. This document further clarified the intents of the 1998 policy. It noted that the development cooperation was targeted towards 11 key partner countries. The orientation towards NGO cooperation was expressed as follows:

Cooperation with non-governmental organisations is seen as a way to help bring up the points of view of the civil society in all development processes supported by Finland. In addition, the know-how of established non-government organisations must be seen as an increasingly significant source of potential in government-to-government cooperation. Where the criteria of government-to-government cooperation are not met, non-governmental organisations play a key role as an alternative channel of cooperation.

The 2004 Government Resolution, *Development Policy*, placed top priority on poverty reduction. It stated that the UN Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals formed the framework for Finland's development policy. It highlights a commitment to policy coherence. This policy reduces the number of key partner countries from 11 to 8.

The 2004 policy document also clearly states a commitment to a human rights-based approach to development, and considers that NGO cooperation and Local Cooperation Funds may be especially suitable for supporting human rights issues. This 2004 policy defines cross-cutting issues to be:

- Promotion of the rights and the status of women and girls, and promotion of gender and social equality;
- Promotion of the rights of groups that are easily marginalised, particularly those of children, the disabled, indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, and promotion of equal participation opportunities for them;
- Consideration of environmental issues.

With respect to NGOs, the 2004 policy notes that NGOs are among the other parties – in addition to the MFA – that are involved in implementing the development policy. The document states a desire “to strengthen the presence of civil society in all areas of development policy.” The Government announced its plans to increase the NGO cooperation share of the overall development cooperation budget to 14% by 2007, and to reduce the NGO’s self-financing (from 20%) to 15%. The document proposes that efforts will be made to strengthen partnerships with NGOs, to improve the quality and complementarity of cooperation, and also to increase the civil-society orientation of Ministry staff.

Finland joined with the international development community in pledging to support the 2000 UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). These goals focus on major reductions in extreme poverty by 2015, and other key milestones to achieve sustainable development. There are 8 key MDGs, with over 20 targets and over 60 different indicators. The major goals include: (i) eradication of extreme poverty and hunger; (ii) achieve universal primary education; (iii) promote gender equality and empower women; (iv) reduce child mortality; (v) improve maternal health; (vi) combat HIV / AIDS, malaria, and other diseases; (vii) ensure environmental sustainability; and (viii) develop a global partnership for development.

Another key international development agreement has been the 2005 Paris Declaration, which focused on issues of aid efficiency and harmonisation, improved governance, transparency, and accountability. The Paris Declaration was developed during a period when much attention was being focused on development of sector-wide approaches (SWAPS) or programme approaches to development cooperation, including some support for direct budget support (DBS) modalities. These approaches have been lauded for placing greater emphasis on national ownership of development efforts, but they have also been critiqued for focusing on donor-government relations, thereby neglecting the role of civil society organizations in both the South and the North.

In 2006, the MFA’s *NGO Development Cooperation Guidelines* noted that:

Projects receiving discretionary government grants must be in line with Finnish development policy goals and the UN's Millennium Development Goals. Within this framework, organizations choose their own partners' way of working, country and beneficiaries for their projects in line with objectives that are of priority to the organization.

The 2007 *Development Policy Programme* states that the most important objectives are "eradication of poverty and ecologically sustainable development." The importance of environmental issues – now taken to include climate change issues — thus has been elevated from its previous status as a "cross-cutting issue." It also notes that Finland supports "goals and approaches jointly approved in the United Nations and the EU." This policy also highlights Finland's aims to increase its level of development cooperation funding to reach 0.51% of the Gross National Income (GNI) by 2010, and 0.7% by 2015, which is in line with overall EU targets. The 2007 policy underscores the importance of project-based funding, and states that a review of programme support will be forthcoming.

Regarding NGOS, this 2007 document states:

A new Government policy on Non-Governmental Organisations (*NGO Development Cooperation Guidelines*) was approved in 2006. NGOs have an important role to play in Finnish development policy overall. Their work complements official development cooperation on a bilateral, multilateral, and EU basis. The special value that NGOs can add is their direct contacts with the grass-roots level and their valuable work to strengthen the civil society in developing countries.

In development cooperation with NGOs, the Government strives to boost the effectiveness of operations and the NGOs' general capacity while also raising the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation by providing training.

In their own development cooperation programmes, NGOS should enhance, whenever possible, implementation of the principles contained in the Government Programme and in the development policy programme. Cooperation among NGOs should be encouraged.

## **4.2 Roles of NGOs and Mechanisms for NGO Support**

### **Roles of NGOs in Civil Society Development**

In considering international development cooperation, non-governmental organizations are acknowledged to play a wide range of different roles – as civil society organizations – and as partners supporting the development of civil society. For donor organizations, NGOs are valued for their roles in service delivery, advocacy work, capacity building,

democratization, information dissemination, and building relations between donor countries and developing countries.

In many cases, it is recognized the Northern civil society organizations may be better suited to work with their Southern counterparts, to provide support for building civil society organizations in the South and developing the capacity of those organizations, especially the smaller community-based organizations and grassroots groups.

The three Finnish NGO Foundations are not merely instruments for managing small-grant schemes. Nonetheless, it is useful to consider experience with other options for managing donor-financed small-grant schemes.

### **Small-Scale Grant Mechanisms**

In terms of mechanisms for donors providing small-scale support to non-governmental organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), grassroots groups, and other civil society organisations (CSOs), a wide range of different models have been tried over the years. In Finland, such support is primarily provided through the NGO Foundations and also the Local Cooperation Funds managed by the Finnish Embassies. The MFA also funds individual NGO projects, undertaken by a Finnish NGO in collaboration with southern partners. Many of these NGO projects are also relatively small-scale, in terms of funding levels.

Other donors have tried administering small-scale grants directly, from headquarters, their embassies or country offices, or contracting out management of such grants (or grant funds) to other entities, which may be non-governmental organizations, consulting firms, research institutes, or other organizations. For example, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) received EC funding for a Small Grants Programme for Operations to Promote Tropical Forests in southeast Asia (SGPPTF). This 15 million Euro (€) programme ran from 2002 to 2007, providing 247 grants to CBOs and NGOs in 8 countries, including Indonesia. As the programme was locally administered, groups were able to submit applications in their local language. The programme was designed to build local capacity, as well as to support community forestry interventions. In Indonesia, UNDP had a budget of 1.9 million US dollars (US\$) for the SGPPTF, of which US\$1.2 million USD went to 31 grantees (average grant size approximately US\$30 000). The programme had originally received approximately 200 applications. With this funding, UNDP had a National Coordination Team, or programme management office, with a PTF Coordinator and two other full-time staff, as well as a National Steering Committee that selected the grants. When grantees were accepted into the programme, they all underwent training in the first year in integrated project cycle management and financial management, knowledge and communication issues. The training programme was contracted out, on a competitive bidding basis, to a well-established NGO. The UNDP Programme Officer (PTF Coordinator) responsible felt that it had been well-designed for building the capacity of the participants, as well as supporting them on their substantive forestry interventions. The UNDP Country Office in Indonesia has also been involved in managing small grants funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

In some cases, the donor may provide an “umbrella grant” to a large non-governmental organization (or other body), which in turn is responsible for providing smaller (or micro) grants to community-based organizations and grassroots groups. The organization receiving the grant is thus responsible for reporting and monitoring to the donor, as well as facilitating the work of the ultimate grant recipients and building their capacity through careful training and human resource development efforts. For example, in Indonesia, the UK Government is supporting a major cooperation programme, the Multistakeholder Forestry Programme (MFP). During the first phase, the MFP was managed directly by the local UK Department for International Development (DFID) office. Now in its second phase, the management of the programme has been contracted out to an Indonesian NGO, the Kehati Foundation. This large programme has four different grant components, including: (1) policy advocacy development grants; (ii) regional support development and assistance; (iii) Ministry of Forestry and Government of Indonesia capacity building grant; and (iv) strategic small grants. Under the regional support grants, this MFP has supported community foundations, which in turn support local groups. During the first phase of MFP, six regional community foundations were established in different regions of Indonesia. The community foundations support local people-based organizations, with training, such as proposal-writing clinics, other capacity-building, and grant administration. Some grants to local groups may be very small, such as only US\$1 000 – 2 000.

With great emphasis over the past decade on programme approaches and sector-wide approaches (SWAP) to development, concern has been expressed regarding how such development cooperation funding mechanisms leave out the civil society organizations in both the South and the North. In some countries, such support has been designed so that part of the funding provided to the national government is intended, in turn, to be channelled to local civil society organizations. But in many cases, these efforts have proved to be problematic, as national government may be more interested in using the funds for government programmes, rather than sharing them with local NGOs. In recent years, some donors have been experimenting with establishing either independent, or multi-donor, funds or other mechanisms to support small grants to civil society organizations in developing countries. For example, in Nicaragua, Finland as well as other bilateral donors supports the Common Support Fund to Civil Society for Democratic Governance, which is managed by international NGOs.

Key advantages to managing small-grant schemes through such nationally-based programmes are their local presence, knowledge, and greater ability to provide technical advice and training. By providing grants to an organization responsible for managing the small-grant programme, the donor then entrusts the organization with responsibilities for capacity building, achieving the intended programme results, and providing accountability, through monitoring and reporting to meet the donor standards. The management organization, in turn, is able to facilitate the work of grassroots groups, build up their capacity, including their capacity in reporting and monitoring. But such grassroots groups are not required to report directly to the donor.

## 5 FINNISH NGO FOUNDATIONS

### 5.1 Rationale for their Establishment

The NGO Foundations were established to provide small-scale flexible grants, to support the development of civil society in developing countries.

In the mid-1990s, the issue of Finland's development cooperation was under active discussion. Several NGO activists had proposed that Finnish development cooperation should include support to small-scale, flexible interventions. This idea won political support from members of Parliament and the Minister for Development Cooperation, Mr. Pekka Haavisto. The modality for providing such support was agreed to be through the NGO Foundations, which were thereby established by the NGOs and NGO activists, and funded by the MFA.

Given that these three foundations focus on themes – human rights, disabilities, and environmental issues – that were considered at that time to be “cross-cutting issues” in Finnish development policies, the establishment of the foundations was also seen as a way to support these cross-cutting issues. Thus, the foundations were considered to be a way to complement other modalities of Finnish development cooperation and Finnish support to NGO cooperation.

As the three Foundations were founded for similar, yet distinct, purposes at the same time, they are sometimes considered to be “sister foundations.” They are supported through one distinct funding modality of the Finnish MFA. The Foundations also have, over the years, shared office space, some resources, and similarities in a number – but not all – of their approaches and procedures.

### 5.2 Nature of the NGO Foundations

A wide variety of different types of foundations exist in Finland. The three NGO Foundations are established as legally independent entities, yet they are primarily supported by the government budget. Their mandate is established by their founding members. As most of their funds come from the MFA, they are obligated to follow a number of agreed-upon principles and procedures.

In meetings with a wide range of stakeholders, the Evaluation Team found an equally wide range of views regarding what, exactly, the NGO Foundations are. Some view the Foundations as an extension of government or as a means of “outsourcing” the Ministry's management of small grants to civil society organizations (CSOs). Some NGOs, CBOS, and grassroots groups in developing countries think that the Foundations are non-governmental organizations (NGOs), whereas others see them as funders or donors.



Board and staff members of the Foundations, however, see themselves as independent, autonomous civil society entities, not merely means for implementing the government's development cooperation policies.

### **5.3 Ministry Agreements and Support to the Foundations**

The MFA Department for Development Policy has a NGO Unit, which is responsible for management of most, but not all, of the development cooperation support to NGOs. The NGO Unit currently has 17 full-time staff. It is responsible for managing the NGO Partnership Scheme with 10 Finnish NGOs (managing an estimated 375 projects each year), individual NGO projects with Finnish NGOs (244 in 2007), and the three NGO Foundations, which are managing 200–300 projects per year (Matti Lahtinen, personal communication, 28 May 2008). It also looks after support to KEPA and KEHYS ry. The NGO Unit has outsourced management of individual NGO projects concerning disabilities to FIDIDA. Currently the NGO Unit is calling for proposals for outsourcing the management of the individual NGO projects.

One NGO Unit staff member has been responsible for management and oversight on these agreements for the three foundations. As of January 2008 another staff member with background in environmental issues has taken over the responsibility for follow-up of Siemenpuu activities and agreements. These two staff members are responsible for monitoring the activities of the Foundations, reviewing their reports, discussing substantive issues, and providing guidance on use of the MFA funding. All major decisions, such as the level of financial support for the NGO Foundations and other policy issues are, however, made by the Ministry leadership. The two staff members do not spend all of their time on monitoring the Foundation activities, as they have other responsibilities.

The two NGO Unit staff members participate in and monitor the activities of the Foundations in various ways. The NGO Unit and Foundations are in regular interaction via telephone and email. The Foundations advise and consult with the NGO Unit on any problematic issues that may arise. In addition to reviewing the written reports of the Foundations, the NGO Unit staff members attend meetings with the Foundations, as well as seminars and workshops organized by the Foundations. From time to time they travel to visit and monitor field activities.

According to the Foundations' staff, there has been considerable staff turnover in the Ministry's NGO Unit since the establishment of Foundations. This situation has required more time from the Foundations to maintain relationships with MFA staff, as new NGO Unit staff have to be briefed on the operations.

#### **MFA Agreements with the Foundations**

The NGO Unit has two kinds of agreements with each of these NGO foundations: a



general (or cooperation) agreement, and a financing agreement. Currently, financing agreements are only for two years. The most recent agreements have required considerable time to process, and they only became effective two months after the implementation period had commenced. This delay created difficulties for operations. The NGO Foundations hope that future funding agreements will be done for longer-time periods, and that they will be negotiated and signed in a more timely manner.

As indicated in Table 2, the grants to these three NGO Foundations have been growing over time, but the rate of annual increase in funding is highly variable. This situation makes it difficult for long-term planning of the Foundation programs.

Between 1998 and 2007, the three Foundations had received state grants via the MFA totalling €16 721 660. Another €7 700 000 was agreed in support for 2008–2009. Thus the total agreed support between 1998 and 2009 amounts to €24.4 million. Although there have been some slight differences among the foundations, in recent years the three foundations have received roughly comparable levels of funding, averaging around €750,000 in 2005, €1 million in 2006, €1.1 million in 2007, €1.25 million for 2008, and €1.3 million for 2009.

Altogether, the combined state grants to the NGO foundations have amounted to more than €16.7 million through 2007, almost €20.5 million by 2008, and are projected to reach €24.4 million by 2009.

**Table 2** State Grants to the NGO Foundations, 1998–2009 (Euros).

State grant	Abilis	Growth (%)	KIOS	Growth (%)	Siemenpuu	Growth (%)	Total Funding	Growth (%)
1998	100 913		65 593				166 506	
1999	252 282	150	336 376	413			588 658	254
2000	252 282	0	252 282	-25			504 564	-14
2001	336 376	33	336 376	33	333 180		1 005 932	99
2002	700 000	108	420 000	25	336 000	1	1 456 000	45
2003	800 000	14	500 000	19	400 000	19	1 700 000	17
2004	900 000	13	600 000	20	750 000	88	2 250 000	32
2005	1 000 000	11	750 000	25	1 000 000	33	2 750 000	22
2006	1 050 000	5	900 000	20	1 050 000	5	3 000 000	9
2007	1 100 000	5	1 050 000	17	1 150 000	10	3 300 000	10
Sub-total	6 491 853		5 210 627		5 019 180		16 721 660	
2008	1 300 000	18	1 200 000	14	1 250 000	9	3 750 000	14
2009	1 400 000	8	1 250 000	4	1 300 000	4	3 950 000	5
Total through 2009	9 191 853		7 660 627		7 569 180		24 421 660	

The Ministry sets guidelines on use of the funding (i.e., % allocated to administration, project management, and grants), and reporting requirements. The NGO Foundations, unlike other NGO funding modalities, are exempt from “self-financing,” although

this requirement is imposed upon the recipients of their grants. Although the normal rule for NGO self-financing requires 15% contribution, in the case of the Foundations the grant recipients are required to provide 7.5%. (The MFA also only requires 7.5% self-financing from NGOs working on disability issues.) The Ministry has set limits on the funding levels for grants, i.e., each foundation is permitted to decide upon making one grant per year above €50 000 Euros, but any additional grants above this amount require the NGO Unit's concurrence.

The NGO Unit would like to see how the Foundations' activities and spending can be maximized in developing countries, as opposed to work in Finland or the Foundation headquarters in Helsinki. In this regard, then, interest has been expressed in seeking ways to empower Southern partners to assume more of the administrative responsibilities for grant reporting and financial management.

The Foundations submit annual reports, including both substantive and financial reports, to the Ministry, as well as annual work plans and budgets. Nonetheless, given the volume of small grants managed by the Foundations, the NGO Unit sometimes finds it difficult to get a clear overview of the achievements – and difficulties – of these small grants, and would welcome more attention to “lessons learned.” The NGO Unit has also raised the issue of risk management – what are the risks involved in managing such a large number of small grants, dispersed in such a large number of different countries.

As the support from the Government exceeds more than 50% of the total support for the Foundations, they are required to follow Government regulations on the use of discretionary Government transfers. The Foundations undergo annual financial audits. The three Foundations were all subject to a performance audit by KPMG Finland Oy in 2004, covering 2003–2004, and again in 2008, covering the period 2006–07. The 2004 audit noticed that project administration, accounting, reporting, financial management, and internal controls still needed improvements. Following the earlier performance audit, the Foundations have made changes in some of their accounting procedures, as well as other improvements in monitoring and reporting to the MFA upon their grants disbursed to Southern civil society organizations (CSOs). The 2008 performance audit was tasked with assessing what changes the Foundations have made in response to the earlier audit. The second performance audit report had not been finalised at the time of writing this Evaluation report.

#### **5.4 Similarities and Differences among the NGO Foundations**

Many of the approaches and procedures of the three Foundations are similar, if not identical. As previously discussed, they have similar cooperation and funding agreements with the MFA, and roughly similar levels of funding in recent years. All three Foundations try to balance the needs for accountability with the aim to support smaller grassroots

and community-based organizations, which may have more difficulties in project preparation, implementation, monitoring, and reporting. The foundations have been using a variety of approaches to deal with this issue.

Although the MFA considers that support to the three Finnish NGO Foundations to constitute one specific modality of NGO support, the characteristics and operations of the Foundations differ in some important respects. Thus, one might say that the foundations have each been interpreting, and experimenting, with variations on a theme, i.e., the modality. A comparison of some key characteristics of the three Foundations is summarised in Tables 3 and 4. (The specifics of each Foundation are discussed in the following three chapters of this report.)

The governance structures of the three Foundations are slightly different. Siemenpuu has a Council of its founding member organizations, which in turn elects its Board of Directors while KIOS has an Executive Board comprised of one representative of each member NGO. Abilis was not founded by a group of NGOs, but rather by some disability activists, a number of whom have also served as members of its Board of Directors.

The three Foundations have worked in a large number of countries, but over time they have been moving towards a more programmatic means of support, working with specific partner(ship) organizations, or with a working group of key local NGO activists, who in turn work with other NGOs, CBOS and grassroots groups. Although Abilis has worked in 60 different countries, and is currently working in 47 countries, it is now focusing on eight partnerships in seven countries, and it is considering to develop two more partnerships.. Siemenpuu has worked in 39 different countries, and is currently working in 27 countries, but it now has cooperation programmes in three countries. It is planning to develop two regional programmes (Mekong Region and Latin America). KIOS has worked in at least 33 different countries, but now it has narrowed its focus to 20 countries in two regions. Whereas Abilis and Siemenpuu wish to move to a future situation where most, if not all, of their grants go to their cooperation programme areas, KIOS would like to reserve a portion of its grant funding to be able to respond to urgent situations, wherever they might arise.

One of the most striking differences is how the foundations target their grants. Abilis has focused on working through partnership organisations in different countries, who in turn work with the grassroots groups, or implementing organizations, that receive grants. Abilis gives direct support to the implementing organizations, but uses the partnership organizations as a facilitator and watchdog. As a result, Abilis has provided many more – but on average much smaller – grants than the other two foundations. Abilis normally only provides implementing organisations with a single, one-year grant. It does, however, have longer relationships with its partnership organisations, which are supported through a series of grants.

The other two foundations tend to work with larger, more well-established organizations, capable of handling somewhat larger grants, and often establish longer-term relationships, providing organisations with a series of grants over time. Nonetheless, the NGOs that receive grants from KIOS or Siemenpuu may in turn work with smaller NGOs, community-based organizations and grassroots groups. For example, the Siemenpuu support to ARuPA in central Jawa (Java) is not only for ARuPA activities, but it also funds their local partners. In 2007, KIOS established, however, a “Small Grants Scheme,” which provides grants of less than €10 000 Euros to small and/or newly-established NGOs. Siemenpuu’s Cooperation Programme in Mali works through one NGO, which in turn works with grassroots groups, similarly to the Abilis model. In Uganda, KIOS works with two new Human Rights Organizations, (Action for Community Development (ACODEV) and East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders (EHAHRDP). These organizations receive support not only for activities, but also for administrative costs, salaries and office equipment.

For all three Foundations it should, however, be noted that the Boards have been making all funding (grant) decisions, based on assessment of project proposals and advice from the partnership organisations or country working groups, as well as the staff. Even for the country cooperation programs of Siemenpuu, where an agreement is made with a NGO to manage a programme with micro grants, the individual grants are still subject to Board approval.

The foundations also differ in their relations with their southern partners. For example, Siemenpuu places major emphasis on partnership, stressing that the grant recipients are partners, and wanting to promote a two-way dialogue on important, substantive issues. Abilis, at times, portrays itself as a “friendly funder,” or donor, who aims to support the southern organizations in their own development efforts.

In terms of networking with other organizations working on similar issues, the foundations have taken different approaches. Both Siemenpuu and KIOS have been quite active in international networks and meetings, and have published some reports on substantive issues. They are also supporting some southern networks and southern partners to participate in international meetings. Abilis is also participating in international disability networks. As Abilis has focused primarily on the grassroots level, its networking efforts have focused on supporting partnership organisations to promote such networking within the countries where they work. All three Foundations have found means to occasionally bring their southern partners to Finland, for participation in important seminars, or other forms of dialogue networking.

Many of the Foundations procedures are very similar, and some are specified in the agreements with MFA. For example, the three Foundations follow similar procedures for grant applications, the application review process, reporting, monitoring, and auditing. The Foundations’ normal pattern for grant disbursement is to provide 50% of the funds upon signing the agreement, 40% after receipt of the mid-term narrative (progress) report and financial report; and the final 10% after completion of the project,

receipt of the final narrative and final reports and audit report. Thus, the grant recipient is required to fund the final 10% of the grant activities, and then seek reimbursement. The Foundations, however, may have some variations in this funding disbursement pattern depending upon the type of grant.

According to the funding agreement between the Foundations and the MFA, the grantee shall contribute with a minimum of 7.5 % (self-financing share) to the total costs of the project funded by the Foundations. The self-financing share of the organization can be either cash, voluntary work or donated goods. The Foundations request that the project costs are reported by an auditor who should give a statement on the use of the self-financing share of 7.5 %. This requirement is compulsory in the case that the self-financing share consists of cash contributions. Self-financing share consisting of in-kind contribution shall be duly reported on by the auditor and/or the accountant of the grantee. All three Foundations have jointly developed special guidelines for the calculations of cash contributions, voluntary work and donated goods, value of voluntary work, and value of donated goods.

For all three Foundations, the major focus of the grants is to support work on the substantive issues, i.e., disability, human rights, or environmental issues. Support to capacity building is, thus, a secondary issue, often treated indirectly. The Southern partners of the Foundations that work with smaller organisations do sometimes provide training related to project design and implementation. But more often, the focus is on “learning by doing,” with the Foundation staff providing guidance and coaching. Limited other support to capacity building is provided.

**Table 3** Foundations: Comparison of Organisational and Grant Characteristics.

	<b>Abilis</b>	<b>KIOS</b>	<b>Siemenpuu</b>
<b>Founding Members</b>	NGO activists	11 NGOs	15 NGOs
<b>Governing structure</b>	Board of Directors, comprised of NGO activists (6 members, 1 deputy)	Executive Board, representing founding members (11 members, 11 deputies)	Council of members, which selects individuals as Board of Directors (9 members, 9 deputies)
<b>Staff</b>	Executive Director 2 Senior Project Coordinators 3 Junior Project Coordinators	Executive Director 3 Coordinators 1 Administrative Assistant	Executive Director 3 Project Coordinators 1 Financial Officer
<b>Financial staff</b>	Pay for financial officer's time	Pay for financial officer's time	Financial Officer (also works with other two foundations, who pay for his time)
<b>Languages used in work (i.e., on website)</b>	Finnish, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian; others	Finnish, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese; others	Finnish, English, French, Spanish, Portuguese; others
<b>Foundation website</b>	<a href="http://www.abilis.fi">www.abilis.fi</a>	<a href="http://www.kios.fi">www.kios.fi</a>	<a href="http://www.siemenpuu.org">www.siemenpuu.org</a>
<b>Source(s) of funding</b>	MFA; multi-donor foundation based in US	MFA; exploring other possibilities, i.e., EU proposal	MFA; small grant from Min. Environment; small donations
<b>Self-financing (by grant recipients)</b>	7.5% project	7.5% project	7.5% project

<b>Grant recipient (grantee) types</b>	8 Partnership organizations (POs) in 7 countries; Implementing organisations (IOs)	Project Partners; Small grant scheme (<€10 000) for new, developing NGOs; Partnership Programme in Kenya	Partners; Micro-grants to smaller groups (i.e., Mali); 5 (sub-)programmes in 3 countries
<b>Grant size (Euros) Range (Average)</b>	IOs: €500 - €10 000 POs: (€15 000)	€5 000 - €50 000 (€24 330)	€914 – 102 000 (€20 000)
<b>Average grant duration</b>	IOs: one year (10-12 months), normally only one grant; rare cases, organization invited to apply for second grant POs: series of grants	First grant is for 1 year or less; about 30% grants are for 2 years; about half grantees are long-term partners (receiving a series of grants)	Grants typically 1-2 years; many grantees are long-term partners (receiving a series of grants)
<b>Number of grants (through 2007)</b>	1166 grants over 9 years, or an average of 130/yr	178 grants over 9 years, or an average of 20/yr	201 grants over 6 years, or an average of 33/yr
<b>Grant disbursement</b>	Normally 50%, 40%, and 10%	Normally 50%, 40%, and 10%; in 2-yr projects, 30%, 30%, 30%, and 10%	Normally 50%, 40%, and 10%; some projects 80% and 20%; special cases (long projects), 4 or more disbursements

Table 4 Foundations: Comparison of Focal Areas and Key Procedures.

	<b>Abilis</b>	<b>KIOS</b>	<b>Siemenpuu</b>
<b>Total number of countries (current)</b>	60 (47)	33	39 (27)
<b>Criteria for selection of focal areas</b>	Organisations that can serve as partnership organisations	Post-conflict countries and countries where legal framework for human rights is weak	Important environmental issues; historical relationships and expertise
<b>Current focal regions / countries (future plans)</b>	7 countries (plan to add 2 more)	2 regions, comprised of 20 countries	3 countries (plan to add 2 regions)
<b>Cooperation programmes or partnerships</b>	8 partnerships (planning to add ?? more); aim to develop programmes	1 country programme (started in 2008)	3 country programmes (one comprised of 3 sub-programmes)
<b>Programme or partnership personnel</b>	Partnership facilitators and Review Boards		Programme Working Groups
<b>Current / future funding</b>	In future, aim for most funding to go via partnerships	Current target: 70% funding for 2 regions, 30% for other areas	Current, 70% funding going to 3 programmes; in future, aim for 80-90%
<b>Project design (formats, guidelines, etc.)</b>	Application format provided; Participatory Proposal writing guidelines; Participatory Project Preparation guidelines	Application and reference forms provided; Application guidelines	Application format provided
<b>Project review process</b>	In partnership countries, POs assess the proposals and capacity of the IO; others go to foundation staff for review	Applications go to foundation staff for review	In programme countries, the country Working Groups provide advice on the proposals and capacity of applicants; others go to foundation staff for review
<b>Reporting</b>	Mid-term and final reports (activity and financial); audit	Mid-term and final reports (activity and financial); audit Reporting guide	Mid-term and final reports (activity and financial); audit Reporting format provided; Reporting Guidelines

<b>Monitoring</b>	Mid-term and final reports (activity and financial); audits; follow-up of IOs by facilitators and RBs; monitoring trips	Interim and final reports (activity and financial); audits; monitoring trips	Mid-term and final reports (activity and financial); audits; follow-up by WGs; monitoring trips
<b>Evaluations</b>	Two performance audits; two external evaluations	Two performance audits	Two performance audits; one self-appraisal with external consultant
<b>Capacity-building (training, networking, other organis. dev. support, etc.)</b>	Learning by doing; Some training organized by POs for IOs; training of POs by Abilis staff	Learning by doing; Mentoring and training in Partnership Programme	Learning by doing; Some training, i.e., Mali; networking supported, i.e., in India and Indonesia

## 6 THE ABILIS FOUNDATION

### 6.1 Overview of the Foundation

Abilis was founded in 1998 by a group of Finnish disability activists. The goal of this foundation is *to build the capacity of people with disabilities in the Global South to improve the quality of their lives*. Abilis aims to achieve this goal by providing funding for small-scale projects initiated and implemented by persons with disabilities and their organizations. Special priority is given to projects of disabled women. Also organisations run by parents of children with disabilities can apply for funding.

Funding is provided to activities that contribute toward equal opportunities and empowerment of disabled people. Specific themes that receive support are promotion of human rights, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency (income generation). Currently, Abilis provides short-term, one-time grants to its Implementing Organizations ranging from €500 to €10 000. The aim of the one-time economic self-sufficiency (income) grants is to provide “seed money,” to help establish viable means for the grant recipients to earn their own incomes.

Abilis works all over the world, managing annually 160 – 200 projects. Since 2003, Abilis has established partner agreement with eight Partner Organizations (POs) in seven countries (Cambodia, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, India, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Tanzania). Approximately 50 percent of funding is channelled to countries where there is a PO working as mediators to ensure that Implementing Organizations (IOs) are reliable and that project proposals submitted by them meet the criteria set by Abilis Board. An Abilis facilitator is recruited to each PO, and a Review Board is established to assess the project proposals and progress reports from the Implementing Organizations and to make recommendations to Abilis Board about funding.

According to the five year strategy for 2006–2011, entitled “Small in Size, Big in Impact,” Abilis aims to increase the number of POs and focus on those geographical areas where partnerships have been established.



Abilis Foundation receives most of its funding from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The foundation has also received some donations from individuals. For 2007 and 2008–2009 the foundation has received US\$100 000 and US\$ 240 000, respectively, for human rights projects from a US-based multi-donor fund. Out of this funding the Abilis gave grants in 2007 for awareness-raising and advocacy projects as well as legal advice and training of trainers on human rights in Moldova, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uganda and Somaliland.

The Board of Directors determines which projects will receive support. The board members are disability activists who have experience in disability movement at national and international level. Most Board members are the founding members of the foundation. The members of the Board are disabled persons themselves and in addition, there is a representative of the Helsinki Deaconess Institute.

Current staff consists of two Senior Project Coordinators, three Junior Project Coordinators and a Chief Executive. All the staff members are women, having experience in NGO work and disability issues. The main tasks of the Project Coordinators are to assess the project applications and analyse the financial and progress reports from the POs and IOs, and they also monitor the performance of the projects through field visits. The work of the staff is divided according to their language capabilities, which include English, French, German, Finnish Sign Language, American Sign Language, Spanish, Russian, Swahili, and Albanian. Accounting is outsourced to a private company. The foundation has used the services of the Financial Manager employed by Siemenpuu.

#### **Previous evaluations and audits**

Two external evaluations of Abilis activities have been conducted. The study by Hisayo Katsui (2005) elaborated the ownership, impacts and lessons learned from 22 projects funded by Abilis in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Uganda and Zambia. Maria Muroke (2006) collected qualitative data from projects in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, and India. Currently, an evaluation of Regional Human Rights and Advocacy Organization in Latin America (*Región Latinoamericana de la Organización Mundial de Personas con Discapacidad Disabled Peoples' International*) is being undertaken.

The evaluations found that projects funded by Abilis have had positive impacts on the lives of disabled persons but no significant changes were found at the organizational level within the Disabled Peoples' Organisations (DPOs). The projects have played a role in bringing disability issues to the government decision and policy making. This funding modality gives the ownership to the Southern actors, which is appreciated especially in comparison with other donor agencies. The strong focus on income generating activities was welcomed by many organizations. However, the number of people who became financially self-sufficient is limited. Also, most beneficiaries tend to understand the DPO activities as charity rather than rights-oriented intervention. The evaluations made the following recommendations:



- Abilis needs to inform better the newly established DPOs about its principles and ideology.
- Income-generating intervention needs to secure that the beneficiaries have sufficient knowledge and skills to implement the projects successfully. Micro-credit type of activities should be implemented by experienced DPOs to minimise negative impacts.
- More attention should be paid to ensure ownership of the beneficiaries at the planning stages. Some DPOs identify the beneficiaries only after the funding has been secured. To address this issue, and in order to avoid too high expectations among potential beneficiaries, Katsui suggests flexibility in project launching so that the needs assessment could be done after funding has been secured.
- Identifying proper partnership organisations is the biggest challenge for Abilis and its transparency. A more transparent system is needed because there is a risk of corruption when the power is centralized in the hands of one individual or a group of people. Abilis could provide support to the partnership organization only for a limited time, and evaluation of partners could be carried out to motivate them and to improve their performance.
- Peer support and information exchange is encouraged. More dialogue between the partners should be conducted to learn from mistakes and failures and to obtain country specific information (Muroke 2007).
- One-year project duration is very challenging for many DPOs. Muroke also pointed out that specific attention should be paid to the rural areas. She wrote that a specific quota or emphasis on the projects taking place in remote areas could activate the DPOs to consider ways of working outside the cities.
- Finally, the evaluations note that advocacy projects take long time and thus needs more flexibility in their time frames.

In 2003 the MFA commissioned STAKES for an evaluation of Finnish Development co-operation from the disability perspective. The evaluation report, *Label us Able*, concluded that without the input of Finnish NGOs there would have been very little co-operation in disability issues supported by the Finnish Government. Most assistance via NGOs has been effective and it has made an impact on the planned target groups. *The impact on individuals has, however, been limited and the assistance has had even less influence on communities and countries. The report suggests that this is because most assistance has been disability-specific (targeted at people with disabilities) and has been based on the dominant social welfare approach.*

The 2003 evaluation recommended encouraging the co-operation via Finnish NGOs, including NGOs in partner countries and their policy advocacy work, so that the development of civil society of people with disabilities would be supported. Support for raising awareness and changing attitudes should be given attention, and the approach towards inclusion rather than exclusion should prevail. Capacity building is essential and is needed among all actors – in the MFA, among experts and consultants, among civil servants in partner countries and among NGOs both in Finland and the partner countries. The report further recommended that high priority should be given to

strengthening the capacities of disability organizations and the individual capacities of people with disabilities. Finally, the evaluation recommends that the various aid instruments and actions should be brought together to form a coherent approach or programme in each country, based on a situation analysis and needs assessment in the national development context.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the MFA has commissioned performance audits of Abilis, and its sister foundations, in 2004 and 2008.

## 6.2 How does the Foundation Work?

The Abilis Foundation has an open call for proposals, to which disability organizations can submit applications. Information about the funding opportunity is disseminated through DPO networks and events. The POs distribute the application forms, but in countries with no PO, the application forms can be requested from the Abilis Helsinki office.

The grant application follows somewhat different procedures depending on whether the grants are given to experienced and stable organisations or newly established organizations. The process of applying for funding is the same for both groups. The Foundation decides whether an organisation is newly established or long established.

Multiple means are used to check the background of applicant organizations. The applicant organizations are asked to provide a certificate of registration and a balance sheet of previous financial year, if they exist. In addition, recommendations are required by two independent persons selected by the applicant. The facilitator and Review Board in the PO check the background of the organization and they can assist the applicants in filling in the application forms. They also monitor the project performance and report about it to Abilis.

One of the selection criteria is that the projects are initiated and implemented by persons with disabilities. This is verified by the Abilis facilitator and Review Board. They appraise the proposal and send their assessment together with the application form to Abilis office in Helsinki, where the Coordinator and Board, in turn, assess it. In countries where there is no PO, the applicant submits an application directly to the background check by Abilis and Project Coordinator appraisal in Helsinki. Coordinators use informal networks and contacts to verify the existence and capacity of applicant organizations.

The Implementing Organization is responsible for the project management. Funds are disbursed directly to their bank account and the first monitoring visit is done by the facilitator immediately afterwards. The Review Board (RB) and facilitator make preliminary assessments of progress reports. They check that the report is duly filled

and then make an assessment of the project. The progress reports and financial reports are sent to Abilis where they are analyzed before the next disbursement is made.

The Abilis Board makes all funding decisions and accepts the final reports in relation to the Project Grant Programme. Each PO sends a narrative report and an income and expenditure report every six months. The POs also send a balance sheet and audited accounts of the whole PO to Abilis in the end of the financial year. The Partner Organisation is also responsible for organising an audit of the Programme accounts at the end of its financial year.

The grants are paid in three instalments (for both newly and long established organisations) (i) 50 % of the grant; (ii) 40 % of the grant; and (iii) 10 % of the grant. When the implementing organisation has used the first instalment, they send a mid-term report which describes the progress of their project and how they have spent the first instalment. The Newly Established Organisations send the **original** vouchers (receipts) to Abilis together with the mid-term report while the Long Established Organisations send the **copies** of the vouchers. The second instalment, 40 % of the total grant, will be paid after Abilis has received the Mid-term report. When the project has come to an end and 90 per cent of the funds have been used, a final report is written. The financial report form is also largely the same, but the newly established organisations send the original receipts to Abilis. The long established organisations hire a registered auditor to audit the project accounts.

Abilis only provides one-time grants. The DPOs can apply for second funding one year after the completion of first grant. Abilis selects only a few outstanding organisations, which are invited to submit a second proposal, for up to a maximum of €20 000. The Partnership Organizations receive annual grants, averaging €15 000 per PO per year.

### **Types of projects funded**

Half of the Abilis funding is targeted to income-generating projects. These projects involve procuring equipment and assets, such as sewing machines, cows or goats for members of a disability organization. In a revolving-scheme modality, which is used in some of the livestock schemes, the loan recipients are expected to repay their loan by providing a certain proportion of the products (piglets, calves) to other members of their organization. The Evaluation Team found that this is rarely done. The revolving-loan schemes also lack proper monitoring systems and record keeping.

One in every four projects focuses on advocacy (Table 5). Since 2006, an increasing number of advocacy and awareness raising projects have made a specific reference to the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Typical advocacy projects are training courses or seminars. The target groups are not systematically identified in the project proposals; for example, the Evaluation Team did not find information on whether awareness raising has been targeted to government or local businesses, which could be potential employers for persons with disabilities.

Organizational development and capacity building are not mentioned as explicit objectives for the grants. Abilis does, however, support organizational development of the DPOs mainly by providing funding to procurement of hardware. In 1999–2003 some agricultural projects of the DPOs were funded, especially as means of raising funds for the organizations. In 2007, some newly established organizations received funds for procurement of office equipment.

The table below describes the types of projects funded by Abilis in 1999–2007.

**Table 5** Types of Projects funded by Abilis (Percentage), 1999–2007.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
<b>Organisational Development *</b>	9	17	28	27	35	6	7	7	5
<b>Awareness and Advocacy</b>	58	-	-	-	-	25	23	22	22
<b>Accessibility</b>	-	-	-	-	-	5	7	9	9
<b>Rehabilitation</b>	-	-	32	27	24	7	12	10	10
<b>Income Generation</b>	28	55	32	36	28	52	49	49	51
<b>Education</b>	-	29	8	10	14	4	2	3	2
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
<b>Other</b>	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total (%)	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
<b>Total number of projects</b>	43	42	78	92	110	148	148	250	255

Source: Abilis annual reports 1999–2007

**Organisational Development** includes projects focusing on capacity building of DPOs.

\* Includes agricultural projects/ fund raising for the DPO 1999–2003.

**Awareness and Advocacy** projects aim at improving human rights of disabled people: campaigning, lobbying, collaboration with media, empowerment of disabled people.

**Accessibility** –projects aim at overcoming barriers and development of sign language, Braille production, prosthesis production, wheelchairs, other technical and mobility aids.

**Rehabilitation**–projects focus on rehabilitation and Community Based Rehabilitation, CBR).

**Income Generation** –projects focus on skills provision, vocational training, marketing, skills to run small enterprises, micro loans).

**Education** –projects target to basic education, inclusive education, special needs education. (FIDIDA Classification of disability-specific projects 2004).

Some general features of Abilis projects:

- The majority of the projects are implemented by DPOs of persons with physical disabilities. Organizations representing different disability groups receive 25 percent of the support and groups of persons with hearing impairment, deaf, or visually impaired as well as parent groups receive approximately 10 percent of the support.
- Most applications come from sub-Saharan Africa but the share of South Asia and Central Asia is increasing. Fewer applications come from Latin America or Middle East.

- According to Abilis reports one-third of the funded projects are in rural areas. Two-thirds are implemented in towns and urban areas, and one-quarter of projects are implemented in the national capital.
- Approximately 75 percent of funded organizations provide a certificate of registration and half of them have also provided a balance sheet. Some 10 percent of support is targeted to sponsoring education of individual disability activists and non-registered organizations in countries where the registration is not yet formalized.
- Average funding of a project is €9 000. There is some variation, however: for example, in 2004 the average funding for a project was €9 237 and in 2001 it was €5 627. The duration of projects varies between 10 and 12 months.

Abilis provides the Partnership Organizations with support for their liaison work, as indicated in Table 6. The average annual amount of funding for each Partnership Organization in 2005–09 has amounted to €14 842.

**Table 6 Annual Funding to Abilis Partnership Organizations, 2005–2009 (Euros).**

Abilis Partnership Organizations	Country	2005	2006	2007	2008	Planned 2009	Total 2005-09
National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU)	Uganda	18618	20017	20017	20150	20150	98952
Mobility India	India	9003	12860	14000	14000	19000	57863
<i>Almatynskoe Gorodskoe Obchestvo Invalidov</i> (AGOI), (Almaty City Society of People with Disabilities)	Kazakhstan	14792	19972	13313	11370	16677	76124
Handicap International - Bangladesh	Bangladesh			13000	11244	11244	35488
Information Centre on Disability, ICD	Tanzania		13000	19606	19798	19961	72365
<i>Shirikisho La Vyama Vya Watu Wenye</i> (SHIVYAWATA) Mwanza	Tanzania		10000	17194	19832	18335	65361
Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD)	Ethiopia			10000	9900	9900	29800
Handicap International – Mozambique	Mozambique				11500	10000	21500
Cambodian Disabled People's Organisation (CDPO)	Cambodia				11323	10000	21323
<b>Total for Year</b>		42413	75849	107130	129117	135267	489776

### Monitoring, reporting, auditing and evaluation

The performance of the projects is monitored through reports and monitoring visits by the Abilis staff in Helsinki, as well as by facilitators and Review Board established in the POs. If there is no PO in a particular country, monitoring is done through reports and communication with the implementing organization. Also voluntary activists,

KEPA, members of other NGO foundations or Finnish NGOs occasionally make follow-up of Abilis funded projects.

The facilitator and/or Review Board members visit the projects two to three times during the project cycle: prior to the application submission to Abilis, after the first disbursement, and at the end of the project. These visits are reported to the Review Board and in quarterly progress reports. The field missions of Abilis staff include meetings with applicant organisations, IOs and POs, and project site visits. The review of mission reports showed that the missions focus on project management issues and that information is collected mainly on inputs and activities rather than outputs or outcomes of the projects.

There are differences in the reporting modalities by POs: in some POs, the facilitator reports directly to Abilis and for some POs reporting is done by or via, the Review Board. It is not always clear how the management or members of the PO are kept informed about the Abilis grants. Similarly, the reporting from Abilis to the POs is not always efficient. In Uganda, the facilitators and the RB told the Evaluation Mission that they do not receive information about the transfer of funds to the IOs in time, which makes it impossible for them to monitor the implementation and provide guidance as planned. There is also a need to improve information sharing between the implementing organizations and development partners of the POs. The quality of reports both from the IOs, POs and Abilis missions is rather poor. Simple guidelines would be needed to ensure that appropriate indicators are monitored and reported and that reports are used to assess the performance of the projects and the programme as a whole.

While two external evaluations have been conducted, there has not been any specific project or thematic evaluations. For instance, evaluations on effects of income-generating or advocacy activities could serve future decision making, advocacy and capacity building. When planning for such evaluations, it is critical to design sound and technically qualified evaluations with realistic objectives and to ensure that sufficient capacities are available. For example, impact evaluations require complex methodologies, which take into account several factors in the project environment.

Efforts are made to establish a system to pre-screen the background of the applying organizations and assess the project proposals, but less attention has been given to development of sound monitoring systems. Monitoring tends to focus on inputs and outputs rather than outcomes. None of the reviewed projects had established baselines, which are needed to assess the changes. Sometimes, there was a very weak link between the issues monitored compared to the actual targets of the project. For example, if the objective is to improve the livelihood of persons with disabilities, related data should be collected – it is not sufficient to monitor and report about the inputs (e.g. number of goats or cows procured and delivered). Monitoring systems should be built on simple indicators thereby motivating the members to participate more actively in the

project implementation and monitoring. Such improvements would also make project reporting more meaningful.

### 6.3 Development Trends 1998–2008

During 2005–2007, the Foundation has managed more than 200 projects per year, ranging from 196 projects in 1995 to 255 projects in 2007. Some of these projects were completed during one year. The number of ongoing projects in the end of the calendar year is presented in the Table 7. On average, 200 project applications have been each year, ranging from 130 applications in 2001 to 358 in 2004. In general, one-third of the applications were approved for funding and the proportion of rejected projects applications was about 40 percent, ranging from 22 percent in 1999 to 63 percent in 2007. In the end of the calendar year, some 40 percent of the applications were in the approval process, as applications can be submitted towards the end of the calendar year. In addition, for projects submitted from countries without a partnership organization, the screening process may take a longer time. There has been a slight reduction of countries where Abilis works over the year 2004 – 2007. Currently Abilis works in 47 countries.

The number of Abilis staff has increased in accordance with the number of projects funded. The first year was managed by the Board and one staff member. Since 1999, the number of staff has increased steadily. On average, one staff member deals with 50 ongoing projects and assesses 95 project proposals in a year.

Table 7 Status of Abilis Project Proposals.

Year	State grant (Euros)	Number of ongoing projects as of 31 December	Number of applications received	Approval percentage	Percentage of rejected projects	Percentage of project applications in process as of 31 December
1998	100 913					
1999	252 282	25	148	29	22	49
2000	252 282	42	180	15	48	37
2001	336 376	78	130	22	49	29
2002	700 000	92	170	24	29	47
2003	800 000	110	160	25	26	49
2004	900 000	148	358	22	37	41
2005	1 000 000	162	167	47	53	*
2006	1 050 000	175	232	39	61	*
2007	1 100 000	155	221	37	63	*

Source: Abilis annual reports 1999–2007.

Note: The figures differ from some previous data, due to a change in the recording system.



Table 8 Abilis Staff and Projects Managed per Staff Member.

Year	Number of staff as of 31 December	Number of projects managed by one staff member
1999	0.6	35
2000	0.8	42
2001	2.0	66
2002	1.8	51
2003	2.5	44
2004	3.5	42
2005	3.8	42
2006	4.6	38
2007	5.0	51

Source: Abilis Annual Reports 1999–2007

### The future of Abilis

Abilis plans to focus on geographical areas where it has established partnerships with local disability organisations. According to the 2006–2011 strategy there is a plan to increase the number of partner organisations to ten. Identification missions have been conducted to Nepal and Zambia but partners who would meet the criteria for partnership programme are hard to find. The Foundation also aims to establish a new country office in Asia by the year 2011. The office will have its own Asian sources of funding and will independently initiate projects in the region. The Foundation also plans to supplement the funding agreement with the government of Finland by finding new sources of funding, aiming at increasing the annual budget to €2 – 3 million by the year 2011.

Within Finland, Abilis aims to focus on raising awareness about the foundation, particularly among new audiences. According to the strategy for 2006–2011, the plan is to increase cooperation with other development foundations, and to work with Finnish disability organisations that have development projects. There is also a plan to enhance the professional skills of staff.

## 6.4 Field Assessment of the Grants

The evaluation missions in Uganda and Indonesia visited altogether 10 grantees of Abilis. Two of them are located in Indonesia. Eight grantees and the partnership organisation, NUDIPU, are located in Uganda. These organizations have implemented projects on training of disabled journalists, income generation through revolving loan schemes, and awareness raising.

### Training

In Jogjakarta, Indonesia, the evaluation mission assessed the Abilis support to *Sasana Integrasi Dan Adokasi Difabel* (SIGAB). In 2007, SIGAB had received an Abilis grant



of €10 386 to provide journalism training for disabled persons, and to produce 4 issues of a magazine on disability issues. Earlier training and publication had been supported by the Voluntary Service Organization (VSO). The project coordinator reported that three out of 11 trainees had subsequently published articles in mainstream national newspapers. One broader impact of their work had been that in conjunction with preparing the magazine issue on the “diffable life on campus,” they had identified much discrimination in access. One of two university rectors had been receptive to this feedback, and agreed to work on making changes. The group is now assisting another group in Aceh to set up a similar magazine. The group faced difficulties, however, in continuing their magazine in Jogjakarta, as it had never been established as a financially-viable publication, i.e., seeking advertisements and subscribers, but only had been supported by donor funds, and given away for free. The group is now seeking alternative donor funds to continue. This group would have welcomed Abilis support on organizational development issues.

### **Income generation through Revolving Loan Schemes**

The field mission in Uganda visited organizations that have received funding for revolving loan schemes, such as the Young Deaf Women Association (YDWA) in Kampala, the Uganda Parents with Deaf-Blind Association and the Mubende Women group. The YDWA has received € 10 000 for a Revolving Fund project in 2004. This project has ended, but the final disbursement from ABILIS has not been made because there are some deviations in the work plans, which have not been approved by the ABILIS and PO, and because acceptable reports have not been received. The association could not provide an accurate report about the beneficiaries of the loans nor the current status of the repayments of the loans.

The mission visited some businesses of the YDWA beneficiaries, such as a snack kiosk at the school of the deaf children, stand at the market place and knitting workshop at home. The businesses are ongoing, but the mission found that none of the beneficiaries has kept sales records or stock books after the project. This finding suggests that although training in business management has been provided in the beginning of the projects, it should continue as hand-on activity during the project. Some follow-up could also be useful after the project has ended.

The Uganda Parents with Deaf-blind Children Association received €7500 for a Revolving Loan Scheme Project in 2007. The project is being implemented and it aims to improve the quality of life of deaf-blind children and their families. Goats and other animals have been provided to the member families. So far, no follow-up has been done as to if, or how, the livelihood of the final beneficiaries has improved as a result of this programme. The Evaluation Team believes that involvement of the final beneficiaries of the project, i.e., the deaf blind children, in taking care of the animals should be a primary objective for the project.

The Mubende Women with Disabilities Association (MUDIWA) received €9 905 for an income-generating project for women with disabilities in 2005. Active members,

selected by the organization management, received either pigs or sewing machines. The Evaluation Team witnessed that some participants and their families have benefited from the project. They have not, however, met their responsibility of repaying their loan with two piglets, to share with other beneficiaries, as was originally agreed with MUDIWA. In a sewing-machine project, one woman reported doubling her income after receiving a sewing machine. Production of a traditional dress takes now only two weeks (including hand embroidery) instead of four to five weeks.

The Mission also visited a tailoring workshop of KADIWOD in Kasese, which was established through Abilis funding in 2003. During the mission's visit, training was ongoing but it was not clear whether the activities are still targeted to PWD. It was also observed that all equipment procured was not in the workshop. The mission was told that they have been distributed to the villages but no distribution list was available.

### **Awareness Raising**

In Jogjakarta, Indonesia, the Evaluation Team visited *Dria Manunggal*, an organisation established in 1991 that focuses on advocacy and education, especially providing training for blind persons in information technology and computer skills. In 2000, *Dria Manunggal* had received an Abilis grant of US\$9 815 to organize a workshop, as input into a national education act under preparation at that time. The organization had also hoped to get additional funding from KEPA for a second workshop, but that did not materialize. The Abilis grant had helped the organization to raise awareness on the need for greater inclusiveness in education, and obtain more feedback for the legal draft. As a result, government regulations include provisions for "inclusive education." The director proposed that Abilis could improve its working methods through more focus on strategic issues, i.e., advice and feedback to its grantees, guidance on how the grantees could develop their organizations, and support to networking among organizations.

In Uganda the mission visited the Mityana Women Group, which is implementing a human rights sensitisation project. The mission was told that several activities have been taken place, but no proper records about the activities, number or participants etc. were available. The association has, however, procured a video camera and recorded some activities. The mission advised the association representatives to plan for the use of this material in the future. The management structure in this association was not very transparent: the project coordinator has a lot of authority as she is also acting as an accountant for the organization.

### **Conclusions**

Based on its field observations, the Evaluation Team concludes that the Abilis support is targeted to relevant areas but that quality of work is a concern. Most of the beneficiaries met in Uganda were women and they showed satisfaction with the goods or finance provided to them. The organizations should be able to provide follow-up information in an accurate manner. Regarding the capacity issues, more emphasis should be put on assessing not only the project management capacity but also the capacity in substance

issues in concern. When approving requests for hardware, the POs need to confirm that there is a true need for such equipment and that they benefit the entire group rather than one or two persons. Also the running costs, sustainability and maintenance issues need to be carefully assessed. An association in rural Uganda cannot afford paying US\$ 45 per hour to hire a generator to enable them to use a computer. In terms of the journalistic training project in Indonesia, more consideration should have been given to the development and sustainability of the magazine, not just to see it as a tool for training. The mission concludes that revolving loan schemes should be managed by professional microcredit institutes rather than NGOs focusing on disability issues.

## 7 THE FINNISH NGO FOUNDATION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (KIOS)

### 7.1 Overview of the Foundation

KIOS was established in September 1998 as a direct funding mechanism for supporting human rights movement in the developing countries. Since its establishment, KIOS has strengthened and supplemented the official Finnish development cooperation. KIOS provides financial support to local civil society organizations that work for the promotion and protection of human rights in their own countries and regions. In Finland, KIOS is committed to promote human rights and its work is about enhancing the knowledge of Finnish Civil Society on the human rights situation in the South. KIOS is not aimed at supporting academic research, nor scholarship, nor international NGOs (INGOs). KIOS receives financial support for its activities from MFA.

KIOS was founded by 11 Finnish NGOs, all of them working with human rights and development issues. The following are the founder organizations:

1. Amnesty International Finnish Section
2. Committee of 100 in Finland
3. FinnChurchAid
4. Finnish Disabled People's International Development Association (FIDIDA)
5. Finnish League for Human Rights
6. Finnish Peace Committee
7. Finnish Refugee Council
8. The Finnish UN Association
9. Service Centre for Development Cooperation (KEPA)
10. The United Nation's International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
11. The United Nation's Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

According to the Strategy Plan for 2004–2010, the KIOS Vision is: “KIOS is a known and respected actor in its chosen areas of human rights work. Its partners shall meet the requirements of sufficient resources and capacities to carry out human rights work. Partners are well networked and their efforts carry wider social impact. The target countries follow the obligations documented in major international human rights treaties and other instruments”.

The 2004 strategy document describes the Mission Statement of KIOS as “the overall goal of KIOS is to promote human rights in developing countries, as human rights are defined in the treaties and other instruments of the United Nations, the Council of Europe and other regional organizations.”

KIOS values are the following: a) all people have an intrinsic worth and human rights that are universal, inalienable and fundamental.; b) emphasis on justice and equality.; c) promotion of the rights and conditions of the most disadvantaged members of societies; and d) reliability, independence, commitment and quality. According to its strategy, KIOS thematically prioritizes Democratic Rights, Gender Equality and Right to Education in its funding policy.

Originally KIOS provided grants worldwide, with support going to organisations in Kosovo, Israel-Palestine, Turkey, Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Other grants were provided in Haiti, Peru, the Philippines, Indonesia, East Timor, Thailand, Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire, Gambia, and Chad. In the 2004–2010 strategy, the two focal regions were adopted – Eastern Africa and South Asia.

The 2004–2010 strategy was revised and approved by the Executive Board of KIOS in January 2006. In the 2006 revision, the geographic focus was extended to include more countries in Eastern Africa and South Asia. In Eastern Africa the focal countries are Burundi, Djibouti, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, while in South Asia the focal countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tibet.

In October 2008, the KIOS Executive Board had a planning meeting, to review lessons learned and discuss different alternatives for their strategy. At this meeting they discussed several issues, including the role of the Executive Board, the work of the strategy group, KIOS work in Finland and KIOS work on impact assessment.

### **Organisational Structure**

The 11 founder organizations each have a representative seat in the Executive Board of KIOS, which is the highest level of the organization with the mandate to formulate the strategy of the organization. The Board is the final decision maker.

KIOS has five full-time staff members – the Director, 3 coordinators, and an administrative assistant. KIOS welcomes interns. KIOS uses the services of a financial officer employed by Siemenpuu. The administrative work load of 45 projects and the additional operational and administrative internal work of KIOS has been divided among the staff members of KIOS as follows: (i) 22 projects under the responsibility of one East Africa coordinator, who is also responsible for communications, public relations and internal development issues of KIOS; (ii) 15 projects under the responsibility of the South Asia coordinator who is also responsible for database development; and (iii) eight projects under the responsibility of the third coordinator. (At the time of the evaluation, however, the latter eight projects were temporarily under the responsibility of the Executive Director.) The administrative assistant and intern also contribute to project administration.

The overall responsibility lies with the Executive Director, who is responsible for the management and development of the organization. The Executive Director supervises the work of three project coordinators and one administrative assistant. Each member staff of KIOS has a complementary role in the field of communications and public relations, institutional development, development of data base and organizing events and seminars.

According to some interviewees, the members of the Board are highly appreciated human rights experts, activists and workers of human rights and /or development issues. When KIOS was founded, the Board members were accountable to the mission, vision and work of KIOS and they were very committed. Over the years, the Board membership has been changing, which has diminished the commitment and the accountability of some Board members.

According to some Board members, the role of the Board is not clear. The Board Chairperson and the Executive Director prepare the agenda for the Board meetings, and the Executive Director prepares the minutes of Board meetings. The coordinators prepare project summaries and analysis for the Board's financial decisions on the proposals. Some Board Members noted that they receive only limited information on the country context, but, at the same time, they get too much background and detailed project operational documents for scrutiny. Therefore, some Board members believe that the role of the Board has become operational rather than strategic.

The Evaluation Mission found that the operational work in project management and administration as well as the internal administration are carried out by highly-educated persons with background on social sciences, international relations, public international law, political sciences, development studies, and other fields, as well as expertise in human rights. The Evaluation Team believes that to date, the staff members' expertise on human rights has not yet been fully utilized. In 2009 KIOS is planning, however, to begin formulating country strategies aimed at building longer-term partnership with focal countries, which should draw upon this staff expertise.

The Coordinators' routine work consists on guaranteeing the quality of project cycle management and administration. There is no doubt that the quality system of project management is well followed up by the coordinators. The staff knowledge and experience on human rights issues, however, is used primarily when the coordinators assess the application vis-à-vis the current human rights situation of each country. The Evaluation Team obtained the impression that this subject matter competence is less utilized during the monitoring visits, and very limited technical assistance or dialogue on human rights issues occurs between the coordinator and the partner organizations. The staff expertise in human rights issues is not fully utilised in their work, which focuses currently on project administration. The Evaluation Team believes that more emphasis should be placed on the content of human rights issues.

The KIOS staff, which is knowledgeable and experienced on the field of human rights, could much more contribute in policy analysis, research and the promotional, awareness raising and educational work that KIOS is currently developing in Finland and overseas. Currently, however, the agreement between KIOS and MFA only permits a small amount of funds, i.e., 2.5% of the budget in 2008, to be used for information work in Finland. This issue needs to be reconsidered. The added value of human rights professionals should be visible in the quality and process of the projects.

#### **Collaboration with Nordic Human Rights Foundations in global lobbying and advocacy**

KIOS is currently coordinating closely with the Swedish NGO Foundation for Human Rights. They jointly prepared a proposal for a three-year EU-financed programme. The aim of the programme was to support post-conflict situations on human rights, for instance through a well-established Truth Commission of Human Rights. Unfortunately, however, the EU decided not to fund the programme.

KIOS is also proactively building professional coordination with the Nordic Human Rights Foundations (Sweden and Norway). With Norwegian Human Rights Fund, they planned joint assessment and information actions when visiting the county level beneficiaries. The Nordic collaboration is planned annually in a one-day Nordic Cooperation Meeting. At this meeting, they exchange information regarding the application assessment process and the situation in focal countries; they also participate in seminars and training of others.

KIOS staff recently visited Geneva where they visited different human rights NGOs and attended a session in the Human Rights Council. This visit included the annual Nordic cooperation meeting for the Nordic foundations. They were able to present KIOS to the International Service for Human Rights, which is currently providing training on human rights to developing countries in Geneva. Strategically this input is important for their future advocacy work.

### **KIOS participation in the Järvi Project**

KIOS is taking part in the three-year pilot phase of JÄRVI Project, implemented by the Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health and Finnish Centre for Health Promotion. JÄRVI Project aims to build the capacity of NGOs in assessing their work. In JÄRVI Project, KIOS has been working especially on project reporting and impact assessment issues. A new Reporting Guide and Reporting Cover Sheet are being drafted as part of JÄRVI Project with the aim of focusing the reporting more on the impact assessment. They have been in use since spring 2008.

### **Participation of KIOS in the Impact Assessment Working Group**

KIOS is actively participating in the Impact Assessment working Group of the Finnish Partnership Organizations. The Impact Assessment framework is used by KIOS for evaluating their work at different settings such as the evaluation of the annual plan implementation, the mid-term evaluation of KIOS strategy 2004–2010, as well as project evaluations and evaluating seminars.

### **Other Collaboration**

KIOS is permanently in contact with the MFA and the Finnish Embassies in countries where projects are implemented. KIOS is permanently in contact with other donors, UN organisations, experts, universities, and international NGOs. In addition, KIOS staff takes part in trainings and seminars in Finland and abroad, which provides opportunities for further networking. Overseas colleagues visit the KIOS office, including representatives from partner organizations, civil society organizations, international human rights organizations and governmental departments.

### **KIOS promoting human rights through Seminars in Finland**

KIOS has been actively organizing Seminars in Finland. For example, in September 2007 KIOS organized a 2-day Seminar on the Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to development in collaboration with the Human Rights Institute at Åbo Akademi University where different perspectives on the approach were discussed. The seminar had a very practical approach during the second day where NGOs participants could analyze different projects applying the approach.

To celebrate its 10th anniversary, in October 2008 KIOS organized a seminar entitled “Realizing Democratic Right at the Grassroots – Experiences from Africa and Asia” where different experiences and practices of promoting grassroots democracy were presented. The seminar had special emphasis on the participation of women and youth in democratic and electoral processes. The seminar aimed to influence the Finnish development cooperation in supporting the development of democratic rights.

### **KIOS Thematic Publications in collaboration with University**

KIOS is promoting human rights in Finland and overseas by publishing thematic reports in close collaboration with researchers from Institute for Human Rights at Åbo Akademi University. These documents have been shared with the partners, and are available on the KIOS website: (1) *Democratic Rights in a Development Perspective* by



Kristian Myntti; (2) *Human Rights of Women* by Katarina Frostell; and (3) *Right to Education from a Developing Country Perspective* by Alessandra Lundström Sarelin. KIOS is also collaborating with other research organisations and universities.

#### **Previous evaluations and audits**

No previous evaluation of KIOS has been conducted. In 2004, KPMG Oy Ab did, however, carry out a performance audit of all three Foundations and their international partners. A similar exercise was conducted by the same audit company in 2008, covering the period of 2006–2007.

## **7.2 How does the Foundation Work?**

**Support through grants.** KIOS provides financial support to local civil society organizations that work for the promotion and protection of human rights in developing countries. The Foundation makes independent decisions regarding the allocation of its annual budget. KIOS support aims mostly at:

- Human rights awareness raising and education.
- Human rights campaigning, lobbying and advocacy.
- Human rights monitoring and documentation.
- Legal aid service provision.
- Capacity building on human rights issues.

#### **Quality Assurance Management System**

The KIOS Quality Assurance Management System is well prepared. Actually the Director of KIOS has been following the standards of the European Foundation for Quality Management and the developments in this field are actively followed. For instance, KIOS already has in use a risk management system.

#### **Application and grant-awarding process**

Applications are accepted throughout the year by open invitation. Local civil society organizations, working groups and networks of civil society organizations in developing countries are eligible for funding. In exceptional cases civil society organizations in exile also are eligible. Individuals, INGOs, profit entities, religious communities, political parties and governmental bodies are not eligible for funding.

The funding criteria include: a) the potential of the project to promote or protect human rights; b) the capacity and experience of the applicant related to human rights; c) experience of project and financial management; d) the project objectives and their achievability by the proposed project activities; and e) the budget of the project (compared to the local price level, to the project activities and to the capacity of the applicant).



Around 300–400 applications are received annually from Africa, Asia, Latin America, Middle East and Europe and an average of 20 new projects are approved each year. Most grants range between €5 000 – 50 000, with the average grant size being €24 330. The project duration of the first grant is for one year.

In 2007, KIOS established a Small Grant Scheme. Small and newly-established organizations are also encouraged to apply with the objective of supporting new civil society initiatives, and building the capacity of new human rights actors. The grants for small projects are under € 10 000: they receive guidance by the KIOS staff throughout the application and reporting process.

KIOS has developed a detailed application guide, an application form and a reference form that needs to be carefully filled in by the applicant organizations. All the guidelines and forms are available in the KIOS website in different languages. Annexed documentation that is requested includes the project budget, two written references, applicant organization's annual budget, Statutes or By-laws, Registration Certificate, Annual Report and latest audit reports.

KIOS processes only one application from each organization and each organization may have only one ongoing project funded by KIOS at any particular time. The fast processing of applications (2–6 months) was appreciated by the applicant organizations. Project coordinators are fully responsible on processing the application, and assessing the relevance of the project as well as elaborating the project summaries to be presented to the decision-making body, the Board.

According to the funding agreement between the KIOS and the MFA, the grantee shall contribute with a minimum of 7.5 % (self-financing share) to the total costs of the project funded by KIOS. The grant instalments are transferred in 3 parts: 50%, 40% and 10%. The first instalment of 50% is paid after the signature of the cooperation agreement. The second instalment is paid after the approval of the mid-term narrative and financial report. The third instalment (10%) is paid after the Board has approved the final narrative and financial report. For two-year projects, the disbursement takes place in four instalments, of 30%, 30%, 30%, and 10%.

#### **KIOS practice when assessing applications, monitoring and field visits**

Monitoring of projects funded by KIOS is carried out in Finland by the project coordinators through the analysis and assessment of the mid-term narrative and financial report, as well as through monitoring visits. KIOS has developed a follow-up sheet for project management.

The Evaluation Team found that KIOS project coordinators have diverse systems for dealing with the applications. Some coordinators prefer to discuss together the assessment/analysis, while others would prefer to handle the assessment individually. No harmonized process internally exists. Coordinators use a checklist, with 8 criteria that defines the standards of the assessment. Internal communication aimed at

harmonizing best practices of assessment and analysis should be improved and internal processes should be clearer, as well as roles and responsibilities. (Following the Evaluation, the application assessment has been harmonised. Now all applications are discussed together, and all coordinators use a common evaluation form.)

Coordinators do background research for the potential projects. Interns have compiled short country profiles. Coordinators are increasingly using different UN documents (state reports, concluding observations, alternative/ shadow reports) from countries where these documents are available. The background material is also taken also from different sources and the sources vary somewhat for different applications.

KIOS staff is committed to support high-quality human rights specific projects. Efforts are made to strategically think on KIOS role, the strategic focus, the type of priority partners and the type of human rights that are funded. All these reflexions were “food for thought” for the KIOS Executive Board planning meeting in October 2008.

A clear plan for monitoring visit has been developed by the KIOS Board. Monitoring visits of KIOS’ staff have a specific objective and, according to the reviewed documentation, they are well planned. When possible, monitoring visits also include participation in the project activities. For instance, in Uganda the KIOS monitoring mission participated in the strategy workshop of East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders (EHAHRDP). Mission reports are well elaborated. Between 1999 and 2007, KIOS has made 11 field trips, with at least one field trip each year. Fewer trips have taken place than were planned, and six of the 11 trips have been to Africa. Due to security reasons, trips to Afghanistan in 2006 and 2007, and to Pakistan in 2008, had to be cancelled. The Board currently aims to plan 4 trips per year. In addition, KIOS Board members, staff of the other foundations and KEPA may visit KIOS projects as part of their own work.

Some of the smaller Ugandan grantees found that the funding system is complex compared to other development partners, who do not require auditing reports and expenditure verification. While the approach of results-oriented projects has been introduced and adopted by some partners, Ugandan grantees stated that they found it difficult to promote a results orientation as long as KIOS focuses on activity-based financing and disbursements are based on reports on completed activities.

In terms of long-term capacity building, the Kalayanamitra staff argues that it would have been useful if KIOS could have supported a small organizational management development training course for their staff. They also recommended that KIOS could consider providing some larger-sized grants, noting that the KIOS grant had been much smaller than the LCF grant that they have received from the Finnish Embassy.

### 7.3 Development Trends 1998–2008

As shown in the Table 7, between 1999 and 2007 KIOS received 2 146 applications, approved 178 of them and rejected 1892 applications. Thus, less than 10 percent of the applications are accepted for funding. Over the past 9 years, thus, an average of 20 grants per year have been approved.

Strategically KIOS has decided to give priority to projects strengthening and protecting rights of the most disadvantaged groups (women, children, minorities, and the poor). No specific approach has been yet developed by KIOS to mainstream these issues in the grant projects. KIOS' new partnership programme in Kenya, however, will include as beneficiaries small organizations whose work will benefit and improve the human rights situation of vulnerable groups.

In 2007, KIOS decided to fund what it terms “Small Grants,” of under €10 000, to benefit small and newly-established human rights organizations. The KIOS Small Grants Scheme is for smaller organizations that have little experience receiving funds from international donors. With this Small Grants Scheme, KIOS aims to support new initiatives of the civil society and to build the capacity of new human rights actors. Small-scale projects often demand more capacity building and guidance from KIOS, and the small grant projects receive special attention from KIOS staff throughout the project cycle. KIOS is committed to guide the applicant organization through application and reporting process by offering advice and suggestions. As with other projects KIOS keeps regular contact with the partner throughout the project.

Table 9 Number of KIOS Applications between 1999 and 2007.

Region	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Asia	39	55	76	65	81	166	77	113	88	760
Africa	56	63	87	83	107	164	86	147	139	932
Europe	17	17	18	19	12	28	13	21	14	159
Latin America	24	25	21	15	16	24	28	33	13	199
Northern Africa and Middle East	7	7	8	15	12	12	3	20	6	90
Other	3	0	2	0	0	4	0	0	0	9
<b>Total</b>	146	167	212	197	228	398	207	334	260	2149

Table 10 Number of Approved KIOS Projects from 1999 through 2007.

Region	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Asia	11	12	10	7	3	3	5	8	7	66
Africa	7	5	4	5	7	4	12	5	13	62
Europe	3	2	2	1	1	0	1	3	1	14
Latin America	5	6	2	3	3	0	3	3	2	27
Northern Africa and Middle East	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	2	2	9
<b>Total</b>	27	25	19	17	14	8	22	21	25	178
<b>Total €</b>	259834	300905	295069	326800	379 428	367500	711743	747200	941900	4330379

Table 11 Rejected KIOS Applications, 1999–2007.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Proposed by the Staff to be Rejected	53	103	163	153	198	369	154	293	226	1712
Rejected by the Board	60	35	25	22	21	15	0	2	0	180
<b>Total</b>	113	138	183	175	219	384	154	295	226	1892

In 2008, KIOS launched a new partnership programme, called *KIOS – Youth Alive! Kenya Partnership Programme*. The aim of this programme is to identify and support community-based human rights groups to harness their full potential and become key human rights actors in their region and ultimately nationally. The central aspects of the programme are networking of the participating groups with each other and with other relevant institutions in the country (whether governmental or non-governmental), and providing individualized training and mentoring on issues that will be identified together with the participating groups. The programme will work with eight selected community-based human rights groups. The idea of this new programme is to get more involved in the grassroots work and share the knowledge accumulated in KIOS funded projects over the years. Besides supporting smaller human rights actors, the idea is to also enhance networking between all KIOS project partners in Kenya.

## 7.4 Field Assessment of the Grants

The implementation of the grants was primarily assessed through the field visits to Uganda and Indonesia. The field mission in Uganda visited four partner organizations

of KIOS, as well as one organization that has recently applied for KIOS support. The field mission in Indonesia met with one organisation that had received a KIOS grant.

### **Awareness Raising and Training**

The Foundation for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI) is a long-term partner of KIOS. It has been awarded grants of €18 200 in 2003, €25 500 in 2005, and €49 500 in 2007 to expand its work to grassroots levels. FHRI is a well-known and stable organization in Uganda. The KIOS Funding is a fraction of the annual budget of FHRI, but it has provided an opportunity to undertake additional field activities. However, it is not clear whether this is and continues to be a priority action for the organization.

Action for Community Development – Uganda (ACODEV) is newly established, registered in 2007. It operates in the Kasese region. ACODEV received its first KIOS grant in 2007 for €13 000, for the training of paralegals and for institutional support (salaries and office equipment), and a second grant in 2008 of €45 800. ACODEV has implemented training for the para-legal advisors in the region. Some advisors were interviewed. In general, they were satisfied with the training but also identified some topics that need more attention in future training, such as legal frameworks, problem solving and consultation. Some support for transportation in the communities is needed. Regarding management, ACODEV has developed, in collaboration with KIOs, its monitoring and reporting systems and procedures. However, the mission found that some fine-tuning is needed, especially in interpretation of reports from the para-legal advisors. Drawing conclusions, e.g., on the prevalence of domestic violence based on voluntary reports, should be done with caution.

The Association of Human Rights Organizations (AHURIO) has received KIOS grants of €15 000 in 2004 and €25 000 in 2005 for training para-legal advisors. It operates in northwest Uganda, near Kasese. After the cooperation with KIOS, this organization has expanded. It is now administering a DANIDA-funded human rights project, which is largely built upon the experience of the KIOS project.

In Indonesia, the Evaluation Team visited Kalayanamitra, a women's rights organization in Jakarta, which was one of two organizations in Indonesia that has received support from KIOS. This grant has been important in terms of policy advocacy and awareness-raising on women's rights. Kalayanamitra was established in 1985 to work on women's rights. They have three major areas of activity: policy advocacy, providing information and documentation to the general public, and community assistance, to help women's groups. In 2005, KIOS provided a €30 000 grant (2005–2006) to disseminate information on the international Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The project financed 22 discussions aimed at raising awareness of women's rights as defined in CEDAW, which had been ratified by Indonesia in 1984 but not fully enforced through national laws. Although KIOS grant was finalized in 2006, the activities supported by KIOS had a great impact on the ongoing advocacy work of a network of 10 women's rights NGOs. Kalayanamitra serves as the secretariat for this NGO network, which is actively involved in the dialogue with the government

and the Convention Secretariat regarding the national report to CEDAW, and serves as a “watch dog” regarding CEDAW compliance. This important work has been funded latter by two grants from UNIFEM, with CIDA funds. Currently Kalayanamitra has a grant of US\$80 000 from the Local Cooperation Fund (LCF) of the Finnish Embassy for other work on women’s issues.

The Kalayanamitra staff noted that they had found the KIOS procedures easy to follow, similar to those of other funders, and flexible, such as for extending the duration of the project. The KIOS staff had not undertaken a monitoring trip during the project, but that they had discussed the project through email exchanges. The director of Kalayanamitra had had an opportunity to visit Finland and meet with KIOS during that visit. The project had been monitored through a visit from a KEPA staff member based in Indonesia. They had also received a Finnish visitor from the Committee of 100, which is one of KIOS’ founding member organizations. In 2006, they had submitted a second proposal to KIOS, to expand the CEDAW awareness-raising to the university level. The Kalayanamitra Director stated that they had been informed by KIOS that this second proposal had not been funded as Indonesia is not among the KIOS focal areas. After the KIOS Board decided not to support a second grant, KIOS did provide the Finnish Embassy with a positive recommendation of Kalayanamitra’s work, thereby assisting them to secure additional support through Local Cooperation Funds.

### **Networks**

The East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Project (EHAHRDP) is the secretariat and coordinating unit of the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders Network (EHAHRD-Net). It was registered in 2005. EHAHRDP received its first KIOS grant of €32 100 in 2006 to conduct a regional conference. In 2007, the network secretariat was granted €39 400 to organize a Regional Strategy Workshop and for institutional support (salaries, office equipment and staff training). The objective of EHAHRDP is to improve protection of human rights defenders and increase awareness about human rights issues. The secretariat operates from Kampala, Uganda. The Evaluation Team was told that it has 65 network members (human rights defenders and their organizations) from Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan, Tanzania, Rwanda, Burundi, and Uganda. The support to EHAHRDP is not a typical project funding but it includes financing of administrative costs and some specific activities of this organization. In the future it is critical to assess what resources are needed in the network countries and to assess the sustainability of this kind of support that is currently provided. Supporting a network requires a different approach than traditional project funding.

The mission also visited the Human Rights Organization Network Uganda (HURINET-U), which has submitted its application to KIOS. HURINET-U is a network of 32 human rights organizations. The purpose of the HURINET-U is to build capacity of its member organizations through trainings, exchange programs and peer learning. HURINET-U has managed a locally-owned re-granting initiative Human

Rights Trust Fund, which was funded by Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) and the Royal Netherlands Embassy (RNE) for five years. This Fund aimed at enhancing the work and capacity of the civil society organizations (CSOs) and groups involved in the promotion of human rights in Uganda by providing them with financial and skills support. This Trust Fund is now under transformation into an independent Human Rights Trust Fund, where the HURINET-U is sharing the secretariat with SIDA.

### Conclusions

KIOS has developed reporting guidelines, audit instructions and information on self-financing share guidelines. These guidelines are appreciated by the Ugandan partners as well as the consultative project preparation process. Many project coordinators told that the requests for clarification from KIOS have helped them to better understand the project logic and central project management issues.

## 8 THE SIEMENPUU FOUNDATION

### 8.1 Overview of the Foundation

#### Overall Goals

The Siemenpuu Foundation (SIPU) was established in 1998 by 15 Finnish NGOs and Foundations working on environment and development issues. The Finnish word, *siemenpuu*, means the “mother tree” or “seed tree.” This name was chosen to embody the idea that the Foundation would “aim to give birth to sustainable environmental projects in developing countries.” On their website, [www.siemenpuu.org](http://www.siemenpuu.org), the Foundation’s goals are expressed as follows:

The Siemenpuu Foundation helps people in the South to get their voices heard while also supporting their work in advancing citizens’ political and other decision-making powers locally and globally. We also support the activities of our founding organisations and other environmental and development movements both in Finland and in other countries by producing and disseminating information on experiences and lessons learned in the co-operation with Southern partners.

They further specify that they support “civil society organisations in developing countries working on ecological democracy, environmental protection and prevention of environmental threats.”



## Establishment

The 15 founding members of Siemenpuu include:

- *BirdLife Suomi ry* (Birdlife Finland)
- *Dodo ry* (Dodo – Living nature for the future)
- *Kehityksmaayhdistys Pääskyt ry* (The Swallows of Finland)
- *Kehitysyhteistyön palvelukeskus KEPA ry* (KEPA Service Centre for Development Cooperation)
- *Luonto-Liitto ry* (The Finnish Nature League)
- *Maan ystäväät ry* (Friends of the Earth Finland)
- *Natur och Miljö rf* (The Finnish Society for Nature and Environment)
- *Suomen Luonnonsuojeluliitto ry* (The Finnish Association for Nature Conservation)
- *Suomen Tinku ry* (Tinku Finland)
- *Suomen Ympäristökasvatuksen Seura ry* (The Finnish Association for Environmental Education)
- *WWF* (WorldWide Fund for Nature, WWF Finland)
- *Tekniikka elämää palvelemaan ry* (Technology for Life)
- *Uusi Tuuli ry* (New Wind)
- *Vihreä Sivistysliitto ry* (The Green Cultural Association)
- *Ympäristö ja Kehitys ry* (Coalition for Environment and Development)

These organizations are very diverse and on some issues they have very different points of view. Outside observers consider that some of these members are “idealistic” or even “radical,” whereas other members are considered to be more “moderate” or “pragmatic.” Given the diversity among the members, it can take a long time to reach consensus on certain issues. Although Siemenpuu was created in 1998, its founding members reached strong consensus on their basic principles, but did not reach consensus on an agreement with MFA until 2001. Siemenpuu’s first grants were approved in 2002.

## Board of Directors

Siemenpuu has a Council of its Founding Members. The Council elects the Board of Directors. Members of the Board (9 members and 9 deputies) are elected in their personal capacity, rather than representing a specific organization. The Board is responsible, among other duties, for approving all grants, accepting all final grant reports and providing oversight on the activities of the Foundation, including monitoring of grants through periodic visits to its partners. SIPU’s Board meets an average of 8–10 times per year. The Board members work on a voluntary basis, although they do receive reimbursement for expenses, such as monitoring trips.

## Secretariat Staff

When Siemenpuu was established in 1998, it began operations with one part-time staff member. Now it has a Director, a financial officer and 3 programme officers. The financial officer also works with Abilis and KIOS.



### **Southern Partners**

Siemenpuu regards its collaboration with colleagues, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs) and grassroots groups in developing countries as a partnership, promoting dialogue among the partners and discussion of substantive issues. Thus, Siemenpuu does not see its role merely as that of managing a small grants programme, nor as merely serving as a channel for funding.

### **Previous evaluations and audits**

Siemenpuu, like its sister foundations, has been the subject of performance audits undertaken by KPMG Finland Oy in 2004 and 2008.

In 2007, Siemenpuu also undertook an evaluation, terms a “self-appraisal,” of its collaboration with one of its partners in India, the South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy (SADED). At the time of that evaluation, SADED had been the largest recipient of Siemenpuu grant financing, having received €235 000 in 4 grants between 2002 and 2007 for the general cooperation programme, and an additional €6 889 for Helsinki Process Side Events. (SADED was subsequently awarded another grant for €140 000 in 2008.) This assessment noted that programme management of both Siemenpuu and SADED had improved over the period of collaboration. It proposed, however, 30 different recommendations to improve the thematic focus and administrative arrangements for collaboration.

## **8.2 How does the Foundation Work?**

### **Strategy**

Siemenpuu is currently operating under a Strategy Plan for the years 2005–2008, which was approved by its Board on 23 November 2004. This strategy agreed to support grants on three themes: (1) activism, advocacy and lobbying connected to environmental issues; (2) projects promoting ecological democracy in forest and land issues; and (3) cooperation programmes with 3–5 partner organizations (or countries).

According to its Strategy, Siemenpuu aims to promote learning, self-evaluation, and information exchange and networking in its activities in Finland. For example, Siemenpuu has published some discussion papers, both in hard copy and on its website, such as the 2006 paper entitled, *Ecological Democracy: Rights of the Local Communities to Land, Forests and Water*, and the 2007 report, *Enriched or Impoverished: Environmental Accounts about Mining in the Global South*.

As part of its activities, Siemenpuu has been supporting NGO activists to participate in the World Social Forum (WSF) or attend other important meetings or conferences. An earlier discussion paper, prepared in 2005, concerned *Siemenpuu and the World Social Forum (Africa) process: A description of the WSF (Africa) process and the possibilities for Siemenpuu's participation*. This document reviewed the Siemenpuu experience with

providing support related to WSF, and made recommendations for possible future support. Further analysis of support to WSF was reflected in the 2007 “self-appraisal” of the Siemenpuu and SADED cooperation. Siemenpuu and SADED played important roles in organizing the Asian Social Forum (ASF) in Hyderabad in January 2003, which was attended by 22,000 participants, and the World Social Forum (WSF) in Mumbai, India, held in January 2004. The 2003 ASF was an important preparatory event for the 2004 WSF.

Siemenpuu is planning to prepare a new strategy during the fall of 2008, to cover the period beginning in 2009.

### **Agreements with the MFA**

When Siemenpuu was established, the idea was that its activities would be supported by the MFA. As such, then, Siemenpuu has entered into a series of agreements with the MFA. These agreements have included a General Agreement and a Funding Agreement, dated June 2001; a General Agreement and a Funding Agreement, dated 2002; a combined general agreement and funding agreement (one document) for 2003–2005; a new Cooperation Agreement, dated December 2005 (with no expiry date); a Funding Agreement for 2006–2007; and a Funding Agreement for 2008–2009. The 2005 Cooperation Agreement specifies objectives for MFA support, and also states that it is complemented by the foundation’s own specific objectives and strategies. To date, almost all of the funding for Siemenpuu has come from the MFA.

### **Grant Applications**

The Siemenpuu Foundation began its grant process after the other two foundations. Therefore, it was able to build upon, and adapt the application procedures of the other foundations, especially those of Abilis. Initially Siemenpuu accepted full proposals, but later moved to a two-stage process, first requesting a concept note, and if that were of interest, a full proposal. While initially they were open to receiving proposals in any format, later it was decided that a standard format had to be used, to ensure that minimum standard comparative data was obtained for the purposes of processing the applications.

In assessing grant applications, Siemenpuu follows procedures similar to the two other foundations. It considers not only the written application (concept note or full proposal), but also seeks to obtain background information and references on the organization, to assess its capability to carry out the proposed activities. Now that the country cooperation programmes have been established, the country working groups can assist with such background checks. If an organization has already received one or more grants and applies for another grant, then its experience with the previous grant(s) is considered.

Like the other foundations, Siemenpuu staff members screen the applications and then prepare summaries and recommendations for the Board to consider. The Board makes the final decisions on all grants, having also the responsibility to accept the final

reports for each grant. The applicant is required to provide 7.5% of the total financing (equivalent to 10% of the financing provided by the Siemenpuu grant): this contribution can be in cash or in kind. For most projects, the Siemenpuu grant funding is provided in three disbursements – the first upon signing the grant agreement, the second upon receipt of the mid-term progress report, and then the final payment after approval of the final report. In some projects, two disbursements of 80% and 20% are made. In special cases (longer projects), there may be 4 or more disbursements. Siemenpuu does not restrict its partners to only one grant, but rather welcomes providing them with a series of grants, in the aim of promoting longer-term partnerships. Grants may be issued for more than one year in duration.

### **Geographical Spread**

Initially, Siemenpuu solicited and considered grant applications from NGOs in developing countries worldwide. After initial experience, however, in 2004–05 there were intense internal strategic debates, in preparation of the 2005–2008 strategy paper. Board and staff members were concerned about blindly receiving applications from anywhere in the world, and having limited impact. Therefore, they decided to develop more geographically and thematically focused programmes, to improve sharing of results and learning, and to be more responsible regarding the financing.

Thus, in 2006, Siemenpuu began to move towards a cooperation programme approach, with a limited number of country or regional programmes. Initial ideas for country cooperation programs had included Brazil, but ultimately it was decided not to develop a programme there. Currently, there is a cooperation programme in Indonesia and one in Mali, whereas there are three different (sub-) programs in India. Siemenpuu has been working in these three countries since 2002. Future plans include development of a regional programme for the Mekong region, intended to start in 2009, and also one for Latin America, planned for start-up in 2010 or 2011. (The Board members wish to have cooperation programs in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.)

Between 2001 and the end of 2007, the Siemenpuu Board had approved 201 grants in 39 different countries (see Table 10). In the first 8 months of 2008, the Board has approved 23 additional grants – 22 grants in the three cooperation programme countries, and one grant in Thailand. In April-May 2008, the Board opened a limited call for grant applications from Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa on the themes of “Alternatives to the industrial monoculture plantations” and “Environmental issues at the World Social Forum.” The application period was six weeks, and 151 preliminary applications were received. Sixteen were chosen for further consideration at the October 2008 Board meeting. The grant in Thailand, and upcoming grants for Latin America, are intended to help move towards defining future cooperation programs in those regions.

Thus, with this “open call” for proposals, Siemenpuu is only able to fund approximately 10 % of the applications. The situation is of great concern to members of the Board for two reasons. First, it is a large amount of work for the applicants, yet only a small proportion of them can be selected for funding. Second, the volume of work to review

all the applications poses a very heavy burden on the Siemenpuu staff and Board members.

### **Cooperation Programmes**

Siemenpuu's three existing cooperation programmes have grown out of their experience with the initial grants and partners, as well as the contacts and network existing among the Board members, staff, and development colleagues. The programmes do not follow a single model, but rather each has been developed according to its own theme(s), logic, and working modalities.

The Indonesia Country Programme is focusing on empowering local people for conserving forest ecosystems. Since 2006, it has had an Indonesia Working Group (IWG), currently comprised of five Indonesian members who are NGO activists, plus one additional "advisor." Three Finnish colleagues – the Chair, one other Board member, and the Director of Siemenpuu – serve as "observers" to the IWG. The IWG serves as an advisory committee to the Siemenpuu Board, assessing applications, monitoring grants, disseminating information, and commenting on the development of Siemenpuu's activities.

These grants are geographically dispersed over several different Indonesian islands – Jawa (Java), Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulewesi, Maluku, and Papua. In December 2007, the first annual meeting of Indonesian Siemenpuu partners was held in Bali, in conjunction with the international climate change conference. The meeting participants agreed that they would prefer to focus on longer-term relationships with fewer, already existing partners, rather than on shorter relationships with a wider number of organizations. In the fall of 2008, the annual partner meeting will be held in Jambi, Sumatra.

As of August 2008, Siemenpuu had awarded 26 grants to 18 organizations in Indonesia. In 2008, there are 8 active, ongoing grants in Indonesia. To date, the total value of all the grants provided to groups in Indonesia amounts to approximately €0.5 million.

The types of activities supported include a wide range of initiatives, such as support to documentary film-making and advocacy work for watershed protection, support to community negotiations for community-based management of forest plantations, awareness -campaigns for forest protection and combating illegal logging, documenting the current "state of the forest" in Indonesia. Although it is outside of the current forestry theme, SIPU also continues to support the Indonesian Peasant's Union (SPI) in their campaigns and publications on agricultural liberalisation.

In Mali, Siemenpuu works with a partner organization, Mali-Folkecenter-Nyetaa (MFC), which in turn makes micro-grants to grassroots organizations. MFC has been collaborating with Siemenpuu since 2003. The cooperation programme was approved by the Board in June 2006, and contract signed in October 2006. A local steering committee, comprised of NGOs, CBOS, and local government representatives, makes recommendations on funding of micro projects. The work is focused in the Sikasso

Region, in southern Mali, where the MFC is trying to foster environmental awareness. They have a campaign, “*Sigida Nyetaa*,” to promote environmental protection and environmentally-friendly livelihood improvement activities. Each January an Environmental Forum is organized in Bamako, the capital of Mali, which SIPU supports.

The initial MFC budget for 2006–07 was for €120 000, of which €40 000 was for the cooperation programme development and administration, €30 000 for capacity building of the grassroots organizations, and €30 000 for micro projects, which were each in the range of €500 – €2 000. Also, they received €8 994 in carbon offset financing from the Ministry of Environment (contributions to offset official air travel during the 6 months of the Finnish presidency of the European Union), which was used for energy-efficient stove promotion. For 2008 and 2009, €25 000/year is agreed for administration. For a 21-month period (January 2008 – September 2009), the MFC programme funding is €141 022 and the budget for micro projects is €59 978. Most of the micro projects support tree planting, but one grant is supporting establishment of a local environmental convention.

The cooperation programme in India consists of three distinct (sub-) programs: (1) the Tamil Nadu Core Team; (2) the South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy (SADED); and (3) the National Adivasi Alliance (NAA). Siemenpuu has an India (Working) Group, which works with all three (sub-) programs. Each (sub-) programme is supported by a Siemenpuu contact person and a Finnish partner group.

The Tamil Nadu Core Team operates in the Indian State of Tamil Nadu, in southern India. It is comprised of representatives from four NGO networks – Tamil Nadu Environmental Council (TNEC), Joint Action for Sustainable Livelihood (JASUL), Southern Initiative NGO Forum for Participatory Development (SINFPAD) and Low External Input Sustainable Agriculture (LEISA).

The South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy (SADED) is a sub-set of the Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (VK) network, and is hosted by the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS). It seeks to promote dialogue, information sharing, and publications related to the ecological dimensions of democracy issues. SADED also has been participating in the World Social Forum (WSF) process, especially in helping to organize the 2004 WSF in Mumbai, India. This event was marked by major participation of indigenous, or Adivasi, groups in India, and also by more attention to environmental issues than had been the case in prior WSF events.

The National Adivasi Alliance (NAA) is another network, which promotes the Adivasi culture and groups, and works with them to save natural (wild, indigenous) forests. The Adivasi are the indigenous peoples of India, also known as “tribal peoples,” “forest dwellers,” or “hill people” who live in several different Indian states. According to the 2001 census, they comprised 8.1 % of the Indian population. A major challenge confronting the Adivasi has been the government plans to promote bauxite mining on their land.

### 8.3 Development Trends 2001–2008

Siemenpuu has provided the Evaluation Team with information on the trends in their grants over time. From 2002 until the end of 2007, Siemenpuu had awarded 201 grants, and the Board had approved final reports for 117 grants. Twenty-three additional grants were approved in 2008 (as of early September), and further grants will be considered at the October 2008 Board meeting. The Foundation has provided grants ranging in size from €914 up to €141 022, with the average grant size running around €20 000. As the country cooperation programmes are developing, some large grants are being provided to country programmes.

Over time, it is anticipated that new grants will primarily be provided in the long-term cooperation programmes, and thus support in other areas will be phased out as existing grants are completed. Currently, approximately 60–70% of the funding is going to grants under the cooperation programs.

**Table 12** Characteristics of Siemenpuu Grants and Staffing Levels by Year.

	Filed applications	Grants	Grant countries	India grants	Indonesia grants	Mali grants	Average grant size, Euros (low-high)	Ongoing January 1 <sup>st</sup>	Ongoing January 1 <sup>st</sup> countries	Staff
2002	57	16	11	2	2	1	<b>22 202</b> (1 670 – 33 000)	0	0	1.0
2003	109	22	11	5	0	0	<b>20 902</b> (3 908 – 50 000)	15	11	1.5
2004	92	31	17	12	1	1	<b>16 485</b> (2 834 – 34 000)	33	17	2.5
2005	346	50	19	16	8	1	<b>22 003</b> (1 600 – 50 000)	50	21	4.0
2006	225	43	25	11	3	1	<b>24 292</b> (1 345 – 140 000)	81	28	4.8
2007	70	39	12	10	10	9	<b>15 882</b> (914 – 101 912)	88	29	5.0
Sub-total	899	201	39	56	24	13	<b>20 349</b> (914 – 101 912)			
2008	190	23	4	18	2	2	<b>25 505</b> (15 000 – 141 022)	78	27	5.0
Total	1089	224	39	74	26	15	<b>20 879</b> (914 – 141 022)			

**Notes:** Status as of 12 September 2008, so 2008 data is only for a partial year. Source: Siemenpuu Foundation data.

All figures/years cannot be compared directly, e.g.:

- Filed applications: some changes over time have occurred on when application (enquiry, concept paper or proposal) has been filed to the database; from 1.3.2005 two-phase process (Concept paper/Call for proposal); different types of restrictions (total/geographic/cooperation programme) have been in place from time to time to receive the applications/concept papers.
- Cooperation programme framework started in 2006.
- In 2001 Siemenpuu had one part-time staff member from mid-August.

In the case of the Siemenpuu Foundation, it would not be justified to consider the number of grants per staff member as a measure of “efficiency” of operations. The Siemenpuu Foundation approaches have been evolving over time: support has been shifting from individual projects more towards country programmes. As such the explicit aim is not to increase the number of grants per staff member, but rather to reduce the overall number of grants, and to develop fewer, but more in-depth, cooperation programmes and longer-term partnerships with Southern partners.

The largest country cooperation programme, in terms of both number of grants and funding, is India, which by September 2008 had received 74 grants. It is followed by Indonesia with 26 grants, and Mali with 15 grants. There have been 13 grants provided to groups in the Philippines, 10 to Uganda, 8 to Brazil, and 6 to Kenya. In 15 other countries, between 2 and 6 grants have been provided, and one grant has been provided in each of 17 different countries. In Siemenpuu’s plans for 2008–2010, the largest proportion of funding will be going to India, followed by Indonesia, and then Mali. Some funds will still be required to complete existing interventions in other countries.

The total government support and grants is indicated in Table 11. Between 2002 and the end of 2007, Siemenpuu had withdrawn government grants of slightly over 5 million Euros, and its costs had amounted to almost 4.8 million Euros. The annual size of the government grant to Siemenpuu increased from €333 180 Euros in 2002 up to €1.25 million in 2008. The Foundation essentially operates on the basis of this government support, as its other fund raising has been very modest: only a total of €17 987 for the period from 2001 through 2007. Although the Board has discussed possibilities of other fund raising, such as donations from private sector corporations, to date it has not wanted to do so, as it believes that it might then be competing with its (founding) member NGOs for funding.



**Table 13** Siemenpuu Use of Discretionary Government Transfers (in Euros).

Year	Grant	Withdrawn	Reported costs	Interest gains	Other income	Carried forward
2001	333 180	333 180	12 966			320 214
2002	336 000	136 000	412 800	1 503		44 916
2003	400 000	600 000	574 033	2 032	3 048	75 963
2004	750 000	750 000	693 912	6 068		138 119
2005	1 000 000	850 000	815 934	3 208	24 138	349 531
2006	1 050 000	1 100 000	1 097 292	3 093	11 007	316 339
2007	1 150 000	1 250 000	1 185 530	6 422	710	280 809
2008	1 250 000					
<b>Total</b>	<b>6 269 180</b>	<b>5 019 180</b>	<b>4 792 468</b>	<b>22 326</b>	<b>38 903</b>	

**Source:** Siemenpuu Foundation. Figures rounded to nearest Euro. Note 1: Due to the reasons of MFA statistics, from the year 2007 onwards the interests gains and other income generated by the discretionary government transfers are not included in the reported costs, although they have been used for the same purposes as the actual grants and are detailed in the report to MFA. Note 2: In 2003, other income was an accounting mistake in the audited finance report (should not have been marked as other income). In the years 2005–2007 other income was returned unused grants from Southern NGOs, which have been reused for other projects. Due to the old accounting method these sums had to be booked as other income.

## 8.4 Field Assessments of the Grants

The implementation of the grants was primarily assessed through the field visits to Uganda and Indonesia. In Indonesia, the field mission met with members of the Siemenpuu Indonesia Working Group and representatives of five organisations receiving grants, whereas in Uganda the field mission met with two organisations. Another representative of a Ugandan grantee was interviewed in Helsinki.

### Indonesian Programme

The Siemenpuu activities in Indonesia have coalesced into a country cooperation programme. From 2002 to 2007, Siemenpuu had provided 26 grants to 18 organizations. In 2008, up until early September, two additional grants had been approved, both to organizations that had received prior grants. Current partners include some longer-term partners, i.e., they have received previous support from Siemenpuu. The country cooperation programme is now focusing on supporting activities related to forest conservation. In the past, however, some grants had been provided for other activities, such as one for “empowering local women” conducted by Walhi (Friends of the Earth)-South Sumatra, post-tsunami rebuilding in Aceh (Walhi-Riau), coastal management by fisher communities (JALA), and protection of clean water (LP2M).

The Evaluation Team met with the Indonesian Working Group (IWG), which is currently comprised of five Indonesian NGO activists, two women and three men. Another man serves as an “advisor” to this group. It has been agreed that the three Finnish colleagues from Siemenpuu (the Director, Board Chair, and another Board member) who work with the Indonesian programme serve as “observers” to the IWG.



The IWG has a (draft) Terms of Reference, which serves as guidelines for their work. It has been agreed that the group would have four meetings per year, at least one of which is a face-to-face meeting, and the other three may be “virtual meetings” using Skype (a voice-over-internet protocol). As two of the Finnish colleagues have long-time research ties to Indonesia, and speak Bahasa Indonesia, they have been able to make fairly frequent monitoring trips to Indonesia. Their Indonesian colleagues value their dialogue and technical advice.

The IWG discusses the overall strategy for the Indonesia cooperation programme, it reviews and comments upon grant applications, and it is intended to follow-up and monitor the ongoing grants. In 2007, the International NGO Foundation on Indonesian Development (INFID) received a grant of €14 000 to host the Indonesian programme, which included hiring of a “facilitator.” This staff person helped to facilitate communication among the IWG members, but was not able to assist Siemenpuu headquarters very much in improving communication with the grant recipients. The position was, therefore, discontinued at the end of 2007. IWG members recognized that perhaps it would be more useful to have a person with more background in the substantive issues, so as to be able to provide technical assistance to the grant recipients, rather than merely administrative or logistical support. The IWG has been less active in 2008, but there is no specific grant for their work, and the Siemenpuu funding is constrained through the end of 2009, so there is little possibility for the expansion of activities. Another NGO, the Community Alliance for Pulp and Paper Advocacy (CAPPA), has been provided with a grant of €7 000 in 2008 to organize the annual meeting of the Indonesia programme (IWG and grant recipients), tentatively planned for November 2008 in Jambi, on the island of Sumatra.

#### **Documentation and Awareness Raising**

One activity in Indonesia, which continues to receive support even though it is outside of the forestry theme, is the agricultural liberalisation campaign of the Indonesian Peasant Union (SPI), which uses Siemenpuu support to publish their newsletter. To date, SPI has received three grants, totalling €68 500 (2002–08), relating to their awareness-raising campaigns, regarding the World Trade Organization and agricultural liberalisation. This group had also received a grant of €24 658 in 2004 to enable their participation in the World Social Forum in Mumbai, India. SPI staff noted that the major Siemenpuu support has been, on average, about €10 000 per year for publication of their tabloid, which has been published on a bimonthly basis from 2002 to 2005, and since 2005, monthly. They noted that their work on agricultural issues has also incorporated work on environmental issues and women’s rights. The Siemenpuu grant had not, however, provided any funding for training. SPI has now requested support for education and training for journalists in their most recent proposal.

In Bogor, Indonesia, the Evaluation Team met with two NGOs. Telapak has received two grants for producing documentary files on forestry issues. The more recent grant of €22 000 (2005–07) provided support for making documentary films with local communities and local NGOs in Sulawesi on watershed management issues. They

reported that this effort had been very successful in empowering the local communities to speak for themselves, to present their views on the needs for community-based management of the watershed areas (rather than granting these areas to concessionaires for logging). The film had enabled the local people, for the first time, to present their views and be heard by the local legislature.

Another NGO, Forest Watch Indonesia (FWI), has been working on research on “the state of the forest in Indonesia.” FWI had earlier worked on a similar study. The earlier research had been done primarily with the Indonesian Ministry of the Environment. The more recent work has been done on the basis of information from the Ministry of Forestry, which has proved to be problematic as the Ministry of Forestry cannot provide data on forest cover. FWI has also had difficulties in managing this project, which has involved up to 32 different researchers. At the Bali meeting in December 2007, FWI did produce a briefing note with statistics on Indonesian forests. It is unclear now exactly when the full report can be finalised and published. The grant is, however, reported as being completed.

Important support has been to the Forest Rescue Network Riau (*Jaringan Kerja Penyelamat Hutan Riau*, JIKILAHARI) network in Sumatra, for their efforts to protect existing natural forests from illegal logging. Siemenpuu has provided 4 grants, totalling €81 600, to JIKILAHARI. One small grant (€1 700) supported participation in a 2007 meeting of United Paper Mills-Kymmene (UPM), a large Finnish pulp and paper company, to provide the Sumatran activists’ viewpoints on the logging and forest plantation issues. The other grants have supported work to raise local awareness regarding needs for forest conservation and to stop illegal logging on the Kampur Peninsula, a globally-important peat forest whose conservation is important to mitigate climate change. The recent support has been successful in raising villager awareness regarding the need to conserve the forests, and to stop engaging in illegal logging. The villagers are concerned, however, about finding alternative sources of livelihood. JIKILAHARI, with support from the World Conservation Union (IUCN)-Netherlands, is working on this issue with the villagers now. A major issue that remains unresolved, however, is that the Government continues to award private sector investors concessions of forest land in this area, which the concessionaires then cut the trees, and replant – either with timber plantations or oil palm plantations.

In 2002–2007 Siemenpuu has provided ten grants in Uganda. The National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE) has received four grants, totalling €59 961, to support work on environmental advocacy, a geothermal energy workshop and guidebook, and to support the Africa Rivers Network (ARN) to organize their second meeting.

Sustainable Development Watch – Uganda (SUDEWATCH) has been supported by Siemenpuu to undertake advocacy and “watch dog” activities regarding the development of oil palm plantations, and related socioeconomic and environmental issues on Bugala Island. The SIPU Board approved a grant of €10 800 at the end of 2007, and to date

no reports have yet been received on this activity. The idea for this project had, apparently, come from an international network working on these issues, and the SUDEWATCH had agreed to develop a proposal for this activity. The Board had rated the project highly, since it was aiming to link local action with international networks. It seems, however, that the activity has not been one of keen interest to the NGO. Difficulties also exist insofar as SUDEWATCH is based in Kigumba, on the mainland, and does not have well-developed links with the local communities on Bugala Island.

### **Empowering Local Communities**

Volunteers Alliance for Saving Nature (*Aliansi Relawan untuk Penyelamatan Alam*, ARuPA) has been working to promote community-based forest management in central Jawa, and is now implementing their second grant from Siemenpuu. ARuPA received its first grant of €23 963 in 2005, and a second grant of €25 300 in 2007. ARuPA is working with local partner organizations, i.e., the Koling Foundation and Sepkuba (the local branch of the Indonesian Peasants' Union), the District Head (Governor) of Wonosobo District, and villager leaders and villagers. The assistance has supported work to negotiate an agreement between local communities, the state forest company Perhutani, and the district government regarding the communities' use of part of state forest company's land. Now the activities are focusing on support of implementation of the agreement.

Support to local communities in fisheries conservation management, through a grant to the Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA), seems to have been effective and efficient, with important capacity-building achievements. In November 2002 Siemenpuu granted €21 904 to the Uganda Fisheries and Fish Conservation Association (UFFCA) to develop local institutional capacity for fisheries resource management in Lake Albert. This grant was used to empower communities in management of environmental issues through Beach Management Units (BMUs). During the project, these fisheries-based organizations received support for capacity building and advocacy, and women's groups were established. Regulations were introduced, for instance, regarding sanitation and net fishing, and were monitored by the BMUs. After the project ended in late 2005, delegations from other lake communities have visited to learn from the experience. The Government has recognized UFFCA and has engaged it in several working groups and committees. The first period of the BMUs is now over and the communities are preparing for the next election of members to the management committees. More work could have been done to take up the implementation of the best practises and to promote good governance as well as exit strategies are needed to ensure that lessons learned are transferred to the next BMU. A critical issue is that supporting BMUs in Uganda only will not bring sustainable results but more regional approach is needed to make sure that similar regulations are applied across the lake in Congo. The group, however, seems to need further support, in terms of capacity development and networking with others in the region.

## Conclusions

Siemenpuu support has enabled its partners to promote awareness of environmental issues, and empower local people to gain more control over their natural resources, with some clear evidence of capacity development. In some activities, however, there is clearly need for continued or expanded support, especially in terms of further capacity development. Some activities would have benefited from closer follow-up, especially in terms of dialogue to support problem-solving. The Indonesian programme is clearly evolving, but needs more support to bring the various activities into a more integrated programme.

## 9 ASSESSMENT OF KEY EVALUATION ISSUES

The NGO Foundations provide an important and flexible modality, which complements other forms of Finnish development cooperation. The Foundations are, however, much more than just an instrument for outsourcing, or managing, small grants in developing countries. The staff and Board members of the foundations have valuable substantive expertise on their respective issues, and can provide important support to their Southern partners on both substantive and capacity-building issues.

### 9.1 Policy Coherence and Cross-Cutting Issues

Overall, the three Foundations are “coherent” with the general aims of Finnish development cooperation policy. They focus on supporting civil society organizations in developing countries to address issues of sustainable development and poverty reduction. Moreover, each of the Foundations focuses on one of the key “cross-cutting issues” of Finnish development cooperation. Abilis provides support to small groups on disability issues, KIOS on human rights issues, and Siemenpuu on environmental issues.

The Finnish development cooperation policies, however, have numerous objectives, including the support for the Human-Rights Based Approach to development, and a range of cross-cutting issues. The cross-cutting issues cover support for gender equity and vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples and ethnic minorities, as well as those suffering from HIV / AIDS. They aim to support good governance, transparency, and accountability.

In looking at the three Foundations’ grants, it seems that each of them has focused primarily on their thematic issues. All three Foundations take gender issues into consideration in terms of their Board and staff members. Addressing gender issues is also an explicit criterion for Abilis and KIOS grants, and is considered in making

Siemenpuu grants. All three foundations have provided some of their grants to women's groups. To varying degrees, grants also support some of the other cross-cutting issues, such as support to indigenous peoples or those suffering from HIV / AIDS.

The cross-cutting issue of human rights figures in the work of all three foundations. KIOS focuses its work on human rights, especially democratic rights, rights of women, and rights to education. Abilis addresses the human rights of the disabled people. Siemenpuu supports work on land and resource rights issues, through its "ecological democracy" work regarding land and forests, and support to indigenous peoples, such as the adivasi in India.

All stakeholders agreed that better capacity is needed to understand what the human rights-based approach in development work means and how it can be applied. KIOS projects have a great potential to become good practices of the implementation of the human rights-based approach. The monitoring visits of project coordinators could be aimed at the promotion of this approach among the local organizations. Most project coordinators of KIOS are aware of the human rights-based approach, vulnerability audits, gender analysis, children rights situational analysis, human rights impact assessment, general impact assessment, but this knowledge is not yet adequately applied in the monitoring visits. Their expertise could also help their colleagues working with Abilis and Siemenpuu activities. Given that overall funding for human rights issues seems to be declining, the importance of these Foundations efforts to support this essential element of development should not be underestimated.

An essential element of human rights is the right to education. This issue is one of the priorities for KIOS' work, and it could be more proactively addressed by the Abilis programme. UNESCO (2006) has estimated that one third of the 77 million children still out of school are disabled children and that less than 10 percent of disabled children in Africa attend school. While the education sector plans of poor countries have selected mainstreaming as a core policy for education of children with disabilities (i.e., Venäläinen 2006, World Vision 2007), relatively few resources are allocated to implement the policies. Abilis could discuss with its partners whether the grant programme could be better used to improve the access and quality of education of children with disabilities. These interventions do not have to be high-level policy interventions - small community-based and school level projects initiated and implemented by school communities together with parents could make a difference in enrolment and retention. In such programs the DPOs could play an important role. Abilis could also encourage more educational projects and initiatives of the youth and children. It was pointed out in several occasions that the weak capacity of the DPOs is a result of poor educational level of persons with disabilities. Traditionally, only few persons with disabilities have had access to education. Therefore, a new generation of educated persons with disabilities and who are active in the civil society is needed.

The foundations' work complements that of other development partners in the countries where they work. Nonetheless, complementarity could be further enhanced through

more thorough analysis of the country situation in which they work, and greater efforts to collaborate with other partners in those countries. In Uganda, for example, NUDIPU has been supported by Abilis, such as for establishing revolving loan schemes, while another project funded by APT Enterprise Development (UK) has supported development of business services for small-enterprise development. Greater collaboration could have enhanced the effectiveness of these efforts. Abilis is a major donor to NUDIPU, yet it has not participated in NUDIPU's partner meetings. The Evaluation Team believes that Abilis should be more active in such types of dialogue on the country level.

In some cases, the grant recipients are receiving support from other donors for activities that complement those funded by the foundations. Such complementary support may be provided simultaneously, or sequentially. For example, the work of Kalayanamitra in Indonesia on awareness-raising on the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) supported by KIOS was then followed up with further support from UNIFEM. Siemenpuu support to JIKALAHARI's work on environmental awareness-raising on the Kampur Peninsula of Sumatra has been complemented by support for local livelihood alternatives, funded by the World Conservation Union (IUCN)-Netherlands.

When the field activities are successful, they often open up a broader range of issues for which the organization would like to take follow-up action. A major constraint, however, is that the foundations offer limited support, with limits on the size of the grants, and whether or not they support longer-term relationships, i.e., a series of grants, or only a single grant. Thus, the recipients then have to seek alternative funding sources to carry forward their plans and programs. As the foundations aim to develop longer-term cooperation programs and/or longer-term partnerships, then, they will need to adapt some of these policies regarding the amount and duration of support.

The evolution of the Foundations' working modality, to shift more of their support towards programs, with more targeted themes and geographical locations, is important in terms of the value that they can add in a given country. For example, Siemenpuu has now a cooperation programme in Indonesia, whereas Indonesia is not a focal area for either Abilis or KIOS. Thus country knowledge and networking is being built up, and information is being shared among grant recipients. Many other development partners are also supporting forestry initiatives in Indonesia, but the country is vast and the needs for such support are very great. The work of Siemenpuu would, however, undoubtedly be enhanced through greater networking with other initiatives.

In contrast, however, is the situation where the foundations only support one or a few grants in a country. For example, in the past, Abilis and KIOS had each supported two different organizations in Indonesia. The Evaluation Team met with three of these four organizations. It seems that while the interventions have been useful and effective, their impact was somewhat limited.



In terms of geographical focusing, the Foundations are not obliged to focus on the long-term key partner countries for development cooperation. Furthermore, each Foundation can decide upon its own criteria for geographical focusing of their programs and projects. The selection of focal areas has been based upon each Foundation's past experience, networks of connections, and considerations of what geographical areas are most suitable given their thematic focus. Since 2006, KIOS has chosen to focus on 20 countries in two regions – Eastern Africa and South Asia – which have been areas of political conflict. Siemenpuu is now focusing on three countries – Indonesia, India, and Mali – where it has a good history of cooperation, and understands well the environmental issues. Abilis is focusing on countries where suitable partnership organizations have been found; but it would like to move towards programs in long-term partner countries.

Currently, Finnish development cooperation policy focuses on eight long-term key partner countries: Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Nepal, Nicaragua, Tanzania, Vietnam, and Zambia. It also provides support for areas suffering from conflict, such as Afghanistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Sudan, Palestine, and East Timor, or from natural disaster, such as Southeast Asian countries affected by the tsunami. MFA also supports some important regional cooperation issues, such as support to the Mekong Region, and provides support on thematic issues, such as recent agreements to provide more support to forestry issues in Indonesia.

Over the years, the Foundations have provided some grants in MFA's 8 key partner countries, and some of the country cooperation programs are in key partner countries. Of its 7 current country programs, Abilis is working in 3 key partner countries – Ethiopia, Mozambique, and Tanzania – and has explored the possibilities of expanding its activities into 2 more key partner countries, Nepal and Zambia. KIOS is working in 4 key partner countries – Ethiopia, Kenya, Nepal, and Tanzania. Siemenpuu does not have a country cooperation programme in any of the key partner countries, but it does provide support to Indonesia (a country of forestry thematic support for MFA) and is planning to develop a cooperation programme in the Mekong region (an area of regional focus for MFA).

The three Foundations have only a few common focal regions and countries. All three Foundations are working in India. KIOS and Abilis are both working in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, and Bangladesh. In addition to the focal countries, however, the Foundations do support activities in other countries, which provide additional opportunities for collaboration. Where they are operating in the same areas, it might be worthwhile to explore ways in which the Foundations might cooperate with each other, or perhaps with some other modalities of Finnish development cooperation support.

Finnish development cooperation policies also take into consideration a wide range of international polices and agreements, including international conventions, such as human rights conventions, including agreements on the rights of disabled persons,

and multilateral environmental agreements, as well as international agreements on development cooperation, such as agreements among the European Union (EU), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and United Nations (UN). Notable recent agreements include, for example, the 2000 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and Harmonisation.

Observers vary in the degree to which they believe that such international agreements should be taken into consideration by civil society organizations, such as the NGO Foundations. To a certain extent, there is broad agreement among development partners – including the NGO Foundations — on the needs to work together to achieve major overarching objectives, such as poverty reduction and sustainable development. When it comes to more specific objectives, such as the Paris Declaration aims to improve national ownership, harmonization, and reduce transaction costs, many have raised questions as to whether such objectives apply primarily to bilateral and multilateral aid relationships between donor countries (or multilateral organizations) and recipient national governments.

Certainly efforts to reduce transaction costs, or to enhance cooperation with others doing similar work, is an important objective even for the civil society organizations, in both the South and the North. In this regard, then, it might be useful for the Foundations to consider more explicitly these issues. The further development of the country cooperation programmes approach, as compared with individual projects, might be an important way to do so.

While there is strong justification for donor-supported small-grant schemes, it should be noted, however, that such programs need to be strategic and well-planned. The 2007 OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Peer Review of Finland's development cooperation observes that Finland joins the general donor community in its recognition of the importance of capacity development, as part of increasing overall aid effectiveness. It argues, however, that “small and fragmented schemes often have limited potential for supporting capacity development.” This Peer Review furthermore noted that Finland's ODA support provided via NGOs has a very broad geographical spread, in over 80 countries, and many of the grants are relatively small, i.e., less than €20 000. The report proposed that,

The MFA should consider whether its NGO policy is sufficiently strategic, whether its administration process is overly burdensome, and whether it should review the overall transaction costs of supporting so many NGO partners and projects (OECD 2007: 39–40).

This OECD/DAC Peer Review report furthermore highlights the general agreement in the development community on the need to focus on capacity building. It is clear that the number of worthwhile small-scale initiatives could be infinite. Therefore, it is vital that such Finnish support be very strategic and well-planned, in order to make



any meaningful difference on key development aims – promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty.

Furthermore, an important issue is overall role and position of these three Finnish NGO Foundations. Insofar as one focuses on their coherence with Finnish development cooperation policies, there is a tendency to see the Foundations just as an instrument for outsourcing management of small grants to civil society organizations in developing countries. The identity of funding modality may be perceived as donor-oriented, with a heavy emphasis on meeting MFA and Government requirements.

This issue is a delicate one for all modalities wherein official development assistance is provided to southern organizations via northern NGOs – or NGO Foundations. For example, in a 2001 review of EC support to civil society organizations in developing countries via northern NGOs, the authors wrote:

There is a balance to be achieved in ensuring close monitoring and accountability for funds on the one hand and allowing scope for initiative and innovation on the other. NGOs can in certain circumstances be contractors for official donors, but if the balance tips too far and NGOs become purely instruments for the execution of an official programme this can also endanger their identity and reduce their ability to capitalize on some of the advantages that they have as NGOs. (EC 2001)

The NGO Foundations were, indeed, founded as independent civil society organizations, with their founding members being Finnish NGOs or NGO activists. The Foundations are beginning to explore other possibilities for financing, in addition to support from the Government through the MFA. To the extent that they may be able to diversify their funding base in the future, then their identity as “independent” of the Government would be more clearly evident. Such developments, however, should not preclude them from continuing to receive support from the Government budget.

One can also ask to what extent the Foundations’ grants been coherent with national policies in the countries where they operate. This issue is much more complex. As part of the rationale for support focuses on advocacy and awareness-raising on policy issues, some of the grant-funded activities operate in support of existing national policies, whereas others may be operating to try to change such policies, on a national, regional, or even local level. The local civil society organizations may be acting to try to improve the existing policy situation, by considering field experience, drawing from international “best practices,” or advocating that their national government implement international agreements that it has already signed and ratified. For example, in Uganda, the Abilis grants were highly coherent with the national policies concerning disability issues. In Indonesia, some of the Siemenpuu grants were supporting efforts to change national policies, and a KIOS grant had supported work to raise awareness on the need for government to implement an international human rights convention. In this respect,

then, some of the CSOs operate as “watch dogs,” monitoring government policies and their implementation. Finnish NGOs have also played a similar role in the past when, for example, some of the environmental groups were active in monitoring and publicizing Finnish investments in large-scale pulp and paper mills and forest plantations in developing countries.

In supporting civil society organisations to work on policy advocacy and awareness-raising issues, the Foundations are contributing to the development of good governance in these countries. As local groups hold their own governments more accountable, and contribute to increased information dissemination and transparency, then local governance may improve. In seeking to support improved governance, it is also vital to ensure that the NGOs, CBOs, and grassroots groups themselves also have good governance structures and transparency.

## **9.2 Efficiency and Effectiveness of Foundation Headquarters Operations**

The three Foundations collaborate in a number of ways. They often jointly discuss issues and share information amongst themselves, relating to their operations, agreements with the Ministry, and so forth. Since their establishment, the NGO Foundations have been gradually improving their systems for processing grant applications, then managing and monitoring grant implementation. All three foundations have been jointly developing their project administration guidelines. The foundations have been improving their accounting and other internal systems. In more pragmatic ways, the Foundations also collaborate. For example, Siemenpuu has hired a financial officer, but he allocates part of his time to working with Abilis and KIOS (and they pay for his time). They have been sharing office space (first in one location, then later in another), which has enabled them to share some joint facilities, such as a meeting room, and office equipment. These efforts – and these forms of collaboration — enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations. In some areas, however, the foundations work has evolved separately, such as in the development of their project databases, which are not compatible with one another.

In developing internal operating procedures and approaches, the Foundations have been able to learn from each other’s experiences. For example, Siemenpuu developed some of its grant procedures on the basis of work done earlier by the two other foundations. In establishing the partnership with the Kenyan organization, KIOS is now learning from Abilis experience in partnership programs. The foundations are also learning from each other’s experiences with respect to the development of cooperation programs.

A major improvement in operations has been the move from individual projects scattered all over the world towards more geographically-focused support. This geographical

targeting is important in a number of respects. First, it enables the Foundations to focus more on understanding the country and/or regional context in which they work. Second, it facilitates dialogue on substantive issues. Third, it enables the possibility of better field monitoring, as then the areas to which staff or Board members travels is more focused.

Furthermore, the Foundations are also more clearly defining not only the geographical regions, but also the themes for their support. By doing so, they potentially can reduce the total volume of potential applications, thereby decreasing the workload of staff and Board members, in terms of numbers of applications to screen. This development is also important for potential applicants, by restricting the numbers of applications prepared that may not be funded.

Currently, Abilis is working with a number of different partnership organizations and implementing organizations in a number of countries. In any given country, however, the projects are implemented independently from one another, and do not, as such, constitute a coherent, integrated programme. Abilis would like, however, to work towards development of programmes in the future. Siemenpuu is working to develop country cooperation programmes. These programmes are being developed by working groups, with strategies and themes for support, networking and sharing of experiences among the individual projects. KIOS is now developing a cooperation programme for youth in Kenya.

An area for consideration is whether or not the Foundations could collaborate more with each other. There are some types of projects that could conceivably address two – or perhaps in a few cases, even three – of the Foundations' individual thematic areas. Thus, for example, perhaps Abilis and KIOS could collaborate more on some initiatives regarding the human rights of persons with disabilities, especially in the area of education and women's rights. KIOS and Siemenpuu might consider ways in which to work together on supporting issues of rights to land and resources. Experience in Indonesia and elsewhere shows that such issues can be very urgent – and if not resolved, can lead to conflict between local communities and the national government, or concession holders. In Uganda, for example, the Evaluation Team found that the Foundations for Human Rights Initiative (FHRI), supported by KIOS, and the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), supported by Siemenpuu, both work on issues related to land rights but did not know about each other's work. Siemenpuu and Abilis might consider whether or not issues of environmental issues have a disproportionate impact upon people with disabilities, or may even contribute to disabilities, such as health problems that can arise with environmental pollution, misuse of pesticides and other agricultural chemicals, and so forth. But for such synergistic effects to be possible, then the Foundations need to share common geographical areas for grantee support, and they need to share information about their projects, not only in headquarters, but also in the countries in which they work.

The approach of focusing most, if not all, of the Foundation support on a limited number of countries and cooperation programs could be further developed to increase transparency, and develop capacity of Southern partners. The Foundations could consider developing agreements with capable partner(ship) organizations that could manage umbrella grant schemes, i.e., the Foundation would sign an agreement and provide funds to the partnership organization, which would then, in turn, manage the (micro) grants to smaller NGOs, CBOs, and grassroots organizations. Such a change would require that some existing agreements, such as how the Boards of the Foundations operate, be changed. The Boards could then focus more on strategic decision-making, and not have to make decisions about every single grant, including small ones of only 500 Euros.

The Foundations work with their international partners in a number of different languages, the most common of which is English. The Foundation staff members now spend time summarizing and/or translating information regarding their grants into Finnish, such as in internal communications, presentations of projects to their Boards, and/or reporting to the MFA. In some ways, such work can be seen as duplication of efforts. Thus, to the extent possible, greater focus could be placed on improving the quality of the reporting from the partner(ship) organizations (and implementing organizations) and using the reports in English. Likewise, field reports from monitoring trips could be prepared in English, and then shared with partners. Such sharing of Foundation reports with Southern partners would increase the transparency of operations. The Foundations are concerned, however, about sharing negative information, which is only intended to be used for internal purposes. It is understood, moreover, that some material still needs to be available in Finnish, such as for sharing information about the work with Finnish society.

In terms of sharing development experiences in the South with Finnish civil society, the foundations have been disseminating information in Finland. They also collaborate with other similar organizations, and are active in a number of relevant networks. They have produced some useful publications. This work could, however, be further enhanced through more explicit strategies for such outreach and collaboration.

### **9.3 Efficiency and Effectiveness of Collaboration with Southern Partners**

In considering the efficiency and effectiveness of the three Foundations support to civil society organizations in developing countries, the Evaluation Team draws primarily upon its findings from its field visits to Indonesia and Uganda.

#### **Efficiency and Effectiveness of the Grants**

The development objectives of the small grants – and the extent to which they have been achieved – are highly variable. In some cases examined by the Evaluation Team, it was clear that the original objectives had been met or even surpassed. For example, in

central Jawa, Siemenpuu support had been important for the successes in negotiating an agreement between local communities, the district government and the state forestry company for community management of areas of forest land, and now further support was assisting with the implementation of this agreement. The activity had, however, had even broader impacts, as now the head of the district government wishes to apply such a model of engagement of local communities in development efforts more broadly to other sectors.

In other cases, the original objectives of the small grants were overly ambitious or the projects not well enough designed. For example, in some of the income-generating activities for persons with disabilities (or having children with disabilities) in Uganda, the individuals may have benefitted from the intervention, or become empowered, but not necessarily become economically self-sufficient. The aim of such activities is to provide “seed money,” which can be used for investments in income-generating activities.

For some projects, the idea had been to create a “revolving fund,” whereby the participants would pay back their inputs, and then support would be available to other members of their organizations. The Evaluation Team found, however, that the recipients of three such grants have not received adequate capacity-building support to create self-sustaining businesses. In their communities, the grants had just been perceived as “gifts,” or charity, rather than the self-empowerment that Abilis had intended to promote. It is also important to recognize that revolving funds, or other types of micro finance, require very careful design and follow-up. Due to past difficulties with such efforts, in 1998 the MFA had, in fact, issued *Microfinance Guidelines*. A 2006 MFA evaluation, *Review of Finnish Microfinance Cooperation* (Porvali et al. 2006), had found that although a number of Finnish NGOs had been supporting microfinance, the NGOs seemed to be largely unaware of the MFA guidelines on this issue. This evaluation had recommended that MFA reconsider the experience to date with microfinance, and make a clear policy decision on this matter.

The effectiveness of grant activities varies with the type of partner organization, and the quality of the proposal, its implementation, and follow-up. Some of the foundation grants have gone to larger NGOs, which are more established and developed. Such groups typically prepare better proposals, have fewer problems with implementation, financial management, or reporting. Such groups do not only work in the national capital cities – many also have important field activities, where they may work with smaller local NGOs, CBOs, and grassroots groups. Such more established NGOs usually have a track record in securing funding from a variety of sources.

Yet all three foundations aim to reach some of the smaller, newer, or less-developed civil society organizations. Such grants, however, require more support, guidance, and coaching from the foundation staff (and Board) members. Typically such grants are more likely to take longer, i.e., the grant recipient may request support for one year, but may actually take two to three years to carry out the activities. These organizations find it more difficult to raise funding from alternate sources, so the foundation support

may be more critical for them. If the foundation support is successful, however, then the organizations can use their work with the foundations as a reference, which is helpful for obtaining further support from other sources. This benefit, for example, was cited by the organizations visited in Uganda. The effectiveness of such grants may be improved, however, if the foundations can provide more explicit capacity development support.

Important issues in the type of partner organization include not only their organizational skills, but also their substantive (technical) skills and their political orientation. The Foundations are aware of these issues, and try to take them into consideration in choosing organizations with whom to collaborate. For example, some groups may take a pragmatic, incremental approach in collaboration with others and their governments, whereas other organizations may be more confrontational. These issues are important in considering what can be achieved, and how the Foundations wish to align themselves in the local setting.

### **Monitoring**

The monitoring systems of the Foundations rely primarily upon the mid-term and final substantive (activity) reports and financial reports, as well as monitoring trips that may be made by the Foundation staff or Board members, or others on their behalf. The Foundations have developed proposal application and reporting formats, to try to improve the quality of project design as well as the final reporting on how the original objectives have been met, what have been the impacts of the supported activities, and so forth. Typically reports may include narrative information and data on activities and results, but not necessarily data for monitoring indicators of outcomes or impacts.

For some of the projects, the Evaluation Team believes that the quality of design and monitoring could be improved through the grantees' greater use of tools such as improved baseline and situational analyses, and results-based planning and monitoring systems (i.e., logical framework) and clear definition of indicators for monitoring. But in discussing this issue with grant recipients, they had mixed reactions to this issue. Some felt that more training and support in such matters would be helpful, whereas others did not. The issue is whether the Foundations could help build the capacities of their Southern partners in the development and use of such systems and tools, and whether developing such expertise would make the Southern partners more effective in their work and contributions to civil society.

### **Other International Support**

Some of the partner organizations receive funding from other local or international sources. The Foundations all take efforts in screening applications and checking with references to ensure that there is no duplication – but only complementarity – of support. In general, however, the Foundations support separate projects, and do not aim for any joint follow-up or cooperation directly with other donors supporting specific partners. In this regard, greater efforts could be made to explore possibilities for joint activities or joint financing of such small-scale activities.

### **Liaison with Finnish Embassies**

The Ministry's NGO Unit tries to keep the Finnish Embassies informed of ongoing MFA-supported NGO projects in various countries. It produces an annual report, which provides details on the current NGO projects. Siemenpuu and KIOS coordinators consult the Finnish Embassies to prevent double funding of projects. As Abilis funds projects that are notably different from those funded by Embassies' Local Cooperation Funds, a similar process is not necessary for Abilis. Despite these efforts, however, the amount of information that the Embassies receive regarding the small grants provided by the three NGO Foundations seems to be limited.

Of the two countries visited, only one (Indonesia) had a Finnish Embassy. In this case, the Siemenpuu Foundation, its partner organizations, and the Embassy have had some limited contacts. For example, the Embassy has decided that one of two future focal areas for its Local Cooperation Funds will be to support community forestry efforts. The Embassy, therefore, organized a meeting in May 2008, at which this idea was discussed with a representative of Siemenpuu and a few members of the Indonesian Working Group. Given that Siemenpuu is also focusing on similar community forestry issues in Indonesia, greater collaboration between the Embassy and Siemenpuu may be desirable. The Evaluation Team does understand, however, that the Embassy has been discussing collaboration on these community forestry issues with the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), which has its international headquarters in Bogor, Indonesia, not far from Jakarta. CIFOR has been undertaking some work with NGOs in Indonesia. The Embassy had also contacted KIOS for references on a local women's organization, which KIOS had supported in the past, and now the Embassy is supporting through a LCF grant.

In the case of Uganda, diplomatic relations are covered by the Finnish Embassy located in Nairobi, Kenya. It seems that the Embassy and the MFA desk officers are not very aware of activities being supported by the three foundations in Uganda. One desk officer noted that the major focus of the bilateral cooperation vis-à-vis Uganda has been working with other donors, to discuss how best to support the Ugandan Government's Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan (PRDP) for northern Uganda. Two of the three foundations, Abilis and KIOS, have chosen Uganda as a focal country. Siemenpuu has provided grants to Uganda in the past, but does not plan to include Uganda in their future cooperation programs. In planning their further activities in Uganda, Abilis and KIOS could explore ways in which to link up with these larger development initiatives.

## **9.4 Capacity-building Impacts**

Capacity building or capacity development is understood to be a broad process, involving not only human resource development and training, but organizational and institutional development, and creation of an enabling environment. Furthermore,



capacity building is understood to be a process that must be locally-owned and locally-led. Thus, outside development partners can provide support to such processes, but they cannot drive them. Finally, it is also essential to consider “capacity for what?” in order to define what capacity is needed and how that capacity can be further developed.

Given this understanding of capacity building, how can the Foundations then support capacity building of their Southern partners? They can support their partners to engage in reflective processes and assessments, to consider their roles and objectives, what their existing capacities are, and where they need further development. Then the Foundations can work with these partners to support such development, both through dialogue and also through funding. Such needs may include efforts in organizational development, networking, fund raising, skills in project cycle management or undertaking baseline assessments, defining monitoring indicators, and collecting and analyzing data. The Foundation staff and Board members and the larger networks, on which they can call, have a wide range of expertise and international experience, which could be utilized in such capacity development efforts. Partnerships, or other longer-term relationships, between the Foundations and their Southern partners, constitute a viable structure within which capacity development can be promoted.

From this perspective, then, capacity building would not undermine – but would rather support – the ownership of the activities, projects or programmes by the Southern partners. By supporting the NGOs in developing countries to become more effective in achieving their visions and missions, the Foundations would then be contributing more directly to supporting the development of civil society in the developing countries in which they collaborate.

The evolution of the Foundations’ work, procedures, and approaches has contributed to building the capacity of the Foundations themselves to carry out this work. Over the years since their establishment, the Foundations each have defined clearer ideas of their themes, criteria and geographical areas for support. Through their work with their Southern partners, as well as their participation in seminars, workshops, and networks, and collaboration with other organizations, the Foundation staff members – and in some cases, also Board members – are developing their own capacity to work effectively on both substantive issues and providing more effective capacity-building support.

The experience to date has shown that the Foundations have been contributing to the building of capacity of their Southern partners. Much of the capacity-building, however, has been relatively indirect, i.e., learning-by-doing, with coaching and guidance from the Foundation staff and/or Board members. In some of the approaches, such as work of Abilis Partnership Organizations, or Siemenpuu partnership with a NGO in Mali, the partner organization has been providing some direct training and/or actively facilitating the work of the community-based organizations or grassroots groups.

Southern partners’ capacities have increased in terms of their abilities to design, implement, monitor, and report upon their projects. In some exceptional cases, grantees have received



core support that enables them to pay staff salaries or buy office equipment, thereby directly improving their organizational capacities.

In terms of working on substantive issues, the grant recipients have also benefited from dialogue with the Foundations, and other networking that has been supported. Some grantees have been able to travel to Finland, or to attend regional or international meetings, to learn more about their substantive issues. The recent initiative of Siemenpuu, to introduce an annual meeting among its grantees in its Indonesia programme, has the potential to increase significantly the value of individual projects through sharing experiences and lessons learned among the grant recipients.

Greater attention, however, needs to be focused on providing more explicit capacity building. Thus, in terms of working with partner(ship) organizations, the Foundations need to consider how they can more effectively support these organizations and their organizational development. In turn, the partner(ship) organizations need support from the Foundations to carry out more explicit capacity building (training and organizational development efforts) with the grantees. In this regard, more training of the grantees in use of tools, such as results-based planning (including preparation of logical frameworks) and integrated project management, including development of indicators and more explicit monitoring systems, could be helpful and enable them to gain access to new funding sources.

The Foundations and MFA could consider “umbrella grants” to capable partnership organizations, as a means of developing further national NGO capacities to provide support to grassroots groups, CBOs, or smaller, newer NGOs. If successful, such efforts would be much easier than trying to manage such support from Helsinki, i.e., the Foundation headquarters. Such a model would also make it easier to consider scaling-up such support.

Such capacity-building work, however, is premised upon first undertaking adequate assessments of existing capacities, then developing well thought out strategies for enhancing capacities. A major rationale for providing support through the Foundations is that such support will contribute to building civil society in developing countries – and that means building stronger civil society organizations.

The foundations could also improve their operations through more explicit consideration of “lessons learned.” All grants are not equally successful, and thus it would help improve operations to have more consideration of systemic patterns in grant preparation and implementation. With any type of small grant programme, it is to be expected that some efforts may even fail. As one observer noted, if you plant lots of seeds, they may not all grow. What is most important, however, is to try to learn what types of grants, and what types of partners, are most likely to succeed, and how best to enhance their capacities to do so.

## 9.5 Other Impacts

In terms of the substantive issues – human rights, disability issues, and environmental issues – the work of the Foundations has had some significant impacts. The individual Foundations can be proud of some of their achievements and impacts in the field. The challenge now, however, is to be more systematic about reviewing, learning from and consolidating such impacts.

KIOS has reported, for example, that many of its partners have worked on documentation of human rights violation, human rights training, legal aid, and providing counselling and other support for torture victims. Its activities have contributed to better understanding and implementation of international human rights conventions.

To date, Abilis has reached 550 organizations in 60 countries working with persons with disabilities, or disability issues. These grants have had important impacts on directly improving the lives of a large number of people, such as through increases in their income-earning potentials, or influencing policy changes, which in turn have benefited such people.

Siemenpuu is experimenting with a variety of different approaches to supporting environmental issues, as each of its country cooperation programmes has a very different nature and approach. It is contributing to improving conservation of natural forests and forest lands, as well as other ecosystems, such as marine and coastal resources. Some activities have enhanced community participation in natural resource management, or supported local communities in documenting their situation, so that they have more of a “voice” in negotiating with government or other stakeholders. Some projects have contributed to increasing the information and knowledge base necessary for informed policy deliberations and decision-making vis-à-vis environmental issues. Siemenpuu has begun to look at certain issues more systematically, such as through their publications on substantive issues, such as ecological democracy (Siemenpuu 2006) and the environmental issues related to mining (Rajala 2007).

In certain cases, unintended negative impacts have occurred. For example, in some areas it seems that the local NGOs, CBOS, or grassroots groups feel themselves to be in competition with each other to obtain support from the Foundations, rather than collaborating together towards some shared goals.

Better comparative analysis of the experiences with grants is needed, to draw “lessons learned” regarding what approaches are most successful, and which ones require improvement.

## 9.6 Added value of the Foundations

The added value of the Foundations in Finnish development cooperation is multi-fold. The Foundations provide a valuable and flexible means of providing grants and supporting the development of NGOs, CBOS, and grassroots groups in developing countries. They have been successful at reaching vulnerable people, including persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples. They are supporting human rights, and addressing important environmental issues. All the grants consider gender issues, and many grants support women's groups. The grants have been able to reach some smaller local organizations, even in some remote rural areas, that are less likely to gain other forms of support.

The Foundations, however, are not merely a mechanism for small-grant management. The Foundations provide technical advice and guidance, on substantive issues, capacity building, and networking. All three foundations provide support through the grant application process and implementation, with further support provided during monitoring trips. In Indonesia, for example, several Siemenpuu grant recipients noted the usefulness of the dialogue that they have on substantive, capacity-building, and networking issues with their Finnish colleagues when they periodically visit. As one district governor remarked, "The ideas are worth more than the money."

This added value of the foundations is related to the professional expertise and experience of the foundation staff and Board members, their local partner organizations and working groups, as well as the larger networks upon which they can call. In many of the countries where the foundations are supporting activities, the Finnish Embassies may also be providing similar-sized grants through Local Cooperation Funds, also to support activities related to human rights, vulnerable groups (including the disabled), and even to environmental issues, such as the plans of the Finnish Embassy in Jakarta to support community forestry issues, i.e., local community rights to land and forests. Yet the Embassies are unlikely to have staff with the same level of expertise in these issues as one would find in the foundations.

This value of the Foundations could, however, be further enhanced through more strategic focusing on and promoting of such exchanges. Some grant recipients noted that they had exchanged ideas during the grant application, but when they submitted their mid-term or final progress reports, they had received feedback primarily on administrative issues, with little feedback on the substantive development issues. This situation seems to be more pronounced in the case of a grant in a country which is not one of the given foundation's focal areas, as the foundation has less opportunity to monitor through personal visits, and less familiarity with the overall country context.

It is important that the Foundations make best use of their Board members, and their expertise on substantive issues, to focus more on strategic planning issues, and less time on administrative uses and decision-making on large numbers of very small grants.

Similarly, it would be useful if the Foundations and NGO Unit could devote more time to dialogue on substantive issues, strategies, and approaches, and less time to certain administrative issues. But in order to do so, it requires that the administrative systems, monitoring, and reporting be improved. The aim should be not to increase reporting, but to improve its quality.

Second, in terms of the cross-cutting issues in Finnish development cooperation, specifically, the Foundations provide additional means for supporting these issues. With respect to support for disabilities, for example, MFA does support other NGO projects dealing with disabilities. The work of Abilis, however, enables support to reach a wider range of grassroots groups, and to provide such support in a wider range of countries.

Siemenpuu provides support to a range of different NGOs, CBOs, grassroots groups and political movements related to environmental issues, which adds value to the other cooperation efforts. For example, in Indonesia, recent MFA cooperation has been focusing on forestry issues, such as support to Finnish NGOs, i.e., WWF Finland and Birdlife Finland, institutional collaboration with Tapio and some universities, and Local Cooperation Funds. The Siemenpuu Indonesia Cooperation Programme focuses on forestry issues, but works with some smaller local organizations that are less likely to gain other forms of support.

KIOS is able to work on politically-sensitive human rights issues in a large number of countries, whereas the majority of Finnish bilateral development assistance is channelled to a restricted number of key partner countries. KIOS' work, according to one of the Board members, includes a focus on the international human rights conventions, and supporting human rights defenders, which may be more difficult for Finland to address directly through other modes of development cooperation.

Third, the Foundations are also able, through their links with Finnish civil society, to share their experiences in development cooperation in Finland, and help to inform the public regarding development issues. They promote two-way dialogue between civil society organisations in the South and the North. They aim to strengthen Finnish involvement in the empowerment of the civil society in the South.

The Ministry could make better use of the professional expertise of the Foundations' staff and Board members, and their networks. For example, the Foundations could potentially provide background information for official analysis, such as on human rights issues. They could also provide capacity building and awareness raising among the staff of the Ministry, other development partners, other human rights actors, founder organizations and the general public. Developing the contacts among the civil society, State actors and officials could also serve as an example of the Nordic model of cooperation between the government and the civil society. The Foundations and MFA could discuss whether or not they would want to enlarge their activities in this manner.

## 10 RECOMMENDATIONS

### Policy Coherence and Support to Cross-Cutting Issues

The NGO Foundations support the implementation of Finnish development cooperation policy, with each foundation particularly focusing on one specific cross-cutting issue – human rights, disabilities, or environment.

#### Recommendation 1

The Foundations are urged to review their grant selection criteria, procedures, strategies, and experience to date, to consider how to increase the coherence of their work with the entire Finnish development policy, relevant international conventions and development policies, and their implementation.

In this regard, it is recommended that they consider how to:

- Incorporate more key elements of Finnish development cooperation policy in their work, such as the human rights-based approach, other cross-cutting issues, good governance, rule of law, democracy, gender equality, etc;
- Increase support for relevant international conventions dealing with human rights, the rights of people with disabilities, and environmental sustainability;
- Modify their approaches and procedures to be more coherent with international commitments, such as the Paris Declaration of 2005, which aim to promote aid effectiveness, complementarity, harmonisations, national ownership, and reduce transaction costs, such as through increased collaboration with other development partners in the countries where they work;
- Review their experience with grants and local networks, facilitate good practices, and lessons learned, in order to better understand how to support policy advocacy work in developing countries, and to disseminate good practices in partner countries, among the Foundations, and in Finland; and
- Explore possibilities for greater collaboration among the foundations, and/or among different modalities of Finnish development cooperation (Local Cooperation Funds, other NGO support, bilateral and multilateral support, etc.), especially in countries where such different modalities are operating.

#### Effectiveness and Efficiency

The approaches and working procedures of the Foundations have been improving over time, in terms of the effectiveness and efficiency of management activities in the Foundation headquarters and the MFA NGO Unit, the grants in developing countries, networking, information dissemination, and other efforts to support civil society organizations in developing countries, and promote dialogue with the civil society in the North, especially in Finland. Nonetheless, further improvements are still needed to make these activities more effective and efficient.

## Recommendation 2

The Foundations need to work together with their own Boards and the MFA to agree upon the ways in which their activities can become more effective and efficient, such as through further improvements in administrative systems, project design and management, monitoring, and collaboration.

They are recommended to:

- Further develop their administrative systems, such that more work can be undertaken by Southern partners, including piloting “umbrella grants” to partnership organizations that could in turn manage micro-grants to smaller NGOs, community-based organizations, and grassroots groups;
- Further improve results-oriented project design and project cycle management, with clear and realistic definitions of project targets and indicators;
- Define and implement improved self-monitoring by partners (grant recipients), such as establishment of the baseline situation, definition of indicators, collections and reporting of data by indicators, and use of this monitoring not only for accountability, but as a tool for improving management;
- Reduce potential overlap and duplication in project assessment and administrative reporting, such as by using English where possible for internal Foundation reporting (rather than translating grant reports into Finnish);
- Assess and report upon their grant experience (and other activities) in a comparative manner, to provide clear “lessons learned” to improve their strategies and approaches;
- Seek ways to increase the complementarity between the Foundation support and other support that their Southern partners receive, including any potential collaboration with the other Finnish development cooperation and/or the Finnish Embassies; and
- Consider ways to collaborate with other donors and development partners to provide long-term support and more sustainable development interventions.

## Capacity Development Impacts

The Finnish NGO Foundations are contributing to building the capacity of civil society organizations in developing countries. The capacity-building is, however, limited as it is primarily implicit in the preparation, implementation, and reporting on the grants. More explicit and strategic capacity development is needed, based upon more dialogue with partners to assess and identify capacity development needs, and prepare strategic plans. Building the capacity of the Southern partners (such as through training or support for results-based planning, integrated project cycle management, improved monitoring, organisational development, fund-raising, etc. ) would improve local ownership of projects, by helping these organisations to become more effective, and thus to contribute more to the building of civil society in the South.

### **Recommendation 3**

The NGO Foundations need to focus more on capacity development, of both their own operations and those of their Southern partners, to better support the development of civil society organisations in developing countries.

To do so, they are recommended to:

- focus on capacity building as well as substantive issues in their support;
- place more explicit focus on capacity assessment, quality assurance, and follow-up of capacity building, especially for the less-developed NGOs, CBOs, and grassroots groups;
- consider providing grants to fewer organizations, but for more grants to support longer-term collaboration, to allow for greater capacity development support.; and
- consider “umbrella grants” to capable partnership organizations, as a means of developing further national NGO capacities to provide support to grassroots groups, CBOs, or smaller, newer NGOs.

The Foundations and MFA need to broaden their future agreements to include support to such broader capacity-building efforts.

### **Other Impacts**

The Finnish NGO Foundations are supporting activities that have important substantive impacts, in terms of human rights, improvements in the lives of people with disabilities, and environmental sustainability. These activities do, however, also have some unintended negative impacts, such as sometimes promoting competition – rather than collaboration – among NGOs in a given area.

### **Recommendation 4**

The NGO Foundations need to focus more explicitly on analyzing and sharing their experiences and lessons learned, to increase the positive impacts of their work, and to minimize any unintended negative impacts. Thus, they are recommended to:

- Continue supporting grassroots initiatives and develop means for the grantees to share experiences and lessons learned; and
- Undertake more systematic analysis and reporting of the outcomes and impacts of the grants, so that lessons learned can improve any future work.

### **Added-Value of the Foundations**

The Finnish NGO Foundations “add value” to the implementation of Finnish development cooperation and management of small grants, reaching women and men in grassroots organisations and in rural areas. They also add value with their expertise, technical advice and guidance, as well as through networking, building links between civil society in the South and the North, and other development partners.

### **Recommendation 5**

Both the NGO Foundations and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs need to better draw upon the strengths of the Foundations, particularly in terms of their ability to support directly small-scale initiatives in developing countries, their substantive expertise, and the value that they add to both implementation of Finnish development policy and the broader goals of building civil society in developing countries.

It is therefore recommended to:

- Further improve and streamline the administrative procedures, so that the Board and staff members of the Foundations and the staff in the MFA NGO Unit, can focus more on substantive issues;
- Encourage the Foundations to seek additional funding from other sources, and to more clearly establish their own independent identities;
- Encourage the MFA to continue to support the work of the NGO Foundations.



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In Helsinki, the team also met with other resource persons, such as the KPMG performance audit team and representatives of KEPA. Their inputs are appreciated.

The Evaluation Team is, however, solely responsible for this report.

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The Evaluation Team reviewed considerable additional documentation from Abilis, KIOS, and Siemenpuu on Foundation strategies, activities, files on grant activities, etc.

## ANNEX 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

19.2.08

### Evaluation of NGO Foundations: Terms of Reference

#### 1. Background

The Government of Finland channels NGO funding through three groups of organizations: 10 partnership organizations, three NGO foundations, and about 140 other organizations, which receive project-based funding. In 2007, the Finnish NGOs implemented nearly 700 projects in 87 countries and regions. The share of the amount of projects for each NGO group is close to one third. In terms of money the partnership organizations received 43,1 M€ or 63%, NGO Foundations 3,3 M€, 5%, and NGO project organizations 22,2 M€, 32% of the total NGO funding.

Three NGO foundations, The Abilis, The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights (KIOS) and The Siemenpuu, started their activities in late 1990's and in the beginning of 2000's. They all have their own strategies and thematic areas – disability sector for Abilis, human rights for KIOS and environment for Siemenpuu – but they have also very close cooperation. They all forward the government support to small scale activities in developing countries based on the applications they received; they do not carry out their own development projects. During the years the foundations have developed their information systems and financial administration towards more compatible procedures.

The first financial support for the Foundations was granted by the Ministry in 1998. The funding has grown steadily, but unevenly, as the table below indicates:

State grant	Abilis	Growth-%	KIOS	Growth-%	Siemenpuu	Growth-%
1998	100 913		65 593			
1999	252 282	150	336 376	413		
2000	252 282	0	252 282	-25		
2001	336 376	33	336 376	33	333 180	
2002	700 000	108	420 000	25	336 000	1
2003	800 000	14	500 000	19	400 000	19
2004	900 000	13	600 000	20	750 000	88
2005	1 000 000	11	750 000	25	1 000 000	33
2006	1 050 000	5	900 000	20	1 050 000	5
2007	1 100 000	5	1 050 000	17	1 150 000	10
2008	1 300 000	18	1 200 000	14	1 250 000	9
2009	1 400 000	8	1 250 000	4	1 300 000	4

According to the agreement between the Ministry and the NGO Foundations, the Foundations submit annually progress reports and financial reports (including audited account) to the MFA.

In 2004 an inspection of accounting and management practices of the Foundations was carried out by KPMG, resulting in recommendations of improvement of the accounting practices and follow-up of the use of grants.

## **2. Purpose and objective of the evaluation**

The purpose of the evaluation of the Foundations is to get an insight on the usefulness of this type of funding as an instrument for the support and capacity building of small NGOs in developing countries as a tool for implementing Finnish development policy. This insight will be necessary for the MFA upon decision making on further funding windows and modalities for NGO support.

The specific objectives of the evaluation are

- the improved capacity of the Foundations for managing their funding activities
- the improved capacity of the partner organizations (for performance and financial administration)
- the improved capacity of the MFA for administering the funding for small NGO projects
- the increased observation of the cross-cutting themes (sectors of the Foundations) in Finnish development cooperation

## **3. Scope of the evaluation**

The first part of the evaluation covers the management activities of the Foundations in Finland. In terms of policy coherence and cross-cutting issues, the evaluation is expected to assess the activities of the Foundations vis-à-vis the focal areas of Finnish development policies and guidelines. The Foundations were established in late 1990's and they have started their full activities within the last 5–8 years. The evaluation will cover this whole time in assessing the organization and management of the Foundations and their development along the increase of funds from the MFA.

The second part of the evaluation will cover activities in two partner countries, Uganda and Indonesia, where in each at least two of the Foundations have been active. The selection of partner organizations, policy coherence in the partner country, the contractual, financial and reporting procedures, as well as the outcome of the projects will be assessed.

Moreover, the cooperation of the Foundations with Nordic / European organizations with similar type of mandates will be assessed.



#### 4. Issues to be covered

##### A. The headquarters of the Foundations and the MFA

The main emphasis in the evaluation of organization, management and processes will be on efficiency, effectiveness and coherence.

###### Efficiency:

- Is the use of resources (funds, human power) in harmony with the outcome? The use of resources for different type of activities will be assessed (fact-finding, networking, processing of applications, financial procedures, follow-up, etc.).
- The development in use of resources along the time will be assessed (allowing for a breaking-in period during the first years).
- The use of resources in different Foundations will be compared.

###### Effectiveness:

- What have been the main development objectives of the Foundation activities and to what extent have they been achieved?
- What kind of monitoring and quality assessment systems do the Foundations have? Is there sufficient data collected via these systems and how has this data been observed in the operations?
- Are there systemic differences in effectiveness depending on the type of partner organization?

###### Coherence:

- What is the procedure of selection of partner countries and organizations? Is the geographical coverage and choice of countries relevant?
- Have the activities of the Foundations been coherent with the policies in the countries of operation and with international conventions?
- In those countries where no policies in the sector of the Foundations have existed, have the activities enhanced the formation of policies (in partner organizations or in government level)?

##### B. Field work

The main emphasis in the evaluation of the field work will be on the efficiency, impact and effectiveness of the activities. The relations between the Foundations / their partner organizations and the Finnish Embassies will also be assessed.

###### Efficiency:

- Is the use of resources (funds, human power of the partner organization) in the projects in harmony with the outcome?
- The performance and financial management of partner organizations will be assessed.

- The development in use of resources along the time will be assessed (allowing for a breaking-in period during the first years) for longer-term partners.

#### Effectiveness:

- What have been the development objectives of the project activities and to what extent have they been achieved?
- What kind of monitoring systems have been used? Is there sufficient data collected via these systems and how has this data been observed in the operations?
- Do partner organizations receive funding from other local or international sources? Is there any joint follow-up or other cooperation between the donors?
- Are there systemic differences in effectiveness depending on the type of partner organization?

#### Impact:

- For longer-term partnerships, what have been the intended and the unintended impacts of the project activities?
- Have the capacity building activities been successful? How has that been verified?
- Is there evidence on economic or organizational sustainability of the activities?

#### C. Added value

The significance of the Foundations as an additional and complementary instrument in Finnish development cooperation will be assessed. As well, the added value of the activities of each Foundation in the local setting of the countries of the field study will be assessed.

### 5. Cross-cutting issues

One of the main purposes in the establishment of the Foundations has been the wish to improve the focus on vulnerable groups in development cooperation, which is one of the cross-cutting issues of Finnish development policy. Specific evaluation questions arising from this are e.g. the following:

- Have different vulnerable groups been treated equally and impartially in fund allocation?
- How have the other cross-cutting themes (especially gender issues, complementarity) been observed in the activities?
- What is the added value of the activities of Foundations in Finnish development cooperation vis-à-vis the cross-cutting issues?

### 6. Methodology and work plan

The evaluation will be carried out in two phases. In the first phase the activities of the Foundations in Finland are assessed using background document analysis as well as individual and group interviews. The team will produce an inception report which will be discussed with the MFA and the Foundations before the field trips.

For the field trips to Uganda and Indonesia, two of the international team members will each lead one country team. The country teams will include 1–2 local experts for each sector to be assessed. Participatory seminars or workshops will be used to collect information from the partner organizations and other stakeholders. The findings and recommendations will be discussed with the partner organizations before the end of the field trip. After the field visit a debriefing meeting with MFA and the Foundations shall be organised on the initial findings from the field and those resulted in the desk study.

## 7. Expertise required

The international team consists of three experts. Their special fields of expertise shall cover the sectors of the three Foundations: disability sector, human rights and environment. As the field part of the evaluation will be carried out in two countries (both teams headed by one international member of the team), the members of the team shall have

- relevant academic qualifications;
- experience in relevant development issues and proven theoretical and practical experience in evaluation of relevant international development projects as specified in the Instructions to Tenderers (Annex A)
- (for the Team Leader and one member) prior experience as a Team Leader of an Evaluation Team;
- good communication and interpersonal skills.

The team as a whole shall have the following qualifications:

- familiarity with Finnish and international development policies, principles and modalities;
- familiarity with NGO cooperation in developing countries and in Finland;
- at least one member of the team must be fully fluent in written and spoken Finnish; all members shall have good command of English.
- gender balance is an asset;
- overall familiarity with the field study countries an asset.

The Team Leader will have the overall responsibility for the report writing and its quality and other arrangements, including communication with the MFA.

For the field trips to Uganda and Indonesia, the team includes local experts. There should be 1–2 experts for the sector of each Foundation working in each country. Local experts need to have thorough knowledge of the sector and its policy context as well as NGO activities in their country in general. However, they must not have earlier involvement with the projects or NGOs to be evaluated.

## 8. Reporting and time schedule

The team will prepare one joint report with chapters of each of the Foundations. The final report shall clearly sum up the findings, conclusions and recommendations for each Foundation as well as for the MFA for the administration of the Foundations. The report shall also have a synthesis of findings in general on the NGO Foundation instrument among Finnish development aid instruments. For clarity and connectivity, a summative table format to support these sections shall also be included. The analysis and results of this evaluation must be evidence-based.

The time allocated for the first part of the evaluation (in Finland) will be four weeks. The team will prepare an inception report which presents the preliminary findings and outline for field work. The inception report is expected to be available two weeks after the initial discussions in the MFA.

The field trip to Uganda (with one international expert + local experts) will take max. 14 days and the field trip to Indonesia (with another international expert) will take max 8 days. A final draft report will be produced within 3 weeks after the field trips. Finalization of the final report will be carried out in two weeks following the comments of the Foundations and the MFA. The total duration of the evaluation shall not exceed 4 months.

## 9. Mandate

The Evaluation Team members are entitled and expected to discuss with pertinent persons and organizations the above and any other matters relevant to the assignment. However, they are not authorized to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of Finland. The final report shall be subject to approval by the Ministry.

Aira Päivöke  
Director  
Unit for Evaluation and Internal Auditing





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