# EVALUATION

## Programme-based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organisations III

Evaluation on Finland's Development Policy and Cooperation

2017/5g

# EVALUATION 3 ON THE PROGRAMME-BASED SUPPORT THROUGH FINNISH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND UMBRELLA ORGANISATIONS

## Abilis Foundation, KIOS Foundation and Siemenpuu Foundation

Nick Chapman (Team Leader)
Ilmari Saarilehto

**2017/5g**

This evaluation was commissioned by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland to FCG International Ltd. This report is the product of the authors, and responsibility for the accuracy of the data included in this report rests with the authors.
The findings, interpretations, and conclusions presented in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

© Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2017
This report can be downloaded through the home page of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs
http://formin.finland.fi/developmentpolicy/evaluations

Contact: EVA-11@formin.fi

ISBN 978-952-281-552-1 (pdf)
ISSN 2342-8341

Cover design and layout: Innocorp Oy/Milla Toro

# CONTENTS


ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS ..... IX

TIIVISTELMÄ ..... 1

REFERAT ..... 2

ABSTRACT ..... 3

YHTEENVETO ..... 4

SAMMANFATTNING ..... 9

SUMMARY ..... 14

KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS ..... 19

1 INTRODUCTION ..... 22

2 APPROACH, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS ..... 23

**2.1 Approach ..... 23**

**2.2 Methodology ..... 24**

2.2.1 Data Sources ..... 24

2.2.2 Data collection procedures and instruments ..... 25

2.2.3 Sampling ..... 26

2.2.4 Analysis ..... 26

**2.3 Limitations ..... 26**

3 CONTEXT ANALYSIS ..... 27

**3.1 Finnish policy context and programme-based approach for CSO support ..... 27**

**3.2 Origins and mandate of Foundations' Development Co-operation ..... 27**

**3.3 Operational principles related to Development Co-operation ..... 29**

**3.4 Funding profile ..... 34**

4 FINDINGS ..... 36

**4.1 Relevance of CSO's development co-operation ..... 36**

4.1.1 Comparative advantage and strategic alignment ..... 36

4.1.2 Alignment with beneficiary and stakeholder needs and rights ..... 42

4.1.3 Alignment with the partner country policies and strategies ..... 45

4.1.4 Alignment with development policy priorities of Finland ..... 46

4.1.5 Alignment with the Theory of Change ..... 51

**4.2 Complementarity, Co-ordination and Coherence** ..... **58**
**4.3 Efficiency** ..... **62**
4.3.1 Results-based management practices ..... 62
4.3.2 Management of programme-based support by the MFA ..... 71
**4.4 Effectiveness** ..... **71**
4.4.1 Achievement of outputs ..... 71
4.4.2 Achievement of outcomes ..... 73
4.4.3 Contribution to outcomes ..... 76
**4.5 Impact** ..... **77**
**4.6 Sustainability** ..... **80**

**5 CONCLUSIONS** ..... **85**
**5.1 Validity of the Theory of Change Assumptions** ..... **85**
5.1.1 From inputs to outputs ..... 85
5.1.2 From outputs to short-term outcomes ..... 85
5.1.3 From short-term to long-term outcomes ..... 86
**5.2 General Conclusions** ..... **87**

**6 LESSONS LEARNED** ..... **89**
**6.1 Strategic programme-based choices** ..... **89**
**6.2 Programme implementation and results performance** ..... **89**
**6.3 Cross-cutting objectives and HRBA** ..... **90**

**7 RECOMMENDATIONS** ..... **92**
**7.1 Recommendations for Foundations** ..... **92**
**7.2 Recommendations for the MFA** ..... **93**

**REFERENCES** ..... **94**

**THE EVALUATION TEAM** ..... **98**

**Annex 1 Terms of Reference** ..... **99**
**Annex 2 People Interviewed** ..... **117**
**Annex 3 Documents Consulted** ..... **124**
**Annex 4 MFA's Programme-Based Approach** ..... **126**
**Annex 5 CSO Generic Theory of Change** ..... **128**
**Annex 6 Evaluation Matrix** ..... **129**
**Annex 7 Meta-analysis of 27 Foundation evaluations and studies** ..... **134**
**Annex 8 KIOS Theory of Change** ..... **144**

## BOXES

**Box 1** MFA Interpretation of the PBS ..... 24
**Box 2** Persons With Disabilities in Ethiopia ..... 38
**Box 3** Human rights in Bangladesh ..... 39
**Box 4** MFA Risk Management Approach ..... 63
**Box 5** Framework of Results-Based Management at the MFA ..... 126
**Box 6** MFA Eligibility criteria for CSOs under the Programme-Based Approach ..... 127

## TABLES

**Table 2** Development policy priorities of Finland ..... 47
**Table 3** Key Assumptions in the Overarching Theory of Change. ..... 52
**Table 4** Self-Assessment of Nepali CSOs at CSO3 debriefing workshop ..... 57
**Table 5** Self-Evaluation of Abilis supported projects that ended in 2016 (97 projects) ..... 79
**Table 6** KIOS Evaluations and Studies (14 reports) ..... 134
**Table 7** Abilis Evaluation and Studies (7 reports) ..... 139
**Table 8** Siemenpuu Evaluation and Studies (6 Reports) ..... 142

## FIGURES

**Figure 1** MFA Funding Commitments to the NGO Foundations 1999–2016 (€) ..... 34
**Figure 3** Abilis Theory of Change ..... 53
**Figure 4** KIOS Theory of Change (a full page version is presented as Annex 8) ..... 55
**Figure 5** Siemenpuu Theory of Change ..... 56

# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|---|---|
| **€** | Euro |
| **Abilis** | Abilis Foundation - Finnish NGO Foundation for supporting people with disabilities |
| **ARB** | Abilis Review Board |
| **CBO** | Community-based organisation |
| **CCO** | Cross cutting objective |
| **CORD** | Coorg Organisation for Rural Development |
| **CSO** | Civil Society Organisation |
| **DAC** | Development Assistance Committee |
| **DPO** | Organisation of Persons with Disabilities |
| **DPOD** | Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark |
| **DRC** | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| **EU** | European Union |
| **EUR** | Euro |
| **FCG** | Finnish Consulting Group Ltd |
| **FOHRID** | Human Rights and Democratic Forum |
| **FT** | Fast Track |
| **FTS** | Fast Track Scheme (Abilis) |
| **FTSR** | Fast Track Scheme Report |
| **GBV** | Gender Based Violence |
| **HQ** | Headquarters |
| **HR** | Human Rights |
| **HRBA** | Human Rights Based Approach |
| **HRW** | Human Rights Watch |
| **ICMHD** | International Centre for Migration, Health and Development |
| **KIOS** | KIOS Foundation - Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights |
| **LCF** | Local Cooperation Fund |
| **LDC** | Least Developed Countries |
| **LGBTQ** | Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer |
| **LTAP** | Long-Term Action Plan |
| **M&E** | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| **MEE Net** | Mekong Energy and Ecology Network |
| **MFA** | Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland |

| | |
|---|---|
| **NAA** | National Adivasi Alliance |
| **NGO** | Non-governmental organisation |
| **ODA** | Official Development Assistance |
| **OECD/DAC** | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee |
| **PBS** | Programme-Based Support |
| **RBM** | Results Based Management |
| **SADED** | South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy |
| **Siemenpuu** | Siemenpuu Foundation – Finnish NGO Foundation for Environment |
| **ToR** | Terms of Reference |
| **UN** | United Nations |
| **UNCRPD** | United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities |
| **UNHCR** | United Nations Refugee Agency |
| **USA** | United States of America |
| **WOREC** | Women's Rehabilitation Center Nepal |

# TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä raportissa esitellään kolmen säätiön (Abilis, KIOS ja Siemenpuu) ohjelmien ja rakenteen evaluointi. Evaluoinnin tarkoituksena on tuottaa näyttöä Suomen ulkoministeriön (UM) ohjelmatukea saavan 10 kansalaisjärjestön ohjelmien tuloksista ja toiminnasta. Evaluointi suoritettiin joulukuun 2016 ja syyskuun 2017 välisenä aikana. Työhön sisältyi kattava aineistotutkimus, jota seurasi kenttätyö, jossa haastateltiin säätiöiden henkilöstöä ja hallitusten jäseniä, sekä lyhyet tutustumiskäynnit Nepaliin ja Intiaan tapaamaan sidosryhmiä ja hyödynsaajia sekä UM:n edustajia. Saatu ohjelmatuki on auttanut säätiöitä parantamaan ohjelmiensa tulosten kohdentamista ja mittaamista, mutta ohjelmatason raportoinnissa ja vaikutusten mittaamisessa on yhä aukkoja. Säätiöt ovat arvokas UM:n rahoitusta täydentävä kanava ja tarjoavat tärkeitä ruohonjuuritason ja vaikuttamistyön malleja. Kestävyys on haaste epävakaassa rahoitustilanteessa, jossa kansalaisyhteiskunnalla on rajoitettu tila toimia. Säätiöitä suositellaan parantamaan täydentävyyttä ja synergioita, rakentamaan vaihtoehtoisia rahoituskanavia, työstämään poistumissuunnitelmia ja jakamaan keskenään onnistuneita malleja muiden toistettavaksi, parantamaan riskinhallintaa ja laajentamaan ohjelmatason seuranta- ja arviointivälineitään. Olettaen että näitä suosituksia noudatetaan, UM:n tulisi jatkaa tämän erittäin tarkoituksenmukaisen ja täydentävän kehitysyhteistyökanavan rahoitusta. Ministeriön pitäisi myös arvioida omien henkilöstö- ja muiden resurssiensa tasoa ja pyrkiä lisäämään henkilöstökapasiteettia ja matkustukseen osoitettuja varoja ja hyödyntää säätiöiden erikoisosaamista.

Avainsanat: *Säätiöt, Abilis, KIOS ja Siemenpuu, vammaisuus, ihmisoikeudet, ympäristö*

# REFERAT

I denna rapport presenteras utvärderingen av programmen och strukturerna hos tre stiftelser (Abilis, KIOS och Siemenpuu). Allmänna målet för utvärderingen är att ge belägg för resultaten och effektiviteten av programmen hos tio organisationer i civilsamhället som finländska utrikesministeriet (UM) beviljat programbaserat stöd (PBS). Utvärderingen utfördes från december 2016 till september 2017 och omfattade en ingående skrivbordsstudie före fältarbete som inkluderade intervjuer med anställda och styrelsemedlemmar på stiftelserna samt korta besök i Nepal och Indien för att träffa intressegrupper och förmånstagare samt representanter för UM. PBS har hjälpt stiftelserna att förbättra inriktningen och mätningen av programresultat men det finns fortfarande brister i rapporteringen och mätningen av inverkan på programnivå. Stiftelserna erbjuder en värdefull kompletterande kanal för UM-finansiering och utgör viktiga modeller för gräsrots- och påverkansarbete. Hållbarhet är en utmaning i en instabil finansieringsmiljö och där utrymmet för civilsamhället är begränsat. Det rekommenderas bland annat att förbättra komplementariteten och synergin, skapa alternativa finansieringskanaler, ta fram exitstrategier, dela med sig av framgångsrika modeller så att andra kan upprepa dem, förbättra riskhanteringen och utvidga övervaknings- och utvärderingsinstrumenten på programnivå. Uppfylls detta ska UM fortsätta att finansiera denna mycket relevanta kompletterande kanal för utvecklingssamarbete. Ministeriet ska också gå igenom sina personal- och resursnivåer, öka personalkapaciteten och resemedlen samt bättre utnyttja expertisen hos stiftelserna.

Nyckelord: *stiftelser, Abilis, KIOS och Siemenpuu, funktionsnedsättning, mänskliga rättigheter, miljön*

# ABSTRACT

This report presents an evaluation of the programmes and structures of three Foundations (Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu). The overall aim of the evaluation is to provide evidence of the results and performance of the programmes of 10 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) assisted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA), using programme-based support (PBS). The evaluation took place from December 2016 to September 2017 and included a comprehensive desk study before fieldwork that included interviews with Foundation staff and Board members as well as brief visits to Nepal and India to meet stakeholders and beneficiaries as well as MFA representatives. PBS has assisted the Foundations to improve alignment and measurement of programme results, but there are still gaps in programme level reporting and impact measurement. They offer a valuable complementary channel of MFA funding and provide important models of grassroots and advocacy work. Sustainability is a challenge in a volatile funding setting and where civil society space is restricted. Recommendations include improving complementarity and synergy, building alternative funding channels, work on exit strategies, sharing their successful models for replication by others, improving risk management and extending programme level monitoring and evaluation tools. Provided these are adopted, MFA should maintain funding to this highly relevant and complementary channel of development cooperation. It should also review its own staffing and resource levels, and seek to increase staff capacity, travel funds, and make more use of the Foundations' expertise.

Keywords: *Foundations, Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu, Disability, Human Rights, Environment*

# YHTEENVETO

## Johdanto

Tässä raportissa esitellään kolmen säätiön – Abilis, Kansalaisjärjestöjen ihmisoikeussäätiö (KIOS) ja Siemenpuu – ohjelmien ja rakenteen evaluointi. Evaluoinnin tarkoituksena on tuottaa näyttöä Suomen ulkoministeriön (UM) ohjelmatukea saavan 10 kansalaisjärjestön tuloksista ja toiminnasta. Evaluoinnissa arvioidaan vuosina 2010-2016 saavutettuja tuloksia ja annetaan ohjeistusta siihen, miten strategista suunnittelua ja ohjelmatukimuotoista rahoitusta tulisi vahvistaa. Kyseessä on kolmas suomalaisille kansalaisjärjestöille annetun ohjelmatuen evaluointikierros.

Evaluointi toteutettiin joulukuun 2016 ja syyskuun 2017 välisenä aikana. Evaluointiryhmä teki kattavan asiakirjamateriaaliin perustuvan selvityksen, jonka pohjalta laadittiin alustavat havainnot esittelevä aloitusraportti. Tätä seuraavassa kenttätyövaiheessa ryhmä haastatteli säätiöiden henkilöstöä ja hallitusten jäseniä. Nepaliin ja Intiaan suuntautuneiden käyntien aikana tavattiin maiden edustajia, projektipäälliköitä, sidosryhmiä, hyödynsaajia sekä UM:n edustajia. Lopullinen kenttätyön purku tehtiin huhtikuussa Helsingissä.

Vakavin tutkimusta rajoittava tekijä oli se, että toimeksiannon tehtäväkuvaus (Terms of Reference, TOR) edellyttivät kaikkien kolmen säätiön käsittelemistä yhdessä raportissa ja riittävän yksityiskohtaisesti. Vaikka säätiöillä onkin sama muoto ja lähtökohta, ne ovat kuitenkin erillisiä yksiköitä, joiden teemaalueet, toimintamaat ja -tavat poikkeavat paljon toisistaan. Tämän moninaisuuden vuoksi oli äärimmäisen haastavaa antaa oikeudenmukainen kuva niiden työstä ja niille evaluointijakson aikana osoitetuista kokonaisvaroista (34 miljoonaa euroa). Tätä hankaluutta kuitenkin jossain määrin helpotti se, että raportti kohdennettiin tiettyihin asioihin, erityisesti ohjelmatuen rooliin, joka muodostaa evaluoinnin pääteeman.

## Tausta

Kaikki kolme suomalaista kansalaisjärjestösäätiötä – Abilis, KIOS ja Siemenpuu – perustettiin vuonna 1998. Niiden taustalla on suomalaisia, erityisesti vammaisasioiden, ihmisoikeuksien ja ympäristökysymysten parissa työskentelevien yhdistysten ryhmittymiä. UM tukee näitä säätiöitä, jotka toimivat kanavana jakaa pieniä avustuksia kehitysmaiden kansalaisjärjestöille ja yhteisöperustaisille järjestöille (community based organization, CBO). Abilis ja KIOS saivat ensimmäisen kerran UM:n tukea vuonna 1999 ja Siemenpuun ensimmäinen valtionapu hyväksyttiin vuonna 2001. KIOS on myöntänyt vuosina 2010-2015 tukea yhteensä 180 hankkeelle, joiden yhteisarvo on 9,9 miljoonaa euroa. Säätiöllä on joissain yhteistyömaistaan pitkäaikaisia kumppanuussuhteita. Abilis on vuosina 2010-2015 rahoittanut 13,7 miljoonalla eurolla yhteensä 1 179 hanketta yhteistyössä vammaisjärjestöjen kanssa. Siemenpuu on työskennellyt pääosin kahdeksassa laajemmassa alueellisessa ohjelmassa 10,8 miljoonan euron kokonaissumman turvin. UM:n rahoitus

kattaa säätiöiden lähes koko budjetin, joka kasvoi tasaisesti vuoteen 2016 asti, jolloin UM leikkasi kansalaisjärjestöille suunnattuja varoja 40 prosentilla. Säätiöitä pidetään UM:n kehitysyhteistyökanavien erityisenä laajennuksena, jotka avustavat pääosin pieniä ja vaikeasti saavutettavia ruohonjuuritason toimijoita vähiten kehittyneissä maissa. Tästä syystä niiltä edellytetään vain 7,5 prosentin omarahoitusosuutta, kun muiden kansalaisjärjestöjen kohdalla omarahoitusosuuden on oltava 15 %. Vammaishankkeissa omarahoitusosuus on myös 7,5 %.

## Keskeiset havainnot

Toiminta on yleisesti hyvin linjassa UM:n politiikan kanssa, sillä se heijastelee Suomen kehityspolitiikan erityisiä korkean prioriteetin teemoja. Evaluointikauden kuluessa ohjelmatuki on kannustanut säätiöitä tarkentamaan strategista fokustaan pienempään maajoukkoon ja olemaan enemmän tekemisissä muiden UM:n apukanavien kanssa. Tästä huolimatta on mahdollista sovittaa toiminta vielä lähemmäs UM:n prioriteettimaita (vähiten kehittyneet/hauraat valtiot). Säätiöt noudattavat ydinperiaatteitaan ja ovat keskittyneet omiin teemaalueisiinsa. Ne tuntevat hyvin omien alueidensa kansainvälisen tutkimuksen ja standardit. Tätä vahvistavat myös niiden yhteydet moniin kansainvälisiin liikkeisiin ja yhteistyökumppaneihin.

Säätiöt keskittyvät pääosin hanketuen myöntämiseen ja hallinnointiin, joten ohjelmatyö on hyvin johdonmukaista järjestön kokonaisstrategian kanssa. Sitoutuminen ihmisoikeusperustaiseen lähestymistapaan (HRBA) ja sen noudattamiseen on vahvaa, joskin läpileikkaavien tavoitteiden (Cross Cutting Objecitves, CCO) kohdalla KIOSin ja Abiliksen on tarpeen lisätä tietoisuuttaan ympäristökysymyksistä ja ilmaston muutoksen lieventämisestä. Kaikkien säätiöiden pitäisi ohjeistuksissaan ja raportoinnissaan puhua sukupuolten syrjimättömyydestä (gender inclusivity) sen sijaan että mainitaan pelkästään sukupuolijaottelu (disaggregation).

Vaikka ohjelmatuki aloitettiin vuonna 2003, UM:n vuonna 2013 laatima yksityiskohtaisempi (ja vuodesta 2015 tulosperustaiseen hallintoon (RBM) perustunut ohjeistus sai säätiöt sovittamaan käynnissä olevat hankkeensa ministeriön uusiin ohjeisiin. Säätiöiden strategia-asiakirjat kattavat 5 vuoden jakson. UM:n tulosperustaista hallintoa koskevia periaatteita ei ole kuitenkaan vielä omaksuttu vastaavaksi kulttuuriksi, jonka mukaan esitettäisiin sekä lyhyen että pidemmän aikavälin tuloksia.

Säätiöillä on selvä ja vahva suhteellinen etu suomalaisen kehitysyhteistyön kanavana, koska niillä jokaisella on hyvin selkeä temaattinen fokus ja ne ovat viime vuosikymmenen aikana rakentaneet vahvan ja uskottavan erityisosaamistason näillä fokusalueillaan. Joustavasta ja reagointikykyisestä lähestymistavastaan ja vähäisestä toimintamaissa läsnäolostaan johtuen säätiöt heijastelevat ja palvelevat hyvin hyödynsaajien tarpeita. Maakohtaisten prioriteettien noudattaminen voi olla haastavaa, sillä joissain yhteyksissä tuettujen järjestöjen roolina on haastaa tai uudistaa valtiotason politiikkaa pikemminkin kuin toteuttaa sitä. Monissa niissä maissa, joissa säätiöit ovat rahoittaneet hankkeita, kansalaisyhteiskunta on joutunut ahtaammalle ja niissä on säädetty kansalaisjärjestöjen toimintaa rajoittavia lakeja. Maastrategiat on laadittu

näiden asioiden linjaamiseksi, mutta niitä ei aina käytetä sellaisenaan tai päivitetä säännöllisesti.

Työn kuvaaminen muutosteorian (Theory of Change, TOC) termein on osa ohjelmatuen tulosperustaisen hallinnon käyttöönottoa, ja säätiöiden vastikään tuottamat teoriat tarjoavat melko hyvän loogisen arvion aiotuista toteutuksen poluista, joihin kuuluu vaikuttamistoiminta, kapasiteetin kasvattaminen ja palveluiden tuottaminen. Oletuksia (assumption), joihin muutosteoriat nojaavat, voisi kuitenkin tarkentaa, jotta voitaisiin kuvata näihin polkuihin vaikuttavia ulkoisia olosuhteita. Tätä kuvataan Abiliksen logframe-matriisissa, joka sisältää teorian oletukset.

Koordinoinnin (coordination), täydentävyyden (complementarity) ja yhdenmukaisuuden (coherence) näkökulmasta säätiöt ovat laajalti vuorovaikutuksessa omiin suomalaisiin ja kansanvälisiin verkostoihinsa. Ne tarjoavat täydentävän lähestymistavan Suomen kehitysyhteistyöhön tukemalla pieniä ja syrjäisiä ruohonjuuritason kansalaisjärjestöjä ihmisoikeuksien kannalta herkillä alueilla, joilla kahden- tai monenvälisillä avustuskanavilla on vaikea toimia. Toisaalta on näyttöä siitä, että UM ei hyödynnä säätiöiden erityisosaamista riittävästi ja että niiden täydentävyyttä ja johdonmukaisuutta voisi mahdollisesti parantaa lisäämällä yhteisrahoitusta tai ottamalla yksityissektori mukaan. Tässä on kuitenkin aina pidettävä huoli siitä, ettei luovuta mahdollisuudesta haastaa olemassa oleva tilanne ja toimia tarvittaessa itsenäisesti.

**Tehokkuus (efficiency):** Koska UM on ollut pääasiallinen rahoituslähde, koko henkilöstö tekee UM:n tukemaa työtä. Henkilöstömäärä on pieni koko budjettiin nähden, mutta toisaalta säätiöt eivät suoraan tue rahoitettujen hankkeiden toteutusta. Säätiöt ovat suorittaneet maksatukset hyvin tehokkaasti. Vuosina 2010–2015 säätiöt käyttivät 96 % budjetoiduista varoista. Suunnittelu ja seuranta painottuu vahvasti hanketasoon, ja tähän mennessä tämän kokoamisessa yhteen ohjelmatasolla on onnistuttu rajallisesti, joskin säätiöt ovat kehittämässä nyt parempia RBM-välineitä tähän tarkoitukseen. Useissa selvityksissä on todettu, että riskiarviointia ja riskein pienentämistä koskevalle ohjeistukselle on tarvetta. UM:ssä säätiöihin liittyvää työtä tekee kaksi henkilöä, mutta heillä on myös muita tehtäviä ja rahoituspäätösten etukäteishyväksyntä vie suuren osan työajasta. Näkemysten vaihto on kuitenkin hyvällä tasolla, vaikka tutustumiskäyntejä kentälle tehdään vain rajallisesti. Yleisesti säätiöiden mielipide on, että UM antaa vain vähäistä palautetta strategisista aiheista ja ohjelman suunnasta arviointijakson aikana, ja RBM-ohjeistusta on ollut vaikea noudattaa.

**Vaikuttavuus (effectiveness) ja vaikutus (impact):** Säätiöiden mukaan hyvin suuri osa loppuunsaatetuista hankkeista on saavuttanut niiden asettamat tavoitteet (outputs). Myös aiemmat evaluoinnit osoittavat, että suuri enemmistö tukea saaneista hankkeista saavutti asetetut tulostavoitteet. Hankkeiden omistajuus on korkealla tasolla, kun hanketuen saajat suunnittelevat, toteuttavat ja raportoivat itse. Joskus asetetaan kuitenkin epärealistisia tavoitteita, jotka saattavat olla tavoittamattomissa, kun rahoitus on usein lyhytaikaista. Ohjelmatason tulosten (outcomes) määrittäminen on haastavampaa, koska säätiöt ovat vasta viime aikoina alkaneet laatia yhteisiä indikaattoreita summaamaan tavoitteita (vaikka Abilis onkin aloittanut työn jo 2012 ja on

kehittänyt yhteismittareita onnistuneemmin). Muutoksen mittaamiseen liittyy myös sisäänrakennettuja vaikeuksia, kun kyse on tietoisuudesta, voimaantumisesta ja oikeudenhaltijoiden uusista yhteiskunnallisista rooleista sekä politiikkaan vaikuttamisesta, varsinkin siellä missä nämä prosessit vievät pitkän ajan. Kumppanijärjestöjen kapasiteetin kehittäminen ja järjestökehityksen ja vaikuttamistoiminnan tukeminen ovat arvokasta työtä, muttei aina hyvin suunniteltua eikä sitä ehkä seurata. Näissä prosesseissa on vaikeampi erottaa se, mistä mikin asia johtuu, vaikka hyviä esimerkkejä onnistumisistakin on. Yleisellä tasolla evaluoinnit ovat laadultaan rajallisia eivätkä riittävän itsenäisiä, niiden tulostavoitteet (outcome) on huonosti määritelty ja näyttö heikkoa. Siitä huolimatta on myös olemassa esimerkkejä hyvälaatuisista evaluoinneista (kuten ACADHOSHA 2013-14; Fiant 2016; Dean Nielsen 2015; sekä Katsui et al (2014). Seuranta- ja arviointijärjestelmiä parannetaan osittain ohjelmatuen tulosperustaisen johtamisen (RMB) tuloksena.

**Kestävyys (sustainability):** Säätiöiden saama rahoitus kasvoi tasaisesti aina vuoteen 2015, jolloin se väheni merkittävästi, mikä vaikutti ohjelmien toteutukseen ja kumppani- ja edunsaajasuhteisiin. Viime aikoihin asti pyrkimyksiä vaihtoehtoisen rahoituksen saamiseen on ollut vain vähän. Toimet EU-rahoituksen ja konsulttitulojen saamiseksi tarjoavat kuitenkin lupaavia mahdollisuuksia. Koska monet hankkeista ovat pelkästään säätiöiden rahoittamia, riskinä on, että hankkeiden toiminta päättyy ennen kuin ne ovat saavuttaneet jatkumisen kannalta kestävän pohjan. Tarkemmin asetetut, kestävyyteen liittyvät tulostavoitteet (outcomes) helpottaisivat poistumispolkujen määrittämistä.

## Suositukset

*Säätiöt:*

1. Säätiöiden tulisi edelleen hioa ohjelmiaan, jotta ne kohdistuisivat kokonaan Suomen prioriteettimaihin; KIOS- ja Abilis-säätiöiden pitäisi ottaa huomioon ympäristöasiat läpileikkaavana tavoitteena., ja kaikkien kolmen säätiön pitäisi laatia yksityiskohtaisempia sukupuolten tasa-arvoa ja haavoittuvia väestöryhmiä koskevia ohjeistuksia.
2. Säätiöiden ja UM:n tulisi kartoittaa ja tunnistaa uusia tapoja, jotta säätiöiden avustustoiminta täydentäisi muita Suomen kehitysyhteistyön haaroja ja myös valituissa maissa tehtävää poliittista/diplomaattista työtä. Samat asiat tulisi tehdä kaikissa kolmessa säätiössä, jos synergioita on olemassa.
3. Säätiöiden tulisi yrittää luoda vaihtoehtoisia tukikanavia. Ne voivat lisätä rahoituksen vipuvaikutusta etsimällä yhteisrahoitusmahdollisuuksia ja harkita yhteisrahoitusta samanmielisten kumppanien kanssa.
4. Säätiöiden (erityisesti KIOSin ja Siemenpuun) pitäisi työstää poistumissuunnitelmia (i) yksilöimällä huolellisemmin mahdolliset tulokset, (ii) erottamalla tiettyyn taloudellisen tuen vaiheeseen sidottu rahoitusjakso pitkän aikavälinen kumppanuuksista, joissa on ollut muutakin kuin taloudellisiin resursseihin liittyvää jatkuvaa ja laajempaa sitoutumista, (iii) suunnitella poistumista etukäteen ja avustaa vaihtoehtoisen rahoituksen löytämisessä

ja (iv) tehdä tutkimus tukea saaneiden otoksesta rahoituksen päätyttyä, jotta ymmärrettäisiin, mitä tapahtuu tuen lakkaamisen jälkeen ja mitä ovat ne tekijät, jotka vaikuttavat tuetun järjestön kapasiteetin tai voimavarojen säilymiseen tai kasvamiseen.

5. Jotta säätiöt saavuttaisivat jatkossa tilanteen, jossa pääpaino olisi tulosten osoittamisessa, niiden pitäisi (i) edelleen vahvistaa seuranta- ja arviointijärjestelmiään asettamalla mittauskelpoisempia tulostavoitteita (outcome), joita tuetut järjestöt voivat luotettavasti ja edullisesti mitata ja (ii) painottaa korkeampilaatuisia mutta harvemmin suoritettavia evaluointeja, (iii) pohtia yhteisten evaluointien tekemistä soveltuvista teemoista, kuten esimerkiksi ihmisoikeudet tai kestävyys.
6. Resursseja tulisi lisätä tulosten jakamiseksi onnistuneista tuen malleista. Tämä tulisi tehdä esittämällä vankkaa näyttöä ja tapaustutkimuksia kansainvälisillä foorumeilla ja verkostoissa mediatapahtumien, julkaisujen ja konsulttitapahtumien avulla.
7. Parantaa riskinhallintaa liittyen maa- ja aluekohtaisiin strategioihin, rahoitushakemusten valintaan, paikallistoimistojen tai fasilitaattorien hallinnointiin.

Ulkoministeriö:

8. Mikäli tulevat ohjelmat määritetään paremmin mitattavissa olevien tulosten (outcome) pohjalta ja ne voivat osoittaa yhteyden elinvoimaisen kansalaisyhteiskunnan rakentamiseen, UM:n tulisi jatkaa tämän erittäin merkityksellisen ja täydentävän kehitysyhteistyökanavan rahoittamista.
9. UM:n tulisi huolellisesti tarkastella säätiöiden henkilöstö- ja muuta resurssitilannetta ja yrittää lisätä henkilöstökapasiteettia, matkoihin osoitettuja varoja ja kentällä työskentelevien tukea saavien kansalaisjärjestöjen koordinointia vahvemman kenttätoimintaa koskevan ymmärryksen saamiseksi sekä tukea sitä, että säätiöiden työ ja muut UM:n kanavat täydentäisivät paremmin toisiaan ja että säätiöiden erityisosaamista hyödynnettäisiin enemmän.

# SAMMANFATTNING

## Inledning

I denna rapport presenteras utvärderingen av programmen och strukturerna hos tre stiftelser (Abilis, KIOS och Siemenpuu). Allmänna målet för utvärderingen är att ge belägg för resultaten och effektiviteten av programmen hos tio organisationer i civilsamhället (CSO) som finländska utrikesministeriet (UM) beviljat programbaserat stöd (PBS). I den undersöks uppnådda resultaten åren 2010–2016 och ges råd om hur strategiska planeringen och styrningen av PBS-finansieringssystemet kunde förbättras. Det handlar om tredje utvärderingen av PBS som kanaliseras genom finländska CSO.

Utvärderingen utfördes från december 2016 till september 2017. Utvärderingsteamet gjorde en ingående skrivbordsstudie som resulterade i en inledande rapport med preliminära rön. Teamet inledde sedan fältarbete och intervjuade personal och styrelsemedlemmar på stiftelserna. Teamet besökte Nepal och Indien för att träffa representanter för länderna, projektledare, intressegrupper och förmånstagare samt representanter för UM. Sista utfrågningar på fältet utfördes i Helsingfors i april.

För studien var den allvarligaste begränsningen kravet i mandatet att alla tre stiftelser ska genomgås tillräckligt detaljerat. Fastän stiftelserna är av samma typ och har ett likadant ursprung är varje stiftelse en skild enhet med viktiga skillnader i temaområden, verksamhetsländer och arbetssätt. Denna komplexitet gjorde det ytterst utmanande att göra deras arbete rättvisa, likaså den totala finansiering som beviljats under utvärderingsperioden (34 milj. euro). Denna begränsning lindrades något av en fokus på bestämda frågor, speciellt rollen för PBS som var huvudtemat för utvärderingen.

## Bakgrund

De tre finländska icke-statliga stiftelserna, Abilis, KIOS och Siemenpuu, bildades alla år 1998 av grupper som arbetade med specifika frågor kring personer med funktionsnedsättning, mänskliga rättigheter respektive miljön. UM stöder dessa stiftelser som en kanal för mindre bidrag till icke-statliga och samhällsbaserade organisationer i utvecklingsländer. Abilis och KIOS fick stöd från UM för första gången år 1999 medan Siemenpuus första bidrag från UM godkändes år 2001. Åren 2010–2015 har Abilis finansierat 1 179 projekt med ett belopp på 13,7 miljoner euro tillsammans med organisationer bestående av personer med funktionsnedsättning. Åren 2010–2015 har KIOS gett 180 bidrag till ett belopp av 9,9 miljoner och den har långvariga partnerskap i vissa länder. Siemenpuu har främst arbetat via åtta större regionala program och använt 10,8 miljoner. UM-finansiering står nästan helt för deras budget och finansieringen ökade stadigt ända till 2016 då UM skar ned allt stöd till CSO med 40 procent. Stiftelserna anses vara en särskild förlängning av UM:s kanaler för utvecklingssamarbete och beviljar bidrag för att stöda främst småskaligt och svårtillgängligt gräsrotsarbete i minst utvecklade länder. Därför krävs av dem

egenfinansiering på endast 7,5 procent från deras förmånstagare jämfört med andra CSO som måste samla ihop 15 procent. Även i samband med projekt fokuserade på funktionsnedsättning är egenfinansieringen 7,5 procent.

## Huvudsakliga resultat

Verksamheten ligger generellt bra i linje med UM:s riktlinjer eftersom stiftelserna främst arbetar med teman som prioriteras högt inom finländsk utvecklingspolitik. Under utvärderingsperioden har PBS-finansieringen uppmuntrat stiftelserna att inskränka sin strategiska fokus till färre länder och ha mer kontakt med andra hjälpkanaler på UM. Det finns dock utrymme att ännu bättre följa förteckningen över prioriterade länder på UM (minst utvecklade/instabila stater). Stiftelserna står fast vid sina grundprinciper, fokuserar fortfarande på sina särskilda temaområden och känner bra till internationella studier och standarder inom sina områden. Detta stärks av deras kontakter med många internationella rörelser och samarbetspartners.

Stiftelserna fokuserar främst på att bevilja och styra bidrag. Därmed finns en klar överensstämmelse mellan allmänna organisationsstrategin och programbaserade tillvägagångssätten. Det finns ett starkt engagemang för och strävan efter ett tillvägagångssätt baserat på mänskliga rättigheter. Då det handlar om tvärgående mål måste dock KIOS och Abilis vidareutveckla sin miljömedvetenhet och begränsning av klimatförändringen. Alla stiftelser kunde också mer detaljerat ta upp könens delaktighet i sina riktlinjer och sin rapportering i tillägg till enkel uppdelning.

Fastän PBS lanserades år 2003 har den mer detaljerade vägledning som UM gav år 2013 (och om resultatbaserad styrning RBM år 2015) fått stiftelserna att anpassa sin aktiva portfölj till de nya föreskrifterna från ministeriet. Eftersom stiftelsernas strategidokument gäller femårsperioder har de riktlinjer UM introducerat för PBS ännu inte antagits helt med tanke på en resultatbaserad kultur och en presentation av resultat på både kort och lång sikt.

Stiftelserna har en klar och stark komparativ fördel som en kanal för finländskt utvecklingssamarbete eftersom de alla har en mycket klar tematisk fokus och har byggt upp stark och trovärdig expertis på dessa fokusområden de senaste tio åren. Tack vare sin flexibilitet, reaktionsförmåga och ringa närvaro i länder återspeglar och betjänar stiftelserna bra behoven bland förmånstagare. Anpassningen till prioriteringar för ett land kan vara en komplicerad fråga eftersom i vissa sammanhang ska förmånstagare utmana och förnya och inte genomföra en statlig politik. I många länder där stiftelserna finansierar projekt har utrymmet för civilsamhället dessutom minskat och det har antagits lagar för att begränsa verksamhetsmöjligheterna för CSO. Landstrategier har tagits fram för att beskriva dessa frågor men de utnyttjas inte alltid fullt ut eller uppdateras regelbundet.

Att ge uttryck för arbetet med förändringsteorier är en del av att införa PBS/RBM och de teorier som stiftelserna nyligen tagit fram erbjuder en ganska bra logisk bedömning av deras avsedda tillvägagångssätt som inkluderar påverkansarbete, kapacitetsuppbyggnad och leverans av tjänster. Det lönade sig för dem att lägga till uttryckliga antaganden för att identifiera externa förhål-

landen som påverkar dessa sätt. Detta illustreras av Abilis logiska ramar som omfattar antaganden.

Med tanke på samordning, komplementaritet och samstämmighet växelverkar stiftelserna på många sätt med sina nätverk både i Finland och internationellt. De kompletterar finländskt bistånd genom att finansiera små och avlägsna CSO på gräsrotsnivå och arbeta med känsliga frågor inom mänskliga rättigheter som bi- och multilaterala biståndskanaler har svårt med. Å andra sidan finns det belägg för att UM inte utnyttjar expertisen hos stiftelserna tillräckligt omfattande och att komplementariteten och samstämmigheten eventuellt kunde förbättras genom mer medfinansiering eller samarbete med privata sektorn – dock alltid så att detta inte prutade på behovet av att utmana status quo och arbeta självständigt vid behov.

**Resursanvändning:** Eftersom UM varit huvudsakliga finansieringskällan arbetar hela personalen med frågor som stöds av ministeriet. Personalantalet är litet med tanke på totalbudgeten men å andra sidan stöder stiftelserna inte direkt genomförandet av finansierade projekt. Utbetalningar sköter stiftelserna mycket effektivt. Åren 2010–2015 har de använt 96 % av budgeterade medlen. Stiftelserna fokuserar starkt på planering och övervakning på projektnivå och hittills har de inte riktigt lyckats sammanfatta på programnivå. De utvecklar dock som bäst bättre RBM-instrument för detta. Skilda genomgångar har pekat på behovet av mer ingående vägledning för riskbedömning och begränsning. På UM följer två personer med arbetet på stiftelserna men de har även andra uppgifter och deras tid går främst åt till att godkänna finansieringsbeslut på förhand. Åsiktsutbytet är bra men det förekommer mycket få fältbesök. Stiftelserna tycker generellt att UM ger endast begränsat med respons på strategiska frågor och inriktningen av program under utvärderingsperioden och det har varit svårt att följa RBM-vägledningen.

**Effektivitet och inverkan:** Såsom stiftelserna rapporterat har en mycket stor andel av avslutade projekten uppnått sina målsättningar (resultat). Tidigare utvärderingar har också allmänt antytt att uppsatta målen uppnåddes av en stor majoritet av understödda projekten. Ägarskapet är starkt då förmånstagarna själva planerar, genomför och rapporterar. Ibland ställs dock upp orealistiska mål som inte kan uppnås inom den ofta korta tidsramen för finansieringen. Det är svårare att ställa fast allmänna resultaten på programnivå eftersom stiftelserna först börjat utveckla gemensamma indikatorer för totalresultat (Abilis började dock arbeta med detta redan år 2012 och har lyckats bättre utveckla gemensamma indikatorer). Det finns också inneboende svårigheter i att mäta förändringar i medvetenhet, egenmakt och erkännande av nya samhällsroller för rättighetsinnehavare samt politisk påverkan, särskilt då sådana processer tar länge. Kapacitetsuppbyggnad hos partnerorganisationer, stöd till organisationsutveckling och påverkansarbete är värdefull verksamhet men har inte alltid planerats bra eller följts upp. Nivån av tillskrivning är svårare att identifiera i sådana processer men det finns vissa bra exempel på framgångar. Utvärderingar är generellt av låg kvalitet med otillräckligt oberoende, dåligt definierade resultat och svaga belägg. Det finns dock exempel på bra utvärderingar (t.ex. ACADHOSHA 2013–2014, Fiant 2016, Dean Nielsen 2015 och Katsui et al. 2014) och övervaknings- och utvärderingssystemen blir bättre delvis tack vare RBM/PBS.

**Hållbarhet:** Finansieringen till stiftelserna ökade stadigt ända till 2015 men skars sedan ned klart, vilket påverkade programgenomförandet och relationerna med partners och mottagare. Först nyligen har det gjorts några egentliga försök att finna alternativ finansiering. EU-finansiering och konsultintäkter erbjuder dock lovande möjligheter. Eftersom många projekt finansieras endast av stiftelserna är risken stor att projektverksamheten tar slut innan man uppnått en hållbar grund för framtiden. Bättre definierade resultat med kopplingar till hållbarhet hjälpte att identifiera utgångsvägar.

## Rekommendationer

*Stiftelserna:*

1. Stiftelserna ska ytterligare finslipa sina program så att de riktar sig mer mot länder som Finland prioriterar, KIOS och Abilis ska bättre beakta miljön som ett tvärgående mål och alla tre stiftelser ska ta fram mer detaljerade riktlinjer för jämställdhet och sårbara grupper.
2. Stiftelserna och UM ska kartlägga och identifiera fler sätt på vilka stiftelsernas bidragsverksamhet kan komplettera övriga delar av finländskt utvecklingssamarbete och politiska/diplomatiska åtgärder i ett utvalt land. Samma ska göras tvärs över de tre stiftelserna då det förekommer synergifördelar.
3. Stiftelserna ska försöka finna alternativa stödkällor. De kan få en hävstång på stödet genom att finna samfinansieringsmöjligheter och överväga samlad finansiering med likasinnade partners.
4. Stiftelserna (särskilt KIOS och Siemenpuu) ska ta fram exitstrategier genom att (i) mer noggrant specificera eventuella resultat, (ii) ha en separat finansieringsfas kopplad till en specifik period av ekonomiskt stöd från långvariga partnerskap som omfattade fortsatt och mer omfattande engagemang än enbart finansiella resurser, (iii) planera utgången på förhand och hjälpa att finna alternativ finansiering samt (iv) utföra en studie av ett urval förmånstagare efter att finansieringen tagit slut för att förstå vad som sker efter att stödet tar slut och de faktorer som påverkar hur förmånstagares kapacitet eller tillgångar bibehålls eller växer.
5. För att stiftelserna ska kunna uppfylla kravet på att påvisa resultat i framtiden ska de (i) ytterligare utveckla sina övervaknings- och utvärderingssystem genom att ställa upp mer mätbara mål som kan tillförlitligt och till ett rimligt pris mätas av deras förmånstagare, (ii) betona högre kvalitet men färre utvärderingar och (iii) överväga gemensamma utvärderingar av lämpliga teman, till exempel mänskliga rättigheter eller hållbarhet.
6. Stiftelser ska satsa mer på att dela med sig av resultat av framgångsrika modellen för bidragsbaserat stöd. Detta ska de göra genom att på internationella forum och i nätverk presentera välgrundade belägg och fallstudier via medieevenemang, publikationer och konsultverksamhet.
7. Stiftelserna ska förbättra sin riskhantering då de tar fram strategier för länder och regioner, väljer ut förslag till finansiering och har lokala kontor eller kontaktpersoner för att försäkra sig om att det finns tillräckliga kontroller och motvikter i förvaltningen.

*Utrikesministeriet:*

8. Innehåller framtida program mer mätbara resultat och har de ett samband med att skapa ett livskraftigt civilsamhälle ska UM fortsätta att finansiera denna mycket relevanta kompletterande kanal för utvecklingssamarbete.
9. UM ska noggrant gå igenom personal- och resursnivåerna för stiftelserna och öka personalkapaciteten, resemedlen och samordningen med de understödda icke-statliga organisationerna inom området för att bättre förstå sig på fältarbete och stöda en större komplementaritet mellan arbetet på stiftelserna och övriga UM-kanaler samt bättre utnyttja expertisen hos stiftelserna.

# SUMMARY


## Introduction

This report presents an evaluation of the programmes and structures of three Foundations (Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu). The overall aim of this evaluation is to provide evidence of the results and performance of the programmes of 10 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) that have been assisted by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA), using programme-based support (PBS). It will explore results achieved over the period 2010-2016 and give guidance on how to enhance the strategic planning and management of the PBS funding modality. This is the third in a series of evaluations of PBS through Finnish CSOs.

The evaluation took place from December 2016 to September 2017. The evaluation team undertook a comprehensive desk study that led to an Inception Report that set out preliminary findings. The team then conducted fieldwork and interviewed Foundation staff, Board members. It visited Nepal and India to meet country representatives, project managers, stakeholders, beneficiaries as well as MFA representatives. Final field debriefings took place in Helsinki in April.

The most serious limitation to the study was the requirement by the ToR to cover all three Foundations to a sufficiently comprehensive level of detail. While the Foundations share a common modality and origin, each Foundation is a distinct entity with important differences in thematic areas, range of countries of operation and in ways of working. This complexity made it extremely challenging to do justice to their work and to the total funds allocated over the period of the evaluation (€ 34 million). This limitation was mitigated to some extent by focusing the report on particular issues, especially around the role of PBS, which formed the main theme of the evaluation.

## Context

The three Finnish Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) Foundations - namely Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu - were all established in 1998 by groups of Finnish NGOs working on specific issues related to people with disabilities, human rights and the environment respectively. The MFA supports these Foundations as a channel to provide small grants to NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) in developing countries. Abilis and KIOS received their first MFA grants in 1999, while Siemenpuu's first grants from MFA were approved in 2001. Abilis has funded 1,179 projects to a value of € 13.7 million with organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) between 2010-2015. KIOS has supported 180 grants from 2010-2015 to a value of € 9.9 million and has long-term partnerships in some countries. Siemenpuu has mostly worked through eight larger regional programmes with a value of € 10.8 million. MFA funding accounts for nearly all their budget and has risen steadily in volume until 2016, when MFA cut all spending to CSOs by 40%. The Foundations are regarded as a special extension to MFA's development cooperation channels and act as a

grant making bodies to support mostly small and hard-to-reach grassroots in the least developed countries (LDCs). As such they are only required to provide self-financing of only 7.5% through their grantees, compared to other CSOs who must raise 15%. For disability-specific projects, the self-financing is also 7.5%.

## Main Findings

Alignment is generally good with MFA policies reflecting as they do specific high priority themes in Finnish development policy. Over the period of the evaluation, the PBS support has encouraged the Foundations to narrow their strategic focus to fewer countries and to engage more with other MFA aid channels. Nevertheless, there is room to fit more closely with MFA's set of priority countries (LDCs/Fragile States). The Foundations adhere to their core principles and have remained focused on their particular thematic areas and are well attuned to international research and standards in their respective fields. This is enhanced through their association with a range of international movements and collaborative partners.

The Foundations focus mainly on grant making and management so there is high consistency between the overall organisational strategy and the programmatic approaches. There is a strong commitment to and pursuit of Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA), though as far as Cross Cutting Objectives (CCOs) are concerned there is a need for KIOS and Abilis to build further on their environmental awareness and climate change mitigation, while all Foundations could have more detail on gender inclusivity in their guidelines and reporting beyond simple disaggregation.

Although PBS was first introduced in 2003, more detailed guidance in 2013 by MFA (and on Results Based Management (RBM) in 2015) has prompted the Foundations to adapt their ongoing portfolio to the new directives emanating from the Ministry. While Foundation strategy documents cover 5 year periods, the tenets introduced by MFA around PBS have not fully been adopted yet in terms of a result-based culture and demonstrating both short and long-term results.

The Foundations have a clear and strong comparative advantage as a channel for Finnish development cooperation because they each have a very clear thematic focus and have built up a strong and credible level of expertise in these focus areas in the past ten years. Because of their flexible and responsive approach as well as low in-country presence, the Foundations reflect and service the needs of beneficiaries well. Alignment to country priorities can be a complex issue, since in some contexts the role of the grantees is to challenge or reform rather than to implement state policy. In many of the countries in the Foundations fund projects, the space for civil society has also been decreasing and laws have been put in place to restrict CSO activities. Country strategies have been drafted to outline these issues, but they are not always fully used or regularly updated.

Expressing their work through Theories of Change is part of adopting PBS/RBM, and the Foundations recently produced theories offer a fairly good logical assessment of their intended delivery pathways, which encompass advocacy, capacity building and service delivery. They would benefit from adding explicit

assumptions in order to capture external conditions affecting these pathways. This point is illustrated by the Abilis logical framework where assumptions are included.

In terms of coordination, complementarity and coherence, the Foundations manage a range of interactions with their respective networks both in Finland and internationally. They offer a complementarity approach to Finnish aid providing funding to small and remote grassroots CSOs and in working in sensitive areas in the human rights arena that are difficult for bilateral or multilateral aid channels to work. On the other hand, there is evidence that not enough use is made of the Foundations' expertise by MFA and that complementarity and coherence could be improved possibly through more co-funding or engagement with the private sector, though always providing this would not compromise the need to challenge the status quo and work independently where needed.

**Efficiency:** Since MFA has been the principle source of funding, all staff are allocated to MFA-supported work. The number of staff is small compared to the overall budget, but on the other hand the Foundations are not directly supporting the implementation of funded projects. Disbursements from the Foundations have been very efficient. Over the period 2010–2015, the Foundations spent 96 % of budgeted funds. There is strong focus on project level planning and monitoring, and so far limited success in aggregating at programme level, though they are developing an improved a range of RBM tools for this. Various reviews have pointed out the need for more thorough guidance on risk assessment and mitigation. In MFA, two staff are covering the Foundations work but they also have other responsibilities, and their time is largely taken up pre-approving the funding decisions. There is good exchange of views however, though field visits are very limited. The Foundations in general feel that MFA provides limited feedback over strategic issues and programme direction during the evaluation period, and it has been difficult to follow the RBM guidance.

**Effectiveness and Impact:** As reported by the Foundations, a very large percentage of the finished projects have met their set objectives (outputs). Also earlier evaluations largely indicate that the set outputs were achieved by large majority of the supported projects. Ownership is very high as the grantees plan, implement and report themselves. But sometimes unrealistic objectives are set that may not be achievable within the often short funding time frame. Determining overall programme level results is more challenging as the Foundations are only beginning to develop common indicators to aggregate outcomes (although Abilis started work on this from 2012 and has developed common indicators more successfully). There are also intrinsic difficulties in measuring changes in awareness, empowerment, and recognition of new roles in society for rights holders, and policy influencing, especially where such processes take considerable time. The capacity development of partner organisations and support to organisational development and advocacy is valuable work but has not been always well planned and followed up. Level of attribution is harder to discern in such processes, though there are some good examples of success. Generally evaluations are of limited quality with insufficient independence, poorly defined outcomes and weak evidence. Yet there are also examples of evaluations of good quality (such as by ACADHOSHA 2013-2014; Fiant 2016; Dean Nielsen

2015; and Katsui et al (2014); and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems are being improved partly as a result of RBM/PBS.

**Sustainability:** Foundation funding rose steadily until 2015 but then faced a marked reduction that affected delivery of programmes and relationships with partners and recipients. Until recently there has been little effort to seek alternative funding. However, steps to seek EU funding and consultancy income offer promising opportunities. Because many projects are sole-funded by the Foundations, this raises the risk that the project activities will end before they have reached a sustainable basis to continue. More clearly defined outcomes with links to sustainability would help set exit pathways.

## Recommendations

*For the Foundations:*

1. The Foundations should further refine their programmes to more fully target Finland's priority countries; and for KIOS and Abilis to seek to further address the environment as a cross-cutting objective, while all three Foundations should develop more detailed guidelines for gender equality and vulnerable groups.
2. The Foundations and MFA should map out and identify more ways for Foundation grant activities to complement other arms of Finnish development cooperation and also political/diplomatic action in a chosen country. Do the same across the three Foundations where synergies exist.
3. The Foundations should seek to build up alternative channels of support. They can leverage grants by seeking co-funding opportunities and consider pooled funding with like-minded partners.
4. The Foundations (especially KIOS and Siemenpuu) should work on exit strategies by (i) specifying more carefully what the eventual outcomes will be, (ii) differentiate a funding phase tied to a specific period of financial support from long-term partnerships that involved continued and wider engagement beyond financial resources (iii) plan exits ahead of time and assist in finding alternative funding and (iv) conduct a study on a sample of grantees after funding has finished to understand what happens after support ends and the factors that influence how grantee capacity or assets survive or grow.
5. In order for the Foundations to meet the emphasis on demonstrating results in the future, they should (i) build up their M&E systems further by setting more measurable outcomes that can be reliably and affordably measured by their grantees and (ii) emphasise higher quality but fewer evaluations, (iii) consider conducting joint evaluations on appropriate themes e.g. on human rights or on sustainability.
6. Increase resources on sharing results from the successful model of grant-based support. Do this through bringing sound evidence and case studies into international fora and networks by media events, publication and consultancy work.

7. Improve risk management in relation to preparing country and regional strategies, selecting proposals for funding, managing local offices or facilitators so as to ensure suitable governance checks and balances are in place.

*For MFA:*

8. Provided future programmes are defined by more measurable outcomes and can demonstrate a link to building a vibrant civil society, MFA should continue funding to this highly relevant and complementary channel of development cooperation.

9. MFA should carefully review staffing and resourcing levels for the Foundations, and seek to increase staff capacity, travel funds and coordination with the supported NGOs working in the field in order to obtain a stronger understanding of field operations and to support greater complementarity between Foundations' work and other MFA channels, and make more use of the Foundations' expertise.

# KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Improving alignment** | | |
| Alignment is generally good but there is room to fit more closely with MFA's priority countries (LDCs/Fragile States)<br><br>There is a strong commitment to and pursuit of HRBA, though there is a need for further strengthening of accountability and for KIOS and Abilis building further on environmental awareness and climate change mitigation, while all Foundations could have more detail on gender inclusivity in their guidelines and reporting beyond simple disaggregation. | The Foundations are in general very well aligned with MFA priorities, but there are still some areas where improvements can be made in terms of country alignment and cross cutting objectives (CCOs). | **1.** The Foundations should further refine their programmes to more fully target Finland's priority countries (LDCs and fragile states and poor); KIOS and Abilis should seek to address the environment as a cross-cutting objective, while all three Foundations should develop more detailed gender guidelines. |
| **Coordination and Complementarity** | | |
| There has been good coordination and complementarity between the Foundations and the different arms of MFA's development cooperation. But there is evidence that not enough use is made of the Foundations' expertise by MFA and its embassies in relation to bilateral cooperation and local cooperation fund (LCF) grants as well as with NGOs acting in the field.<br><br>There are also opportunities for the Foundations to find greater synergies at country level to improve efficiency. | Greater synergies can be achieved between the Foundations and MFA's other arms of development cooperation as well as diplomatic and political work. | **2.** The Foundations and MFA should map out and identify more ways for Foundation grant activities to complement other arms of Finnish development cooperation and also political/diplomatic action in a chosen country.<br><br>The three Foundations should also improve coordination and complementarity with one another, where synergies exist. |
| **Strengthening sustainability** | | |
| Foundation funding has been volatile and affected delivery of programmes and relationships with partners and recipients. Until recently there has been little effort to seek alternative funding. Steps to seek EU funding and consultancy income offer promising opportunities. | Reliance solely on MFA Funding has increased vulnerability to sudden changes in support. This presents a high risk in terms of trust and reputation with partners. | **3.** The Foundations should seek alternative channels of support. Leverage grants by seeking co-funding opportunities and consider pooled funding with like-minded partners. |

| Findings | Conclusions | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|
| Sustainability can be difficult partly because many projects are sole-funded by the Foundations, which raises the risk that the project activities will end before they have reached a sustainable basis to continue.<br><br>Outcomes could be better defined with linkages to sustainability in order to help to set exit pathways. | There is a need to address sustainability more carefully through better planning, deciding on end milestones, building handovers around local and alternative forms of support. Partnerships are not just about funding. | **4.** The Foundations (especially KIOS and Siemenpuu) should work on exit strategies by (i) specifying more carefully what the eventual outcomes will be (ii) differentiate funding phase from the long-term partnerships (iii) plan exits ahead of time and assist in finding alternative forms of funding, including use of co-funding or pool funding and (iv) conduct a long-term study on a sample of grantees after funding has finished to understand what happens after support ends and the factors that influence how grantee capacity or assets survive or grow. |
| **Impact** | | |
| Evidence of impact is difficult to obtain in fields that are complex and take time to measure (empowerment, human rights, environmental change). But, evaluations are of mixed quality with insufficient independence, weakly defined outcomes and sometimes with weak evidence.<br><br>Some partners that focus on research, networking and publication cannot easily show concrete results (e.g. South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy SADED).<br><br>Yet there are evaluations of good quality and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are being improved partly as a result of RBM/PBS (e.g. Abilis is developing a useful programme level M&E system). | While demonstrating impact is difficult given the way Foundations work, the nature of the themes supported and partner and grantee capacity, good practice exists and can be developed further.<br><br>Better ability to demonstrate impact will help with communication and fundraising. | **5.** In order for the Foundations to meet the emphasis on demonstrating results in the future, they should (i) build up their M&E systems further by setting more measurable short-term outcomes that can be reliably and affordably measured by their grantees and (ii) emphasise higher quality but fewer evaluations, and (iii) consider conducting joint evaluations on particular themes e.g. on human rights or on sustainability. |
| **Replicate successes** | | |
| There are many examples of good practice in terms of targeting hard to reach minorities, working at grassroots where planning and implementation is done by people with disabilities, supporting human rights )defenders in difficult contexts, promoting access to land. | Given limited funding resources, the Foundations will not address the problems directly on a sufficient scale to make a global difference, but they can act as a very effective model of aid delivery that others with far greater resources can replicate. | **6.** Increase resources on sharing results from the successful model of grant-based support. Do this through bringing sound evidence and case studies into international fora and networks by media events, publication and consultancy work. |

| Findings | Conclusions | Recommendations |
|---|---|---|
| **Tackling risk** | | |
| While the Foundations have improved their risk management processes, there are still elements of the RBM risk approach that can be addressed. These are important in a grant-making setting and would help risk mitigation. | For KIOS and Siemenpuu that operate without close, hands-on structures at country level, risk management is critical, especially as space for civil society is reducing. | **7.** Improve risk management in relation to developing country or regional strategies, selection of proposals for funding, managing local offices or facilitators so as to ensure suitable governance checks and balances are in place. |
| **MFA** | | |
| Foundations offer an important alternative channel of support for Finnish aid that reaches constituencies outside of other channels. The long-term partnerships have built trust and valuable networks and a good reputation in their respective fields. PBS has helped focus the programmes and increase focus on results. Disbursements have matched budgets and efficiency is high. | The alternative channel offered by the Foundations is much valued by MFA, and with their sound reputations and trusted relationships, there are strong grounds for this channel of aid delivery to continue. | **8.** MFA should continue funding to the Foundations with emphasis on defining future programmes by more measurable outcomes including demonstrating a link to building a vibrant civil society. |
| Funding constraints have made work of MFA staff difficult in administering and guiding the Foundations' work.<br><br>There has been reasonably good communication between the Foundations and MFA, and value of Foundations' expertise is recognised. However, there is evidence that not enough use is made of their expertise by MFA and the embassies in relation to bilateral cooperation and LCF grants as well as with NGOs acting in the field. | The Foundations' expertise and networks and contacts needs to more effectively shared across MFA and other NGOs working in similar fields. | **9.** MFA should carefully review staffing and resourcing levels for the Foundations, and seek to increase staff capacity, as well as to improve coordination with the Foundation supported NGOs working in the field and make more use of the Foundations' expertise. |

# 1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this evaluation is to provide evidence of the performance of the programme-based support (PBS) programmes of 10 Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA). According to the Terms of Reference (ToR) in Annex 1, the evaluation will explore results achieved over the period 2010–2016 and also give guidance on how to enhance the strategic planning and management of the PBS funding modality.

This evaluation is the third in a series of evaluations of the development cooperation programmes of Finnish CSOs receiving multiannual PBS. It completes the individual assessments of the development cooperation programmes of Finnish CSOs receiving multiannual PBS support. It will use comparable evaluation criteria to those in CSO1 (Stage et al., 2016) and CSO2 (Brusset, 2017) in order to build a consistent overall assessment of performance.

The evaluation will promote both accountability and joint learning in terms of future policy, strategy, programme and funding allocation of the CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations as well as the MFA. The results of this evaluation will be used in the reform of programme-based support, in the next update of the Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy and in the planning of CSOs, foundations' and umbrella organisations' next programmes. This process has already started, and it is planned that there will be a PBS application in 2021 that will be open to all CSOs (not just the 22 CSOs currently receiving such funding).

CSOs are a highly visible and active part of Finland's international development cooperation, alongside country-based cooperation and financial support to multilateral agencies. In 2014, the disbursement of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to support development cooperation conducted by CSOs was € 110 million, accounting for 12% of the development cooperation ODA budget which stood then at € 991 million (MFA, 2016, Development cooperation appropriations). There were significant budget cuts in ODA 2015-2016 that have also impacted on CSO plans going forward. The total support for CSOs in the 2016 budget was reduced by over 40% from 2015 figures of € 113 million to € 70 million (MFA, 2015a). The budget for CSOs is also € 65 million during 2017, while the budget for 2018 is still to be confirmed (MFA, 2017).

This report presents a description of the programmes and structures of the three Foundations (Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu), based on a desk study and consultations with a range of informants in Finland and in two countries of operation, India and Nepal.

The four principle aims are to (1) provide an evidence-based overview of the performance and results of the programmes of the selected organisations, (2) highlight the value and merit of their programs, (3) give practical guidance to help enhance PBS strategies and management and (4) identify a set of lessons learned on PBS and promote good practices for the stakeholders to learn from. These aspects should cover policy, programme and beneficiary perspectives.

# 2 APPROACH, METHODOLOGY AND LIMITATIONS

## 2.1 Approach

The evaluation approach is based on the tenets of Finnish development cooperation policy as it relates to civil society engagement – key policy documents including Development Policy Programmes of Finland (MFA, 2007; MFA, 2012; MFA, 2016), Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy (MFA, 2010) and Instructions Concerning the Partnership Agreement Scheme (MFA, 2013a). The Evaluation is also guided by the norms and standards expressed in the MFA Evaluation Manual (MFA 2013b). The evaluation questions addressed are drawn from recognised international evaluation standards as established by Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development / Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC, 2010). These relate to:

- Relevance: have the CSO programmes responded to the needs and rights of the beneficiaries, partner country contexts and the Finnish priorities?
- Coordination, Coherence and Complementarity: has the work of the CSOs been complementary, coordinated and coherent with other interventions?
- Effectiveness: What are the achieved or likely results of the organisations especially in relation to the beneficiaries and how are they supporting the wider objectives of partner countries and Finland?
- Impact: is there evidence of impact (either positive or negative, intended or unintended) of the CSO programmes in partner countries or Finland?
- Efficiency: have the available resources – financial, human and material – been used optimally for achieving results?
- Sustainability: will the achievements of the organisations likely continue and spread after withdrawal of external support and what are the factors affecting that likelihood?

The distinctive values and objectives of each CSO derive from their origins and their evolution within Finnish society, as well as the international networks and principles that they align to. At the same time, the use of standardised evaluation approach and an overarching theory of change (ToC) allow for comparisons to be made and learning to be shared.

This report forms one of seven individual evaluation reports. The overall suite of reports covers the development cooperation programmes of the five CSOs, two 'umbrella' organisations and three special 'foundations'. The most

important findings from these separate reports will be synthesised as aggregate results in a synthesis report. In a final stage, the meta-analysis will draw together results using the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria from all 22 CSOs covered over the three rounds.

A key objective is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the PBS approach through the experiences of these different CSOs. The three syntheses of the CSOs aggregate the most important findings of the individual CSO programme evaluations. The meta-analysis then again synthesizes the results of all three rounds of CSO evaluations (CSO1, CSO2 and CSO3), including the strengths and weaknesses of the PBS funding modality. The meta-analysis should especially focus on instrumental (PBS) level and provide recommendations for the MFA to make strategic changes in this area.

PBS is interpreted by MFA as in the Box 1.

**Box 1. MFA Interpretation of the PBS**

- A partnership organisation's development cooperation programme should be an entity, which is based on its own strategy and special expertise and which has clearly formulated objectives. A development cooperation programme comprises a range of geographical, thematic or otherwise specified functions. The programme must be scheduled to reach a set of sustainable objectives over a certain period of time in accordance with a specified plan of action.
- In order to ensure the quality and effectiveness of development cooperation programmes, partnership organisations have to employ a sufficient number of personnel and have systems to manage the programmes and their subcomponents, evaluate the results, assess the impacts and prepare the reports. The systems and their development will be reviewed in partnership consultations between the organisation and the Ministry. The objective is to bring about high-quality and effective development cooperation which leads to sustainable results and impacts. Attaining these objectives is supported by systematic planning, management, follow-up and reporting.
- The PBS guidance applied to the Foundations operates somewhat differently in the form of a Foundation Contract, which applied some but not all of the PBS procedures.

Source: MFA 2013a

## 2.2 Methodology

The evaluation was conducted and the report prepared by a sub-team of two persons from FCG, an international and Finnish consultant with complementary expertise (different types of evaluation and study experience as well as different sectoral expertise in humanitarian assistance, rural development, water supply and sanitation, environment, economic and rural development and evaluation in conflict setting, Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) etc.) and language skills (for example Finnish and Nepali language skills in the team).

### 2.2.1 Data Sources

#### Desk study

The Foundations provided extensive documentation covering the evaluation period. The desk study assembled and analysed this material during the inception phase. Further documents were then gathered during the fieldwork in Nepal and India from local implementing CSOs, as well as additional material from the Foundations during interviews in Helsinki. A range of studies and independent evaluations were scrutinised to provide valuable external assessments of the work and results of the Foundations. Detailed references are included in the References of the report.

#### Interviews

Document analysis was complemented by interviews and field based observation of projects in Nepal and India, and in Helsinki. The evaluation team interviewed Foundation staff, Board members, country representatives, project managers, stakeholders, beneficiaries as well as MFA representatives. Skype calls were also made with various informants (see Annex 2). The Helsinki-based interviews were held with all three Foundations in the week of 27th February 2017.

Fieldwork in Nepal and India took place from 3rd- 17th March, and a de-briefing was held in Kathmandu before departure. As stated in ToR the purpose of the field visits was to triangulate and validate the results and assessments of the document analysis.

A final fieldwork de-briefing was also organised in Helsinki on 24th April 2017 to present and discuss the initial findings.

### 2.2.2 Data collection procedures and instruments

The Evaluation Matrix (see Annex 6) provides the framework for both data collection and analysis, with a focus on assessing progress towards expected outcomes and establishing a plausible contributory causal relationship between outputs, outcomes and potential impacts.

The fieldwork in Nepal was organised over eight days and covered a sample of projects funded by all three Foundations in Kavre, Kathmandu, Lalitpur, Bhaktapur and Banke districts. An introductory note was sent in advance explaining the background and purpose of the evaluation, the role of the team and the expectations of the participants. A carefully constructed list of stakeholders was included, and these covered staff from implementing organisations funded by the Foundations, other development partners such as the Embassy and the EU, government ministries and beneficiaries.

To assist with the work, a local evaluation expert was hired to work with the FCG team. This person joined most of the interviews, interpreted where needed, and facilitated the meetings. He also documented the final de-briefing workshop and shared the workshop report with Nepali stakeholders.

In India, the team leader also met with several Foundation fund recipients in Chhattisgarh State and in New Delhi. In the former field visits took place to

Kanker town and in surrounding villages where the National Adivasi Alliance worked on land rights issues. A de-briefing meeting was held in Raipur on 15th March.

### 2.2.3 Sampling

In the selection of countries, due consideration was given to previous evaluations, which have been conducted by the Foundations in order to not burden particular projects or create overlap. Logistics also played a role, and a preference for countries where more than one CSO covered by this evaluation is present, to maximise data collection. At the field level the informants included beneficiary groups and stakeholders identified together with the Partner Organisation and through the document review.

### 2.2.4 Analysis

The analysis is based on findings drawn from primary and secondary data. This process included triangulation of data from various data sources, sub-team discussions and meetings with the Foundations and their partners and grantees in Nepal and India to discuss the findings and preliminary conclusions. Furthermore, analysis has followed an iterative process to ensure that the final evaluation report can integrate growing knowledge and changing insights throughout the evaluation. Hypotheses have been developed and checked with the stakeholders at the end country visits and in a debriefing session at the end of the entire field research phase. Where needed, additional interviews and desk-research were carried out to further develop final research findings and conclusions.

## 2.3 Limitations

The most serious limitation was the need in the time available to cover all three Foundations to a sufficiently comprehensive level of detail. Treating the three Foundations together was a requirement of the Terms of Reference (ToR). However while the Foundations share a common modality and origin, as well as office location, each Foundation is a distinct entity with important differences in thematic area, range of countries of operation and in ways of working in terms of scale of projects and partners. This complexity made it extremely challenging to cover all the evaluation topics to the level required to do justice to their work and to the total funds allocated over the period of the evaluation (€ 34 million). The range of areas of expertise represented by the three Foundations was also a major challenge for the two evaluators to do adequate justice to.

These limitations were mitigated to some extent by focusing the report on particular issues especially around the role of PBS, which was the focus of the evaluation, and on certain questions where the evidence was strongest.

# 3 CONTEXT ANALYSIS

## 3.1 Finnish policy context and programme-based approach for CSO support

PBS has emerged as the main channel for funding to the CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations selected for CSO3 evaluation since 2010. Programme-based aid now provides the bulk of MFA funding to the civil society sector and is intended to provide more predictable and flexible financing to those more established CSOs that meet the requirements set by the MFA for PBS. On the policy level, all PBS CSOs are guided by the same policy guidelines as the rest of Finland's support to CSOs. Annex 4 provides further details of the principles related to PBS and to Results Based Management (RBM). Although the CSOs subject to the evaluation have activities that are broader than the PBS funding provided by MFA, the analysis focuses on PBS funded activities only. The programmatic approaches at the CSO organisation-wide level were also analysed as being contextual to the PBS supported activities.

**The analysis focuses on PBS funded activities only**

The amount of MFA support to CSOs increased during the evaluation period up until 2015, however staying in around 12% of total cooperation between 2008-2015.

Significant changes were made to support for development cooperation by CSOs during 2015 and 2016, with the new Government and the ODA cuts. This included cancellation of the cancellation of the application round during 2015 - for work to begin in 2016 - for small and medium-sized organisations and for international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). In addition there was no application round for communications and global education project support in the autumn of 2015. The application rounds for project and global education projects will be organized every two years.

Overall, there was a cut of approximately € 300 million to the development cooperation budget in 2016. The total support for CSOs in the 2016 budget was reduced by some 40% from € 113 million to € 70 million (MFA, 2015a). The budget for CSOs is also around € 65 million during 2017, while the budget for 2018 is still to be confirmed (Unit for Civil Society, MFA).

The need for the CSOs to contribute to Finland's development policy objectives is at the core of the MFA policy.

## 3.2 Origins and mandate of Foundations' Development Co-operation

The three Finnish NGO Foundations - namely Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu - were all established in 1998 by groups of Finnish NGOs and Foundations working on specific issues related to people with disabilities, human rights and

environment. The MFA supports these Foundations as a channel to provide thematic grants to NGOs and community-based organisations (CBOs) in developing countries. Abilis and KIOS received their first MFA grants in 1999, while the founding organisations of Siemenpuu did not reach consensus on an agreement with MFA until 2001. Siemenpuu's first grants from MFA were approved in 2001 and the first grants made to applicants in 2002.

**The Abilis Foundation** grants small-scale financial support to grassroots organizations of persons with disabilities (DPOs) in the Global South. Abilis funded 1,179 projects with DPOs between 2010–2016 (Abilis project spreadsheet 2016). Of these projects 52% have been in Africa, 43% in Asia, 34% in Latin America, and 3% in Europe, with approximately 150 projects starting and 150 ending each year (Fiant, 2016). The majority of the Foundation's funding goes to focus countries: Ethiopia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Tajikistan, (as well as Zambia, Somaliland, Cambodia and Bangladesh prior to budget cuts in 2016) in addition to designated post-conflict and fragile states.

The main purpose of Abilis Foundation is *to strengthen the capacity of DPOs and their members in developing countries so that they can work actively for improvements and realisation of disability rights in society*. Participation of persons with disabilities not only empowers them, but changes the negative attitude of society towards disability. (Abilis, 2010; Abilis, 2014a)

Key elements of Abilis' programme until 2021 are (Abilis, 2014a):

- Commitment to the promotion and realization of the rights of persons with disabilities
- Supporting the activities of people with disabilities at the grassroots level
- Respecting the diversity of the field
- Supporting especially vulnerable groups, such as girls and women with disabilities

**The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights, KIOS Foundation (KIOS)** was established for the "promotion of human rights as defined in the United Nations, Council of Europe and other regional treaties and instruments in countries outside of Finland" (KIOS, 2002). The updated rules of 2016 amend this statement slightly by specifying the promotion of human rights and awareness of them both in Finland and internationally (MFA, 2016a). KIOS provides funding for projects of local CSOs that work to promote human rights and democracy in their respective countries. It is the only Finnish Civil Society actor focusing on human rights-specific projects and was established in order to allow for a direct funding mechanism to support this work in developing countries.

In the 2011–2015 Strategy of KIOS, the mission of KIOS is defined as: "*promoting the realisation of human rights in developing countries as they are defined in the human rights treaties and instruments of the United Nations and the Council of Europe and in other correspondent regional human rights instruments*". The strategy further specifies that KIOS's programme is to channel the development cooperation funds of the MFA effectively and ensuring good quality of human

rights projects in developing countries. KIOS aims to influence the states of the target countries to commit themselves to an adherence to human rights. Simultaneously however, they recognise that they are able to work in sensitive areas that may not be feasible in bilateral development cooperation with governments. The focus regions and countries of KIOS support during 2011-2015 were **East Africa**: Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda and **South Asia**: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tibet. The number of focus countries was reduced to six after the MFA funding cuts in 2016, plus funding was continued for a further four from the previous list.

KIOS defines its values, which guide its work as: i) **accountability**: KIOS is accountable in its work and follows the principles of good governance, KIOS's work is open and transparent; b) **commitment**: KIOS is committed to the goals it has set for itself and is committed to the projects it has taken as its responsibility: c) **quality**: work of KIOS is professional and the expertise of its founding organisations and other partners is utilised in it (KIOS, 2010a).

**The Siemenpuu Foundation** was established 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.

The objective of Siemenpuu's programme as stated in their current Long-Term Action Plan (LTAP) 2016-2021 (largely the same as the LTAP for the 2010-2015) is: *To promote environmental protection and democracy, to defend human rights, and, particularly, to advocate cooperation among environmental and alter globalist civil movements.* The Foundation supports sustainable practices, concepts and forms of culture that preserve and protect biological and cultural diversity instead of encouraging overconsumption. The conveying of and learning from the experiences in the Global South is an integral part of the Foundation's programme.

Siemenpuu supports NGOs in developing countries through development cooperation funds provided by MFA, aiming to strengthen the possibilities of civil societies in the Global South to act for their environment and to help improve the state of the environment both in the South and North. It strives to be an expert on the central issues of the projects it supports and advocates for stronger cooperation between the civil societies in the North and the South.

The majority of Siemenpuu support during 2010-2016 was channelled to the programme areas in Indonesia, the Mekong region, India & South Asia, Mali and Latin America.

## 3.3 Operational principles related to Development Co-operation

The three Foundations receive PBS funding in the form of partnership agreements with the MFA to be channelled through grant schemes to small, local NGO, DPO and CBO projects in developing countries. This is a complementary

**The grants are flexible and support the development of vibrant civil society**

mechanism to other NGO support provided by the MFA, making it possible to reach smaller NGOs and CBOs and work on sensitive issues such as disability, human rights and the rights of the ethnic minorities and native peoples. The grants are flexible and support the development of vibrant civil society in the developing countries enabling also support to civil society actors that are advocating issues not yet recognised by the state and thus complementing the other forms of Finnish development cooperation and Finnish support to NGOs. The PBS funding is managed by and the Foundations report to the CSO Unit of the MFA (KEO-30). The Foundations deploy MFA resources in a very different way to Funds for Local Cooperation (FLC), because amongst other things, they bring strong sector expertise, allocate grants on the basis of open calls for support using specific grant screening tools, and aim to bring strong coherence and learning around their global programme objectives.

The **Abilis Foundation**'s activities cover financial support, information dissemination, education and advisory functions. Their principal activity is funding small projects planned and implemented by persons with disabilities through their organisations. Grants by Abilis range from € 500 to € 20,000 and the supported projects normally last for 1–2 years. The supported activities cover (non-exhaustive list):

- Poverty reduction (42%).
- Empowerment, participation and education (capacity building) (25%).
- Advocacy and awareness-raising of decision makers and communities (11%).
- Other: including children and family relationships and access to health services (22%).

The 2016 Constitution of Abilis declares that funding may also include projects focused on humanitarian work, disaster relief and Global Disability Diplomacy. In addition, the Foundation established a consultancy company in 2016 to undertake business activities like sharing expertise and networks, training and consulting services and selling products to generate funds for the Foundation. Within Finnish society, Abilis is engaged with awareness-raising, advocacy, global education and training, and fundraising.

Since 2002, Abilis has operated through a programme partnership (PP) model, which connects Abilis with a partner organisation in a focus country. This enables Abilis to increase its reach to hard-to-reach groups in local languages, respond to needs of grassroots DPOs in project proposal preparation, implementation and reporting to Abilis, and to minimise the misuse of funds and mismanagement of projects. POs are well established DPOs with relevant knowledge on project work, financial management, and training facilities. POs main activities are:

- To provide information to Abilis regarding applicants, project proposals, and disability issues in the country. Networks and existing activities of POs assist them to carry out partnership activities in the country and to find local DPOs that can benefit from Abilis' support.

- To provide technical support to groups in applying funds and while implementing a project. Many groups also need training on report writing and financial issues such as bookkeeping.

A partner organisation is selected through a capacity assessment undertaken by an independent consultant, who compares candidates according to key prerequisites; including sharing the same human rights (HR) based values as Abilis, and having a majority of board and staff members with disabilities or parents of children with disabilities. When selected, POs submit an action plan, bi-annual narrative and financial reports. Each country level PO receives around € 20,000 or less based on their planned activities and budgets, and are given manuals and training to guide them to implement Abilis' values. Project Coordinators at Abilis' headquarters (HQ) keep in contact with facilitators (who are all persons with disabilities themselves) in focus countries, and facilitators are invited to seminars in Finland or elsewhere every four years.

After conducting evaluations into the Programme Partnership (PP) Model (2014) and learning from lessons, Abilis has been exploring alternative approaches such as the 'country office' model. This model, currently operating in Mekong countries, is run by country and regional coordinators and acts as an independent organisation to guide projects and support DPOs in the Global South. Abilis has also been increasing donor coordination in focus countries (e.g. Tanzania with MyRight Sweden, Uganda with Disability Rights Fund, USA and Disabled Peoples Organisations Denmark (DPOD), in which Nordic and international donors share offices, knowledge and networks to better coordinate and complement each other's work.

**Abilis has been exploring the 'country office' model**

**KIOS** initially received MFA funding in 1999 and provided its first grants in the same year. The partnership is guided by the partnership agreement signed in 2006 and the connected three-year funding commitments (2007-2009, 2010-2012, 2013-2015).

Prior to 2013, KIOS had an open call for applications running through the year. However, based on a Board decision in 2013, it now opens a call for applications twice a year for those CSOs that have not previously received funding from KIOS (KIOS, 2014a). The second call for applications is guided by the potential gap left by the first call (e.g. in terms of lack of applications from a particular geographical focus area or similar). Those organisations that have previously received funding from KIOS are permitted to submit applications throughout the year (KIOS, 2014b) and the Executive Director can approve project extensions for up to 2 years at a time. Due to the funding cuts, no call for applications was organised in 2016 or 2017 (KIOS, 2016a).

The initial KIOS grant is only provided to projects lasting one year or less and only one application per CSO is considered at any one time. According to the Application Guidelines of 2014 the processing of applications generally takes from three to six months, depending on the number of applications received (KIOS 2014b). The funding decisions are based on evaluation of the human rights, development and country context as well as a set of 11 funding criteria focusing on the substance of the human rights project, capacity of the funded organisation, ownership and participation of the beneficiaries, appropriateness

**Initial KIOS grant is only provided to projects lasting one year or less**

and relevance for beneficiaries, funded organisation and KIOS (KIOS document, 2016).

KIOS (KIOS Annual Plans) describes its activities and the funding process as the following:

- Project preparation: assessment and background check on funding applications, provision of technical expertise and planning of project funding
- Project monitoring: provision of training and advice to organisations receiving funding; control and approval of project activity and financial reports, banking and monitoring missions
- Project evaluation and quality assurance: internal assessments carried out by the foundation; external project evaluations and compliance audits
- Quality assurance and development: collaboration between foundations; development of monitoring procedures, research and training
- Communication and advocacy: this is divided into work done internationally and that done in Finland. Internationally the target group are potential applicants, current partners, Finnish embassies, international organisations, other funders, as well as local, national and regional authorities. In Finland, this work largely composes of networking, participation in expert networks and organisations, and communication including an annual seminar.

KIOS also has long-term PPs in some partner countries. Some of the first of these were the East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders (EHAHRDP) supported since its establishment in 2006 and the programme Youth Alive! Kenya, established in 1999, which enjoyed KIOS support that then developed into a partnership in 2008. It aimed at identifying and supporting community-based human rights groups to become key human rights actors in their region and ultimately nationally. The programme included training and mentoring as well as networking of participating organisations with one another and with other relevant institutions in the country (Williams et. al., 2008). Further partnership agreements have been made with organisations in Uganda (Action for Community Development ACODEV) and Bangladesh (Odhikar). The aim has been to establish additional partnership agreements in countries where it is beneficial to increase the capacity of CSOs and where an organisation can be found with the ready capacity to coordinate a partnership scheme (KIOS 2014c).

Siemenpuu is the third NGO foundation receiving funding from the MFA to be channelled through a grant scheme to projects in developing countries. The partnership with MFA is guided by the cooperation agreement first signed in 2001 and the subsequent funding agreements (2002, 2003-2005, 2006-2007, 2008-2009, 2010-2012, 2013-2015).

**Siemenpuu regards its collaboration as a partnership**

Siemenpuu supports NGOs in developing countries mainly utilising the MFA funds and some other smaller funding sources. Siemenpuu regards its collaboration with NGOs, CBOs and grassroots groups in developing countries as a partnership, promoting dialogue among the partners and discussion of sub-

stantive 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.

In the beginning of its operation, Siemenpuu-funded projects were based on applications from around the world with no clear programmatic coordination. Since 2006 a more regional programmatic approach has been adopted and for the LTAP 2010-2015 (Siemenpuu, 2009), 7 large Cooperation Programmes received the majority of Siemenpuu funding. The 7 Programmes in 2010-2015 period were:

- **The Indonesia Cooperation Programme** supporting several small organisations, people's movements and research institutions focusing on protection of forest areas;
- **The India Adivasi Cooperation Programme** with National Adivasi Alliance (NAA) with focus on communities' participation in decision making and support to attaining environmental and cultural rights;
- **South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy -network (SADED)** based in India but working more broadly in South Asia for promotion of ecological democracy;
- **The India Tamil Nadu Cooperation Programme** supporting community level projects in Tamil Nadu;
- **The Mali Cooperation Programme** partnering with Mali Folkecenter-Nyetaa (MFC-Nyetaa) for strengthening the capacity of local people in protecting their environment.
- **The Cooperation Programme in the Mekong Region** working with the Mekong Energy and Ecology Network (MEE Net) aiming to fight the climate change by promoting an energy policy based on the use of decentralised renewable energy sources;
- **The Latin America Cooperation Programme** supporting several partners to study the effects of the expansion of large scale monocultures in the region and to promote sustainable alternatives to these.

**The Global Dialogue Programme** was introduced in 2011-2013 aiming to create dialogue on good and just living without over-consumption of natural resources.

These programmes have continued as long-term partnerships also called Project Funding Clusters for the period 2016-2021 with the exception of the Tamil Nadu Cooperation Programme that was not continued as a specific partnership (Siemenpuu, 2015).

The majority (between 70% and 90% annually) of Siemenpuu funding is channelled through these programmes. In addition, some specific thematic calls for proposals are organised. The funding decisions are prepared in the volunteer reference group supporting each programme and are then finally approved by the Executive Board based on a set of cooperation criteria focusing on the substance as well as community participation, grassroots action, political and civic action, networking, innovation, sustainability and taking into account the cross cutting objectives.

**Since 2006 a more regional programmatic approach has been adopted**

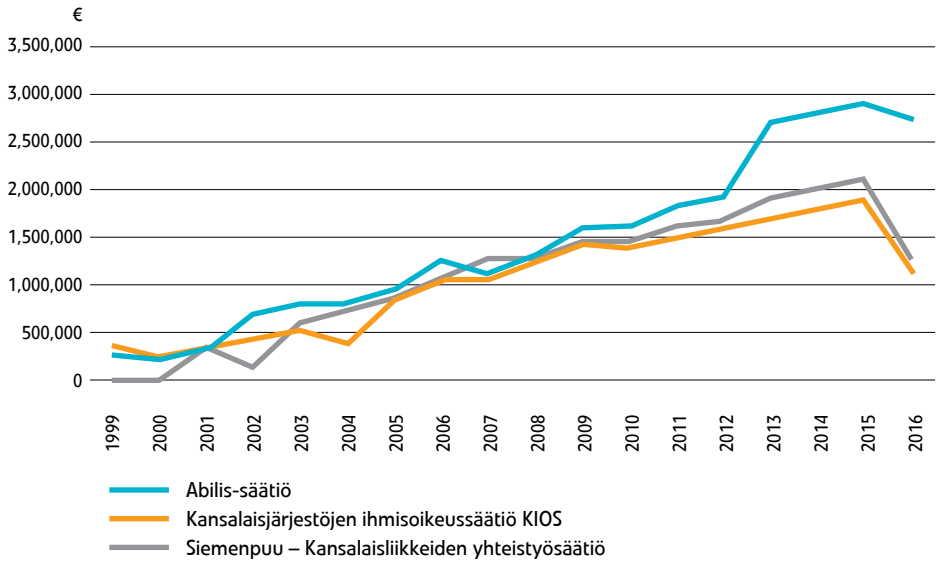
Siemenpuu has also substantive communication and advocacy work for giving publicity in Finland to the issues advocated as well as promoting shared learning and dialogue between the South and the North. Siemenpuu is active in many national and global fora and cooperation networks on environmental issues. Advocacy and communication are also central to most of the supported project work in developing countries.

## 3.4 Funding profile

**PBS funding from the MFA has steadily increased between 1999–2015**

The three Foundations receive PBS funding from the MFA to be channelled through a grant scheme to projects in developing countries. Abilis and KIOS initially received MFA funding in 1998 and provided their first grants in the same year while Siemenpuu received MFA funding in 2001 and issued their first grants in 2002. The Foundations have received PBS funding since the introduction of the scheme in 2003. As can be seen from Figure 1., the PBS funding from the MFA has steadily increased between 1999-2015, allowing the Foundations to provide more and larger grants to its applicants. However, the recent large funding cuts of Finnish ODA have also meant major cuts to the funding of all the Foundations as all their funding comes from the MFA. Funding through KIOS and Siemenpuu was cut by over 40% and Abilis a bit less. Already prior to the knowledge of funding cuts, the Foundations have been looking into opportunities to supplement MFA funding with other sources of funding such as EU funding.

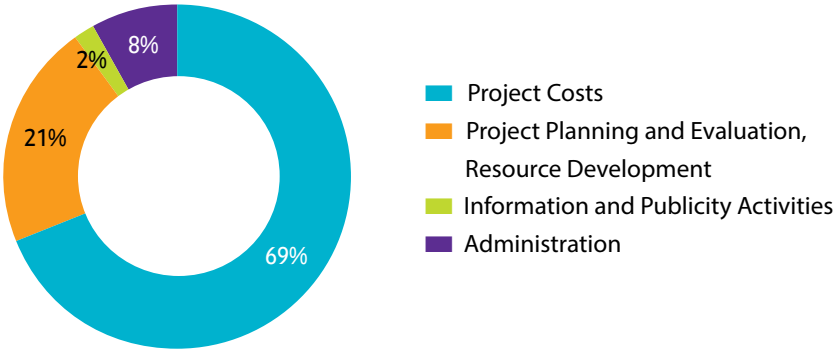
**Figure 1:** MFA Funding Commitments to the NGO Foundations 1999–2016 (€)




Source: Provided by MFA to Evaluation Team

**Abilis** has had three PBS funding cycles during the evaluation period - 2010-2012, 2013-2015 and 2016-2017. The current government funding for 2016-2017 totals € 4.5 million (Abilis, 2015). During the period of 2010-2015 total funding commitment from MFA to the Abilis was € 13.7 million. **KIOS** has also had financing covering 2010-2012 and 2013-2015 , and the current cycle is for 2016-2017. These are covered under the 2004-2010 and 2011-2015 Strategy and are carried out based on the programme plans for each funding period. The total MFA funding commitment to KIOS during 2010-2015 was € 9.9 million. (KIOS, 2016b) Siemenpuu has also had three similar funding cycles during the evaluation period. The current funding decision for 2016-2017 totals € 2.5 million and the total funding commitment over the 2010-2015 was € 10.76 million (Siemenpuu, 2016). Figure 2. shows the overall division of expenditures of PBS of the Foundations in 2010-2015. There are only small differences in division of expenditure between the Foundations with Abilis and KIOS spending a 68-69% on project costs and **Siemenpuu** around 71% while the project planning, evaluation and resource development costs (called project cycle management costs by KIOS) are slightly higher for Abilis and KIOS.

**Figure 2:** 2010–2015 Expenditure of the Foundations in Total




Source: Provided by Foundations to Evaluation Team

The Finnish CSOs receiving PBS have an obligation of providing a 'self-financing' contribution of 15% to the funds provided by the MFA, while the self-financing contribution for disability-specific projects is 7.5%. With the Foundations, this obligation has been reduced to 7.5%, and the contribution is placed on the grant recipients, who are required to provide the 7.5 % self-financing either in cash or in kind (Williams et.al., 2008). In practice the three Foundations have agreed and practiced 10% self-financing (counted from the Foundation's grant) from the supported projects and programmes.

The Foundations are almost solely dependent for the MFA programme based funding for their activities with only some small scale outside funding that has been sought in the recent years. Abilis in 2016 started a consulting company to provide paid-for expertise in the area of disability work, but this is a new venture and there is very little income until recently, when several studies have been commissioned in 2016 and 2017.

**The grant recipients provide 7.5 % self-financing**

# 4 FINDINGS

## 4.1 Relevance of CSO's development co-operation

### 4.1.1 Comparative advantage and strategic alignment

In this section, we assess:

- Have the Foundations' development co-operation strategies been in line with their comparative advantage?
- Have the Foundations' programmes been aligned with their strategies?
- Have the activities chosen the Foundations been the most relevant for achieving their programme goals?

For this evaluation, we define comparative advantage as the relative strength of a CSO against other potential actors – a CSO has a comparative advantage, if it possesses unique or superior expertise, operational model, networks and/or influence in comparison to other actors in a given context. By strategic alignment we refer to consistency of the CSO development co-operation program goals, related planning and activities with the mission, strategic goals and comparative advantage of the CSO (Table 1.).

**Table 1:** Perceived role of the CSOs in the development policy framework of Finland

| Development Policy 2007-2012 | Development Policy 2012-2015 | Development Policy 2016-2019 |
|---|---|---|
| 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.<br><br>NGOs are considered an important means of providing humanitarian assistance. | Civil society is an important actor and partner in the implementation of human rights-based development cooperation. Civil society demands accountability from the government, public authorities and enterprises and thus advances democratic change.<br><br>CSOs are proposed as a means to continue cooperation when bilateral projects end.<br><br>CSOs are considered important in support to conflict and fragile states. | The participation of the Finnish civil society in the strengthening of civil societies in developing countries is important.<br><br>In all activities, NGOs are to build on their own expertise and networks.<br><br>Finnish CSOs are important in countries or groups, which cannot be reached by the means and tools of Finnish ODA.<br><br>Finnish civil society is encouraged to work in the poorest countries. |

Source: MFA, 2007, 2012 and 2016a.

### Alignment of development co-operation programme goals with the CSO's strategic goals and priorities

In broad terms, the Foundations strategic goals and their development co-operation goals are closely aligned. They all focus on development co-operation work in the South as well as advocacy work with the Finnish government and public. They were set up to provide a window of grant funding to eligible actors working in the themes of relevance to each Foundation. The Board members of the Foundations also work to ensure close alignment between the overall mission of their respective Foundation and the development co-operation work supported.

The Foundations strategic goals and goals are closely aligned

The fundamental direction has not changed radically during the evaluation period. Abilis aims to work at grassroots level on human rights based support to people with disabilities, empowering this target group through increasing their understanding of rights and their confidence in their socio-economic roles in society. Since 2010, the strategic focus has been to support girls and women with disabilities and/or projects run by women with disabilities. KIOS aims to strengthen the human rights work of NGOs and the capacity of groups to enable them to promote human rights awareness, and effectively put pressure on their governments to comply with international human rights instruments to prevent human rights violations and bring the perpetrators to account. Siemenpuu has remained focused on promoting environmental protection and democracy, defending human rights, and advocating cooperation among environmental and alter-globalist civil movements. It works to strengthen civil societies in the South to advocate in favour of their environment as well as to enhance environmental protection in both the South and North.

### Geographic priorities and alignment

The Foundations have had a broad regional spread in their development co-operation engagement, covering several countries in Latin America, Africa, Middle East and Asia. Each of them however do have some priority or partnership countries receiving most of the support. Furthermore, following the revised guidelines to the programme-based approach in 2013 and the subsequent funding cuts in 2016, there has been increasing geographical focus.

There has been increasing geographical focus

**Abilis** supports projects run by and for persons with disabilities in the Global South, with specific focus on Ethiopia (Box 2), Mozambique, Tanzania, Uganda, Myanmar, Vietnam, Thailand, Kyrgyzstan, Nepal and Tajikistan, as well as states affected by conflict and natural disasters. Within these diverse contexts, persons with disabilities are often invisible, disadvantaged and forgotten, with many unregistered and therefore not officially existing. In addition, harsh and negative cultural attitudes towards disabilities mean that many are kept hidden in the home (Abilis, 2014b). This challenging situation for persons with disabilities is further exacerbated by factors such as diseases, injuries, conflict and natural disasters. Increasing percentage of the funding goes to projects in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the figures have been around 60%-70% annually to LDCs).

### Box 2. Persons With Disabilities in Ethiopia

The case of one of Abilis main focus countries, Ethiopia, provides an insight into the context in which some of Abilis' projects are operating. In Ethiopia there are an estimated 15 million persons with disabilities, most of whom live in rural areas with limited access to services. At the national level, although Ethiopia has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) there still exists considerable public misunderstanding, with persistent negative attitudes and cultural stigmas. In 2010, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Ethiopia estimated that 95% of persons with disabilities lived in poverty, with many depending on begging for their livelihoods.

Source: Katsui, H. et al. 2014

The lives of persons with disabilities in the Global South are also affected by other levels of discrimination including gender, age, ethnicity, language, religion, indigenous status, sexual orientation and HIV/AIDs status. For women living with disabilities the situation is often extremely challenging. According to Abilis' programme documents, only 1% of women with disabilities in the world are literate (Abilis, 2014b). In the context of Nepal, a country that received one of the highest amounts of Abilis funding in 2015, women with disabilities face higher rates of violence than women in the general population (Puri, Misra and Hawkes, 2015).

The **KIOS Foundation** has been channelling grants to several countries based originally on their thematic foci of democratic rights, gender equality and the right to education. At its establishment, KIOS provided grants worldwide, but took a more narrowly focused approach in the years that followed. The 2004-2010 Strategy adopted two focal regions: Eastern Africa and South Asia. At that time the Strategy included eleven countries in Eastern Africa and nine countries in South Asia (KIOS, 2004). The 2010 Annual Report found that the thematic focus did not properly guide the channelling of funding and as such they were removed from the 2011-2015 Strategy (KIOS, 2010a). Rather, the 2011-2015 Strategy called for further geographical focus and the preparation of Country Strategies for all the focus countries (KIOS, 2010b). The same focal regions remained in the 2011-2015 Strategy, however the number of countries was reduced to six in both regions, and no new projects have been funded in Latin America since 2011.

The 2011-2015 funding focused on:

- **East Africa**: Burundi, DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda
- **South Asia**: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Tibet.

Currently KIOS funding is largely channelled to five focus countries: Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Nepal and Sri Lanka as well as Tibetan CSOs in exile. It also pursues two regional programmes in East Africa and South Asia. It continues to support some selected projects in former focus countries namely Bangladesh (Box 3), Burundi, Ethiopia and Pakistan. However, no new project proposals from these countries are accepted, unless otherwise specified in the call for applica-

tions (KIOS website). In addition to its work in developing countries, KIOS aims to increase the awareness of Finnish civil society on the human rights situation of developing countries through advocacy and communication work.

### Box 3. Human rights in Bangladesh

Bangladesh is presented here as an example of country context. According to Human Rights Watch, there has been a developing trend in Bangladesh of increasing restrictions on civil society. This has included the government introducing a draft bill, which imposes further restrictions on NGOs and their access to foreign funding (Foreign Donations Regulations Act). Furthermore, the government has introduced a new media policy imposing limits on free expression and speech.

Several media outlets were closed, editors faced charges and arrests. The security forces have carried out abductions, killings and arbitrary arrests targeting opposition leaders and supporters. Gender based violence remains a significant concern in the country (HRW, 2015). According to Amnesty International in 2015/2016 several independent media outlets under extreme pressure and publishers expressing secular views were brutally attacked by Islamist groups (Amnesty International 2016). Bangladesh faces several challenges in relation to gender equality and abuse of women's rights. It has the highest rate of marriage for girls under 15 although legally the legal age of marriage is 18 (Amnesty International 2016). According to the International Centre for Migration, Health and Development (ICMHD) some sixty percent of Bangladeshi women have experienced gender based violence.

Source: ICHMD, 2013

**Siemenpuu** grants are mainly directed to the partnership programme (later project cluster) areas namely Indonesia, Mekong region, India and South Asia, Mali and Latin America. These areas and countries receive the majority of grant funding, and support is increasingly directed at the LDCs. Furthermore, those groups of people in other Global South countries whose life conditions, human rights or living environments are particularly vulnerable even in comparison to the majority of the less developed country populations remain an important target for support. In directing the support, specific regional environmental values are taken into consideration as well (Siemenpuu, 2015). The project cooperation is focused on the bigger and longer term partnerships while also supporting new innovations and initiatives where the perspectives of local communities can be brought into the initiatives launched by international civil movements.

Siemenpuu support is well aligned with its strategic direction, as it is directed to projects that aim at strengthening the rights of local communities, in particular defending the rights of forest dwellers and other rural and coastal communities, and community-based environmental protection and improving the state of the environment, in particular the protection of biodiversity, saving rainforests and other essential ecosystems, stopping climate change, promoting renewable, socially and ecologically sustainable energy, and the struggle against environmental pollution. Ecological democratisation of society and transition to sustainable economic growth are also among the key areas of cooperation (Siemenpuu, 2009 and 2015). These themes of support also guide the channelling of funds to countries and areas where these and related issues are acute and civic movements are tackling the issues.

## Alignment of the overall project portfolio

The Foundations have portfolios that differ in scale and, level of interaction and complexity. Abilis has the largest number of individual projects, with over 1,000 in the 2010-2016 period. These are selected to be in line with the overall goal and the country strategies prepared by Abilis. According to Annual Report 2015 (Abilis, 2015), small grants (averaging € 2,158) have rapidly increased since 2012, and according to the Fast Track Scheme (FTS) Review Report 2016 (Abilis, 2016a), these are now the largest method of funding.

**KIOS** has increased its focus to two regions, East Africa and South Asia, now only taking applications from their focus countries within these regions. It provides grant-based funding for projects of local CSOs which work to promote human rights and democracy in their respective countries through biannual calls for applications. The geographical focusing is reflected in the reduction in the number of applications in 2012, 2013 and 2015. (KIOS, 2013 and KIOS, 2016b). As applicants became more aware of the focus, the number of applications reduced accordingly. The average size of grants has increased over the years, with an average of € 39,949 during 2010-2015, larger than in the first years of operation when between 1999-2002 the average grant size was approximately € 15,500.

After the initial years of project-based funding **Siemenpuu** has organised its main support through the eight Partnership Programmes in their 2010-2015 strategy and this continues in the 2016-2021 strategy through the Project Clusters. The main support is directed accordingly to India and South Asia, Mekong Region, Indonesia, Mali and Latin America. In addition to these programme funding areas, Siemenpuu nevertheless also gives project based support amounting to 10-30% of their annual funding. (Siemenpuu, 2015)

In general, there have been efforts to move to fewer projects that fit around more strategic choices. This has been further driven by the MFA funding cuts in 2016.

**There have been efforts to move to fewer projects that fit around more strategic choices**

## Relevance of activities for achieving the programme goals

Generally, the activities appear to be highly relevant and well selected in order to achieve the Foundations' programme goals. The Foundations themselves are well attuned to international research and standards in their respective fields, and this is enhanced through their association with a range of international movements and collaborative partners. As grant making agencies, they adopt a responsive mode and do not seek to over-influence the content of proposals. At the same time, as demands for RBM compliant proposals have grown, the Foundations have found the need to work with partners to refine and improve the quality of proposals. Each Foundation has prepared extensive guidance material for its recipients to use to help in this process. This has sought to improve the rationale and hence the relevance of all new proposals.

**Activities appear to be highly relevant and well selected**

## Programmatic approach as an organisation-wide strategy

The Foundations focus mainly on grant making and management so there is high consistency between the overall organisational strategy and the programmatic approaches. They focus on management of grants in their specific areas

**There is high consistency between the overall organisational strategy and the programmatic approaches**

of disability, human rights and environment. PBS with its longer-term funding arrangements (covering three year periods from 2003-2005, 2010-2012 and 2013-2015 ) have allowed the Foundations to shape their strategies to a longer-term form of engagement and to extend funding agreements with successful recipients.

While strategy documents of the Foundations cover 5 year periods, the tenets introduced by MFA around PBS have not fully been adopted yet in terms of a result-based culture and demonstrating both short and long-term results. As revised PBS guidelines were launched in 2013 by MFA and then RBM in 2015, the Foundations have had to adapt their ongoing portfolio to the new directives emanating from the Ministry.

### Programmatic approach and MFA funding.

The Foundations are almost fully dependent on MFA funding - with a requirement raise funds from grantees set at 7.5% instead of the general 15% and disability-specific projects 7.5%. The Foundations have not had active fundraising strategies until recently, as the MFA has started encouraging such activities and on the other hand the MFA funding cuts have made it more urgent to secure funding from other sources as well.

**The Foundations are almost fully dependent on MFA fundinga**

Abilis has been active in looking for new funding channels from different sources including the private sector, EU, likeminded donors and international foundations in the past few years. The Foundation has also established a consulting company, Abilis Consulting, to offer their expertise in disability issues. KIOS has also made some efforts to find other funding sources and developed a fundraising strategy in 2016, but finds it difficult to focus on such issues with the MFA funding cuts also putting a lot of pressure on the reduced staff time. Siemenpuu has similar constraints of staff time as KIOS but have made some more efforts to collect funds from the Finnish public as well as approached some likeminded donors for support.

### Comparative advantage in development co-operation work

The Foundations have a clear and strong comparative advantage as a channel for Finnish development cooperation because they each have a very clear thematic focus and have built up a strong and credible level of expertise in these focus areas in the past ten years. As a Foundation, each of these agencies have the advantage of presenting no international presence or footprint in the countries of operation, allowing their local partners and grant recipients to take the lead in operations and in contextual understanding, so building their presence and credibility.

**The Foundations have a clear and strong comparative advantage**

In term of human rights, KIOS is alone in offering a very specialist level of knowledge in the Finnish context as a neutral actor providing untied funding for important and sensitive rights based issues. It has built up trusted alliances and networks in the South and internationally. It is recognised by the Finnish government as a credible and trusted source of expertise that can operate in sensitive areas and outside of formal government channels (HR Adviser, MFA). Abilis too has established a reputation in Finland and abroad as a knowledgeable and effective advocate for disability rights. Unlike other disability actors in

Finland, such as Disability Partnership, Abilis works at grassroots level and so has the comparative advantage of reaching the unreached in the most rural or marginalised populations. It is also an important strength that the majority of the staff and board members of Abilis Foundation, including those in the Global South, are persons with disabilities themselves. Siemenpuu also offers an ability to work directly with grassroots organisations in the South, while supporting them over an extended period and without an imposing local presence.

### 4.1.2 Alignment with beneficiary and stakeholder needs and rights

In this section, we assess:

- Have the Foundations' work been aligned with the beneficiary needs and rights?
- Have the Foundations' work been aligned with the stakeholder needs?

In this evaluation, we consider two types of beneficiaries - direct and indirect beneficiaries. The direct beneficiaries are those individuals and/or organizations that are directly targeted by the CSO activities, while the indirect beneficiaries are those who are expected to ultimately benefit from the CSO work. Stakeholders refer to those who are not direct or indirect beneficiaries of the CSO work, but are involved in or relevant for that work.

**The work supported by the Foundations has been very relevant to the beneficiary needs**

Based on programme documents, interviews, observations and earlier evaluations, the work supported by the Foundations has been very relevant to the beneficiary needs, regional and country contexts and Finnish priorities. The issues supported by the Foundations are among the cross-cutting objectives (CCOs) of Finnish development cooperation and the Foundations have organised their support in line with the specific thematic focus, their strategy and comparative advantage. The work of the Foundations in support of their core issues follows the MFA's three-track strategy including 1) mainstreaming, 2) complementary targeted support services, and 3) policy dialogue.

The application process and funding criteria are designed to ensure that the supported projects are well aligned with the needs of key stakeholders and beneficiaries, particularly women and girls and the marginalised groups but of course it is difficult to ensure in all cases with a large number of supported projects. The partnership models and use of well-known partner organisations to monitor smaller partners are seen as ways to ensure the relevance and targeting at the community level.

Abilis applies both the three-tack approach and the UNCRPD in its strategy 2021, and implements these priorities through manuals, policy papers and training provided to their partners in the Global South. Through its partnership programme, Abilis has used local POs networks to find grassroots DPOs in need of support and has outreached over 3,000 projects (Fiant Consulting, 2016; Al-Eryani, 2015a; Abilis ToC Document, 2016c). Abilis does not compromise local ownership or dictate the content of the DPO work that it supports, and rather selects applications from DPOs based broadly on adherence to HR principles. In doing this, Abilis makes itself relevant to Finnish priorities, beneficiaries priorities and the priorities of specific country contexts and stake-

holders, since Abilis maintains the HR principles of MFA, whilst supporting DPOs in their choice of projects based on the needs of the beneficiaries in specific contexts. This is supported in the FTS interviews with facilitators, who stated that Abilis is aligned to the priorities of persons with disabilities in their countries.

Although Abilis' work in general is highly relevant, the internal and external evaluations have shown that the HR principles that Abilis operationalises through guideline manuals and facilitator monitoring and evaluation (M&E) visits, have not been covering all the principles of HRBA to the same extent. For example, Abilis places significant emphasis on the principle of participation, but has lesser emphasis on other principles such as accountability. Accountability has not been fully clarified in relation to the roles, powers and responsibilities of DPOs, POs, Abilis HQ, facilitators, leaders and Abilis Review Board (ARB) members (Fiant Consulting, 2016). Concerning CCOs, the previous evaluations highlighted less representation of diverse disability groups in Abilis' DPO funding, for instance, in relation to ethnic and sexual minorities. Thus, there is no mention of specific work on transgender and queer issues (mainly due to the close to non-existence of sexual minorities among the persons with disabilities caused by the social contexts and taboos around persons with disabilities' sexuality) or on masculinities, men and boys. Furthermore, in programme documents and evaluations there is little mention of environmental factors. Abilis' strategy through 2021 has placed specific emphasis on diversity, especially the inclusion of women and girls showing commitment to work to reach the most marginalised groups.

**Abilis' strategy through 2021 has placed specific emphasis on diversity, especially the inclusion of women and girls**

The Abilis Foundation website offers a range of documentation in many different languages that allow beneficiaries access to relevant materials such as country profile papers. Abilis also translates many materials and newsletters into different languages including international sign language to make them as reachable and accessible as possible.

The **KIOS** Strategy 2011-2015 defines the foundation's mission as: "*KIOS funds human rights based work that aims to have states protecting the rights defined in international human rights treaties and committing to human rights in their legislations and its implementation*" (KIOS, 2010b:1). All of KIOS's funding is targeted at supporting the realisation of human rights of beneficiaries in developing countries and overall the work of KIOS can be said to be very much in line with Finland's human rights and development policies. Additionally, KIOS' emphasis on working in fragile states can be said to further strengthen its relevance to Finnish development policy.

Within the scope of the 2011-2015 Strategy KIOS prepared Country Strategies for its focus countries. The application approval criteria include an assessment of whether projects are relevant to the country context, beneficiary needs and are in line with the KIOS Country Strategy in question. Thus, there is an effort to ensure that funded projects are aligned with KIOS's overall strategy and specific country strategies. It is noted however, that there seems to be little variety in the thematic focus areas between country strategies. A rather large scope of themes is thus provided to which funding can be channelled. This is perhaps partly explained by the fact that there is a lack of local CSOs and applicants

**Funded projects are aligned with KIOS's overall strategy and specific country strategies**

that otherwise meet the capacity requirements of KIOS funding and thus further restrictions have not been placed through heavy thematic focusing. Nevertheless, working with human rights defenders has become a strong overarching theme in the 2016-2020 strategy.

The KIOS 2011-2015 Strategy placed a focus on working in post-conflict areas and so called fragile states. The selection of focus countries and the channelling of funding has very much been in line with this policy with all of the focus countries being either so called fragile states or in a post conflict situation. Countries such as Afghanistan, Burundi, DRC, and Pakistan are all defined as either very high alert or high alert countries in the fragile state index of the Fund for Peace. The remaining are also on the list and many such as Sri Lanka are in the post-conflict category. Some of KIOS' focus countries are current or former partner countries of Finnish development cooperation, these include: Ethiopia (2007, 2012) Nepal (2007, 2012), Kenya (2007, 2012) and Afghanistan (2007 under partner countries recovering from conflict, 2012). The relevance of projects that were evaluated during past few years is seen to be high for the intended beneficiaries (e.g. Bhattarai, 2016; Masitsa, 2014; FOHRID, 2013).

**Much of KIOS' key documentation is available only in Finnish, which reduces transparency**

Much of KIOS' key documentation is available only in Finnish, which reduces transparency towards the beneficiaries, stakeholders and the partner organisations it is working with and funding. Summaries of Annual Reports are available in English on the website for 2006-2014. The results of an evaluation questionnaire carried out with partner organisations are mentioned on the website, but the document itself is not available. The website in English has much less material than that in Finnish and for example does not include the KIOS strategy, although a translation of this does exist. The country strategies prepared in 2011-2013, which are to guide the funding of KIOS in its focus countries are also only drafted in Finnish. Worryingly it seems that respondents to the Strategy Consultation Survey 2015 and the Post- Project Evaluation Questionnaire 2015 (Al-Eryani, 2015a) recommended that KIOS develops long-term country-specific strategies. This would indicate that partners have not been made aware of the existence of these strategies and that they do not readily have access to them.

**Supported activities may encounter objections and resistance from state organisations**

**Siemenpuu's** process for funding decisions is geared towards ensuring the relevance and appropriateness of the supported activities to the beneficiaries and local communities. The support is channelled towards fighting climate change, nature conservation, sustainable production and indigenous communities' rights to control their natural resources and thus is in line with the Finnish priorities regarding environment, regional context of environmental issues and also to some extent the national strategies in the working countries. Much of the work is not fully supported or accepted by the host states though. Often the rights of the small communities and the environmental conservation goals are secondary to the economic development goals of the respective national governments and thus the supported activities may encounter objections and resistance from state organisations at different levels. This was exemplified in the field visit to India, where the tension between the campaign for forest rights for Adivasi villages and the pursuit of economic investments in mining and industry by the Chhattisgarh State authorities and private sector interests was very evident.

Siemenpuu's support is also very relevant to their POs as it offers them long-term and flexible process-oriented funding for their core activities and includes also strong support for capacity development and networking, aspects which are crucial for many small NGOs and CBOs. The work is also relevant as a way of promoting networks and building action from local towards global level. The regional cooperation programmes and networks that the Siemenpuu has supported often have several partners and while the programmes are highly relevant there have sometimes been difficulties in communication and coordination as well as different and even conflicting priorities among the supported organisations. Thus a clear thematic focusing of the programmes rather than mainly geographical focus, including setting and communicating common goals and objectives for full utilisation of synergies and complementarities among the various efforts supported would improve relevance to the partners. (e.g. Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015; Garg, 2012; Sunchindah & Theeratha, 2014).

**Siemenpuu's support is also very relevant to their POs**

Siemenpuu support also enables beneficiaries, communities and partners to voice their concerns. It documents and disseminates their issues making it a very relevant model and different to most other funding agencies. The mechanisms for such documentation and dissemination as well as network building could be further improved (Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015). The work of SADED in this respect while addressing relevant issues such as around ecological 'self-rule', is handicapped by weak dissemination of results (evaluation field visits to Kathmandu and Delhi). Many of Siemenpuu's projects, such as the ones working for ensuring the land and natural resources rights of indigenous communities, mainly focus on documentation and advocacy for the beneficiaries rights and thus are very relevant in the local context. Also in such cases there needs to be clear assessment of the community unity and justifications for their claims during planning of projects to ensure relevance to the whole supported communities (Simarmata, 2016).

### 4.1.3 Alignment with the partner country policies and strategies

In this section, we assess:

- Have the Foundations' development co-operation work been aligned with the partner country priorities?

Here we refer to the partner country priorities as indicted in polices and strategies. For some CSOs alignment is a complex issue e.g. in the case of human rights work, where alignment with host government policies may not always be appropriate.

The projects and programmes supported by the Foundations are generally in line with the national policies and strategies of the partner countries. However, the work in relation to human rights, local community rights to resources and environmental protection issues is not always fully accepted by the host government and there may be threats or disruption from the national governments even though the work is in line with international agreements and movements.

Due to the very nature of human rights and activist work it is important to note that although there might be alignment in principle with the national development policies of countries, the work of funded CSOs may often not be accepted by the government.

**Although there might be alignment in principle, the work of funded CSOs may often not be accepted by the government**

In many of the countries in which the Foundations fund projects, the space for civil society has been decreasing and laws have been put in place to restrict CSO activities (Carothers, 2015). In many countries, KIOS supports monitoring, documenting and reporting on human rights violations and funds the work of human rights defenders. These organisations and individuals may come under great pressure from different groups including state authorities to discontinue their work. Thus although KIOS strategies and funding might be in line with the national development plans and strategies, there might be contradictory legislation (restrictive NGO laws, laws restricting freedom of expression) or government policies with which KIOS is not in line. Nevertheless, it should be noted that according to one study although having country specific strategies is seen as an improvement in enhancing contextualisation, they can remain underused and are not systematically updated (Al-Eryani, 2015a). Also they are not very detailed and vary in their format and in what information is contained. Thus although they may be in line with national policies, this may not be a result of sufficiently thorough analysis.

### 4.1.4 Alignment with development policy priorities of Finland

In this section, we assess if the Foundations' development co-operation work has:

- been aligned with the thematic development policy priorities of Finland?
- been aligned with the development policy CCOs of Finland?
- been aligned with the HRBA adhered to by Finland?
- been aligned with the geographic development policy priorities of Finland?

The 2010-2016 evaluation period has covered three Finnish development policies, with somewhat varying thematic and geographic priorities (Table 2.). The common themes throughout the evaluation period have been reduction of poverty and inequality, promotion of human rights as well as sustainable development. Gender equality and the reduction of inequality as well as climate and environmental sustainability have been common CCOs. By the most vulnerable we refer here, for example, to the extremely poor, children, ethnic and linguistic minorities, indigenous people, the migrants, persons with disabilities or sexual minorities.

HRBA aims to integrate the norms, principles, standards and goals of the international human rights system into the plans and processes of development (MFA, 2015b). Toward this end, it identifies the required key legal bases for the CSO work as well as the rights-holders and duty bearers. Although many can hold dual roles depending on a point of view, rights-holders are usually the individuals and community organizations and duty-bearers refer to government bodies, who are responsible for realization, facilitation or protection of the rights of the citizens.

**Table 2:** Development policy priorities of Finland

| Development Policy 2007-2012 |
|---|
| **Key goals** – Poverty eradication – Sustainable development. |
| **Themes** – Promoting ecologically, economically and socially sustainable development in accordance with Millennium Development Goals – Climate and environment – Respect for and promotion of human rights – Links between development, security and human rights. |
| **Cross-cutting objectives** – Gender equality, women and girls – Social equality and equal opportunities for participation – Combating of HIV/AIDS as a health and social problem. |
| **Geographic priorities** – Least developed countries. |
| **Partner countries** – Ethiopia – Kenya – Mozambique – Nepal – Nicaragua – Tanzania – Vietnam – Zambia. |
| **Development Policy 2012-2015** |
| **Key goals** – Poverty reduction – Human rights and societal equity. |
| **Themes** – Democratic and accountable society – Inclusive green economy that promotes employment – Sustainable management of natural resources and environmental protection – Human development. |
| **Cross-cutting objectives** – Gender equality – Reduction of inequality – Climate sustainability. |
| **Geographic priorities** – Least developed countries – Fragile states. |
| **Partner countries** – Ethiopia – Kenya – Mozambique – Nepal –Tanzania – Vietnam – Zambia. |
| **Development Policy 2016-2019** |
| **Key goals** – Poverty reduction – Reduction of inequality – Realisation of human rights – Support for the Sustainable Development Goals. |
| **Themes** – Rights of women and girls – Reinforcing economies to generate more jobs, livelihoods and well-being – Democratic and well-functioning societies – Food security, access to water and energy, and the sustainable use of natural resources. |
| **Cross-cutting objectives** – Gender equality – The rights of the most vulnerable – Climate change preparedness and mitigation. |
| **Geographic priorities** – Least developed countries, the most fragile states and those suffering from conflicts or climate and natural disasters. |
| **Partner countries** – Afghanistan – Ethiopia – Kenya – Mozambique – Myanmar – Nepal –Somalia – Tanzania – Zambia. |

Source: MFA, 2007, 2012 and 2016a.

The Foundations' programmes and goals are very closely aligned with the Finnish development priorities, HRBA and MFA's crosscutting objectives (CCOs) as the Foundations were set up to implement key CCOs (HRBA, Environment and Disability (rights of the most vulnerable persons) of MFA. The Foundations' work is well aligned with the CCO that the specific Foundation is focusing on. They also share learning and hold internal trainings to share each other's expertise. Earlier evaluations have criticised the Foundations for not taking a more comprehensive view on implementing all the CCOs and HRBA (Williams

**The Foundations' programmes and goals are very closely aligned with the Finnish development priorities**

et. al., 2008). Following these recommendations the current funding criteria and guidelines of the Foundations do aim to make sure that all the work is following HRBA as well as taking into account the inclusion of women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups and considering the environment and climate sustainability of supported activities.

**Abilis is considered to have a clear added value for MFA**

The Abilis programme evaluation (Fiant Consulting, 2016) stated: 'The work of Abilis is, also, well in line with the former and current development policy of the government of Finland as well as with Finland's commitment to promote the rights of the persons with disabilities. Due to its disability expertise, Abilis is considered to have a clear added value for MFA in the implementation of the policy'.

Two of the three priority areas of Finland's Development Policy and Development Cooperation in Fragile States (MFA, 2014) are aligned with the funding priorities of KIOS, namely a democratic and accountable society and the rule of law and the participation of women. Additionally, the Fragile States Policy emphasises the importance of strengthening local civil society and aiming to work with governments to secure conditions for the operation of civil society. Furthermore, the aim of the HRBA policy is to strengthen the capacities of governments to implement civil and political rights and increasing awareness of rights holders and duty bearers (MFA, 2015). All of these objectives are central to the funding focus of KIOS. The country focus of the Foundations is not fully in line with MFA's focus on OECD-DAC defined LDCs but the focusing of the Foundations programmes in the recent years has been shifting the focus more towards these countries and the majority of funding is channelled to LDCs.

**Women and girls have been prioritised in the Foundations' strategies**

**Gender equality** - women and girls have been prioritised in the Foundations' strategies with application processes considering gender issues. For example, **Abilis** gives funding priority for projects focused on women and girls with disabilities or run by women with disabilities. Many of the women with disabilities involved in these projects have later become local, national or even international disability activists and leaders. However, some challenges have been noted in programme documentation and evaluations with regards to the formation of hierarchies, and Fiant (2015) also noted room for improvement in how gender issues were included. For example in Abilis projects the leaders, country coordinators, facilitators and ARB members, with leaders of DPOs and ARB members often being older males and facilitators usually young females. This reflects the fact that ARB members are current disability leaders of these countries who are predominantly men with disabilities. These gendered challenges need further analysis. Additionally, there is no mention of specific work on transgender and queer issues (mainly due to the close to non-existence of sexual minorities among the People with Disabilities caused by the social contexts and taboos around sexuality of People with Disabilities ) or on masculinities, men and boys. Abilis' strategy through 2021 has placed specific emphasis on diversity, especially the inclusion of women and girls showing commitment to work to reach the most marginalised groups.

Prior to 2011, **KIOS** had three thematic areas that were to guide the channelled funding; one of these was gender equality. Unlike the geographical focus areas, the thematic focus was not set with a funding distribution goal. This perhaps

explains why the thematic focus areas were found not to guide funding as such and were dropped in the 2011-2015 strategy. Although it is likely that similar amounts of funding continued to be channelled to projects related to the promotion of gender equality, these were no longer reported on separately in the subsequent annual reports. It is thus difficult to assess how much funding goes to projects related to the promotion of gender equality specifically. KIOS funds projects and organisations, which work on sensitive areas that are largely not funded by Finnish bilateral development cooperation such as the promotion of rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) peoples. In principle, gender equality is expected to be mainstreamed in all projects funded by the MFA and the fact that the KIOS application form requires a description of a gender analysis would indicate that a similar expectation is placed on the applicants of KIOS funding. However, for example the Applicants reporting guideline of KIOS does not make any mention of gender. It seems that, for example, there is no requirement of providing gender-disaggregated data in reporting. As currently understood KIOS does not have a gender guideline or policy, nor is it clear whether there is a set of minimum criteria in relation to gender mainstreaming that need to be met by a project in order to receive funding. Based on annual reports it is not possible to assess the extent to which KIOS projects work towards gender equality as this data is not included. It is likely that this is due more to underreporting than a lack of work in the area. Nonetheless, there is a clear need to carry out more in depth gender analysis and to ensure meaningful mainstreaming of gender throughout the work of KIOS.

**As currently understood KIOS does not have a gender guideline or policy**

**Siemenpuu** includes an emphasis on gender in its most recent LTAP (2016-2021), and places emphasis on gender rights in its screening of proposals (Siemenpuu, 2015). The main focus of the funding criteria and the supported work is on the environmental and climate change concerns and the opportunities to raise gender concerns could be given greater prominence (MEE net evaluation 2014). Siemenpuu is planning to include more detailed considerations of gender and vulnerability issues in the plans for the next funding cycle. Abilis is also preparing a gender guideline.

**Reduction of Inequality** - The main focus of **Abilis** is on realising global disability rights while the other Foundations have also included consideration of persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups into their funding criteria. Abilis work with DPOs at the grassroots directly contributes to the reduction of inequality and strengthening some of the most vulnerable groups in the societies. **KIOS** also emphasises promoting the rights of vulnerable groups including women, children, indigenous peoples, LGBTQ people, disabled and others in all of its country strategies. For KIOS the realisation of human rights is a basis for ensuring sustainable development and reducing inequality. In all of its programmes and country strategies KIOS emphasises promoting the rights of vulnerable groups including women, children, indigenous peoples, LGBTQ people, disabled and others. The promotion particularly of women's rights is central to its work in many countries. The applications require a description of how gender is taken into consideration in the project. However, the application assessment form makes no specific mention of gender or the participation of women. It is thus unclear how and whether it is taken into consideration in making funding decisions.

**Climate Sustainability** – Environmental issues are considered during the application processes of all the Foundations. **Abilis** has developed an environmental guideline to support its proposal evaluation process. However, Abilis does not directly mention environmental issues as part of its strategy through 2021, and it is not mentioned as such in the evaluations. This is despite the overarching international disability agenda which links disabilities and human rights with issues such as climate change. **KIOS** makes little mention of climate change in its reporting and earlier strategies. However, KIOS recently commissioned a study on the effect of climate change on rights of the vulnerable groups in their target countries (Räsänen, 2015) and the recent 2016-2020 strategy acknowledges that climate change may have effects on the human rights situations in countries, which are difficult to predict. KIOS funds projects often working with the most vulnerable sections of the population and as such they may often be more vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. Human rights and climate change is an important area of international dialogue and the UNOHCHR has prepared so called Key Messages on Human Rights and Climate Change. It is not know at this time whether KIOS has funded projects, which relate to human rights and climate change. Siemenpuu is fully geared towards environmental issues and the environmental and climate change considerations are at the hearth of the organisational strategies. The supported projects work largely on initiatives for improved climate sustainability and for sustainable use of natural resources.

**The Foundations directly support rights-holders**

**Human Rights Based Approach** – The Foundations directly support rights-holders (such as the People with Disabilities, those whose human rights are not respected and the indigenous people deprived of their rights to local natural resources) to empower them to work for and demand the services from duty-bearers. The work is often complemented by policy level work to influence duty-bearers to ensure the rights of the rights holders are met. The level and intensity of the advocacy work varies from project to project but is often a key component of the design through bringing the local experiences and voices to national discussions for defining policies and laws. As noted by this evaluation as well as by earlier evaluations (e.g. Fiant Consulting, 2016) the guidelines for objective setting at the project level in principle cover output, outcome and impact levels, but in practice the focus is largely on completion of activities and not so much on higher level results. In order to address this gap the Foundations have worked to develop human rights based indicators and monitoring systems for their work. For example, although Abilis' work in general is highly relevant, the internal and external evaluations have shown that the HR principles that Abilis operationalises through guideline manuals and facilitator M&E visits, have not been covering all the principles of HRBA to the same extent. For example, Abilis places significant emphasis on the principle of participation, but has lesser emphasis on other principles such as accountability. Accountability has not been fully clarified in relation to the roles, powers and responsibilities of DPOs, POs, Abilis HQ, facilitators, leaders and ARB members (Fiant, 2016).

**The Foundations have worked to develop human rights based indicators and monitoring systems**

### 4.1.5 Alignment with the Theory of Change

#### Overall Theory of Change

As part of the inception stage of this evaluation, a generic Theory of Change (ToC) was developed for Finland's civil society engagement in development co-operation. The ToC is illustrated in Annex 5, and captures the logic for how the MFA expects CSOs to achieve their expected outputs, outcomes and impacts.

The aim for this generic framework is to help this evaluation establish a basis against which each of the development cooperation programmes of the CSOs can be compared. The ToC uses language expressed in the MFA's Guidelines for Civil Society (MFA, 2010) and is based on the policies and guidelines of MFA - such as the Development Policy (MFA, 2016a) and the Guidance Note for Finland's Human Rights-Based Approach in Development Cooperation (MFA, 2015b).

The generic ToC presumes that civil society is a key driver of social change in all societies, and that civil society in developing countries requires strengthening with external support. The relationships and pathways have been simplified to achieve clarity. In line with HRBA, civil society's contribution to democratic governance and reduction of suffering and saving of lives is expected to:

- Mobilise citizens, including vulnerable and socially excluded, around their human rights and entitlements, empowering them to participate in social, economic and political processes.
- Monitor governments and hold them to account.

These elements are captured in the three key outcomes: (i) a vibrant pluralistic civil society fulfilling its roles, (ii) strengthened, more resilient communities, and (iii) accountable state institutions that expect their duty bearers to protect vulnerable groups and to respect human rights. In turn these then contribute towards the higher order changes of safety, peace, and inclusive societies, in line with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations.

At the input and output level, the ToC shows how Finland's support to Finnish CSOs - provided by the general public, by the private sector and by the MFA - enables them to carry out projects in their specific areas of expertise in partnership with CSOs in the target countries. While projects may include issue-based advocacy in Finland as well as in a development context, they all contribute to capacity development of partner organisations, civil society more generally, as well as to direct beneficiaries.

The ToC includes seven main assumptions that would need to occur if the changes foreseen in their intervention logic were to happen (Table 3).

**Table 3:** Key Assumptions in the Overarching Theory of Change.

| Short term to long term outcomes |
|---|
| **A.1** Sustainable and equitable development is based upon constructive cooperation, and even partnership, between civil society, the state, and the private sector, where respective duties and roles are mutually understood, and even used to achieve more positive impact than would have been possible without this cooperation. |
| **A.2** A strong, pluralistic civil society, which demonstrates an active respect for human rights and inclusive values is a key contributor to improved citizen participation, greater government responsiveness and more inclusive service delivery. |
| **Outputs to Short term Outcomes** |
| **A.3** Civil societies in developing countries have the required operational, civic and cultural space to exercise their influence after receiving external support. |
| **A.4** A continued and supportive partnership between Finnish CSOs and CSOs in partner countries strengthens national CSO's identification and ownership of the same values. |
| **A.5** CSOs can use their knowledge of and linkages with the grassroots to raise awareness of and educate the Finnish public about development cooperation. |
| **Inputs to Outputs** |
| **A.6** Long-term programme partnerships with Finnish CSOs, based on mutually agreed objectives, are able to deliver support to CSOs in developing countries and reach the grassroots, including the vulnerable and socially excluded. (This assumption is implicit in the precedence MFA gives to its programme-based support over other forms of civil society funding. It also recognises that strengthening civil society and development change more generally is complex and requires long-term effort and requires continuing space and support for CSOs). |
| **A.7** Finnish CSOs develop their strategic direction in collaboration with their Finnish constituency, networks of international partners, including the philosophy, brand, or operational platforms, and in this way complement Finland's bilateral, multilateral and private sector work. This may depend largely on the CSOs partners understanding of the wider, specific institutional and political context within which they work. |

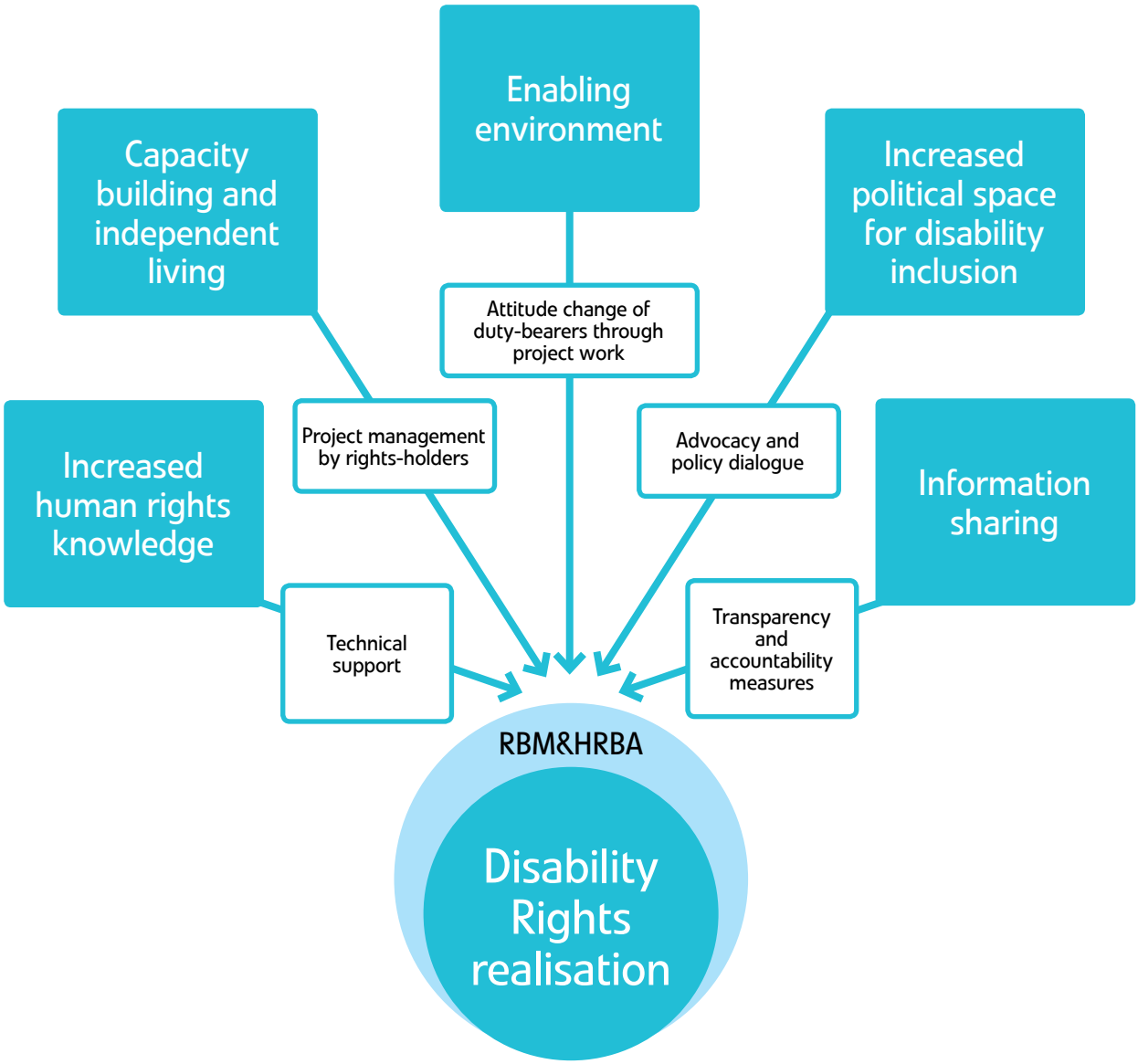
Source: Prepared by Evaluation Team

In this section, we assess if the Foundations' ToCs are aligned with the generic ToC for the Finnish support to CSOs. Besides an explicit theory, Foundation strategy documents generally state the context of the work and their working modality and the application procedures and results for programme funds.

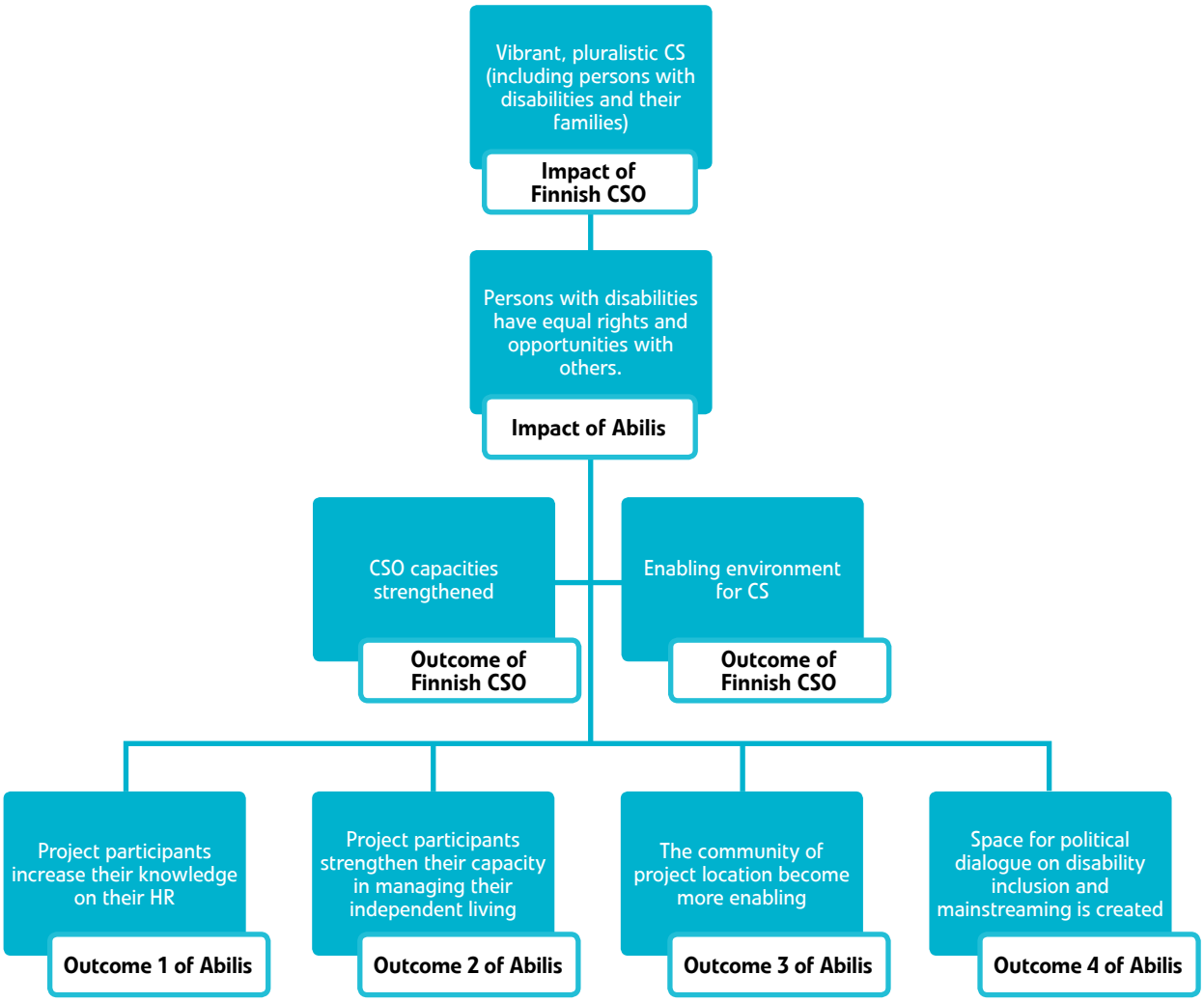
The **Abilis** ToC (Figure 3) is built around a HRBA with the outcome being persons with disabilities are aware of their rights, have self-determination and are in every way equal to other human beings. This approach follows a triple-track framework, which has been promoted by the MFA with the aim to realise global disability rights. These include 1) empowerment of People with Disabilities; 2) mainstreaming of disabilities; and 3) including disabilities into policy dialogues. Abilis TOC presented below (Figure 3) shows the linkages from different kinds of supported activities to disability rights realisation but does not clearly include distinction between inputs, outputs and outcomes and does not include any assumptions. The Abilis Logframe does include assumptions and different levels of results that should be reflected in the TOC as well.

The overall objective of Abilis is that persons with disabilities are aware of their human rights and act for the realisation thereof, and are in every way equal to their fellow human beings. This is articulated in the Strategy 2016-2021.

**Figure 3:** Abilis Theory of Change




Source: Provided by Abilis to Evaluation Team

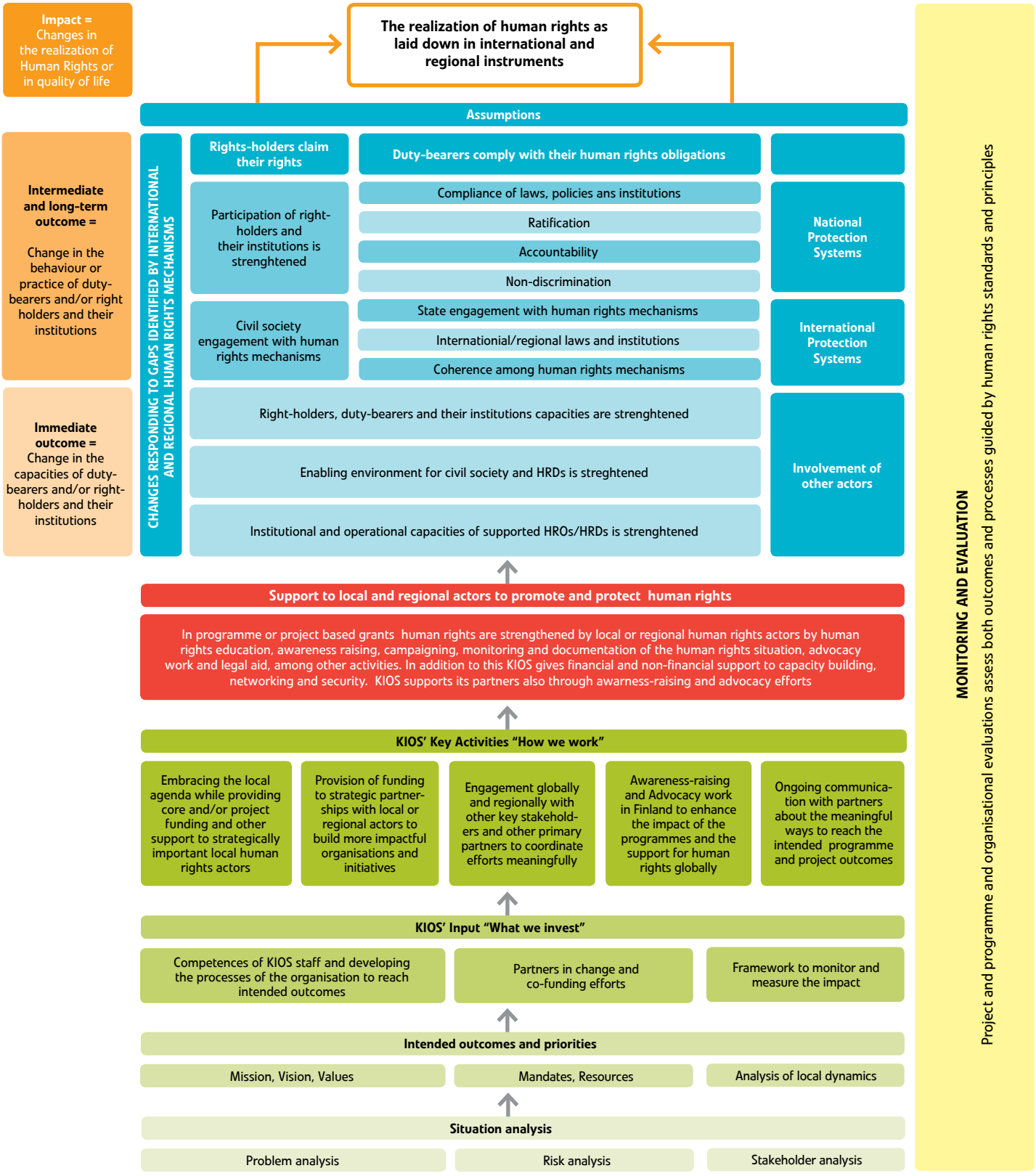



Source: Provided by Abilis to the Evaluation Team

For **KIOS**, they have very recently developed a ToC (Figure 4). While KIOS recognise the connections between improving human rights and wider human development, their ToC focuses on the realization of human rights per se. Their change pathway aligns well with the generic ToC, especially around creating an enabling environment, and strengthening the skills and awareness of rights-holders and duty-bearers leading to a change in behaviour. The ToC is clear and logical in terms of the pathways of change proposed.

For KIOS, human rights violations are often reflected in flagrant violation of the position of the most vulnerable groups in society. Long-term cooperation is targeted to influence at all levels as well as on general attitudes as well as mechanisms such as legislation and official activities in order to strengthen respect for human rights in practice.

**Figure 4:** KIOS Theory of Change (a full page version is presented as Annex 8)

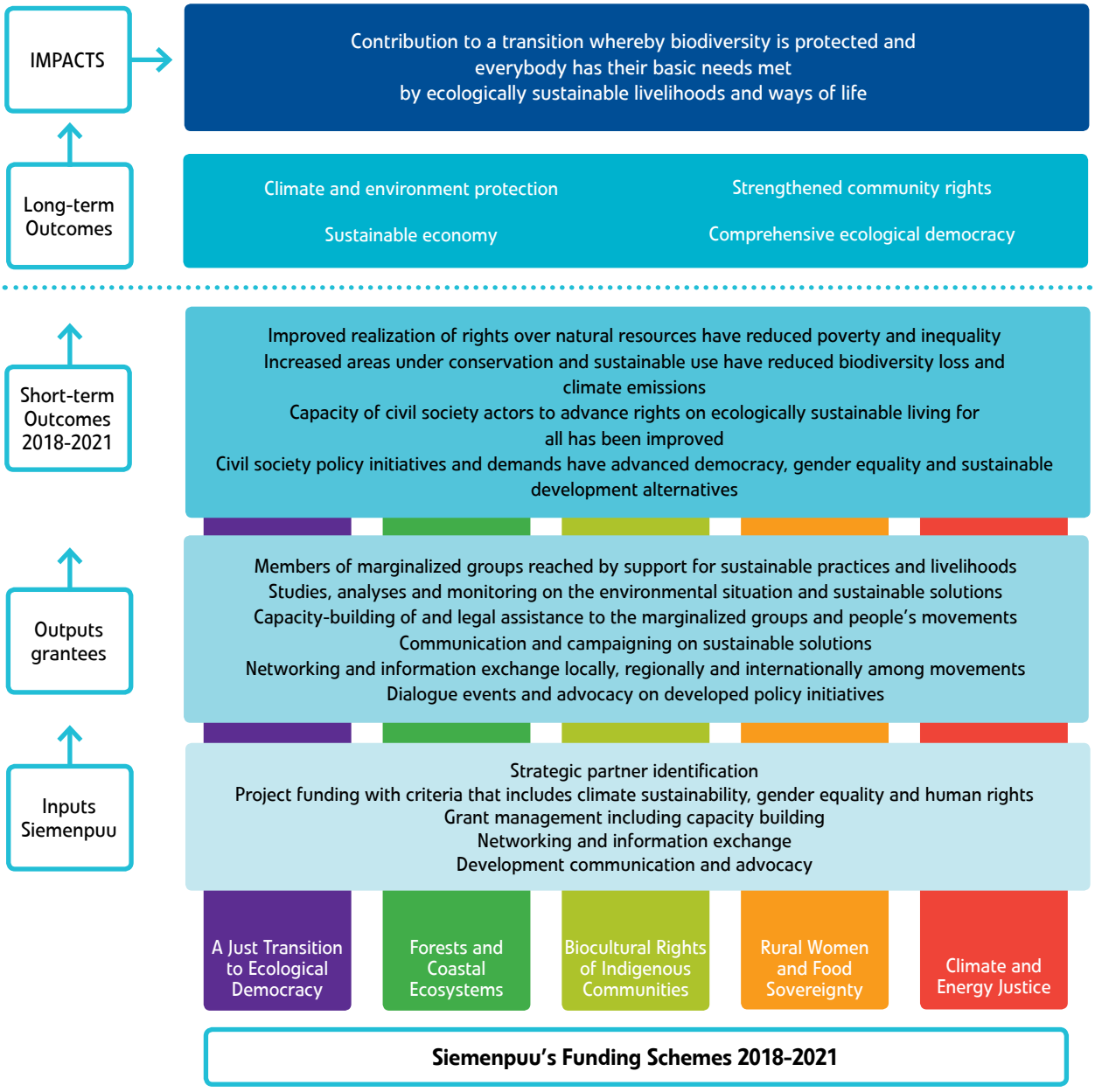



Source: Provided by KIOS to Evaluation Team

For Siemenpuu, they developed their draft ToC also recently (Figure 5). They recognise the importance of global environmental issues that hinder human development and they seek to address these issues through civic engagement and partnership to contribute to enabling people to have their basic needs met with ecologically sustainable livelihoods and ways of life. These issues are tackled through a range of local level civil society activities funded by Siemenpuu to work on studies, analysis and monitoring of the environmental situation, capacity building and legal assistance, communication and campaigns, promotion of sustainable practices, networking and enhancing dialogue.

All three ToCs from the Foundations offer a fair logical assessment of their intended delivery pathways. They would benefit from adding assumptions in order to capture external conditions affecting these pathways.

**Figure 5:** Siemenpuu Theory of Change




Source: Provided by Siemenpuu to Evaluation Team

### Combining service delivery, direct poverty reduction activities, capacity development and advocacy combined into one overall programme

For Abilis the wide range of projects supported and their flexible selection process allows all of these elements to be included. The term 'service delivery' for Abilis refers not only to provision of assisted devices and services, but to persons with disabilities actually choosing and owning how their own services are provided. KIOS and Siemenpuu on the other hand focus more on advocacy and capacity development than service delivery. In the Nepal fieldwork, our evaluation debriefing obtained a range of views on the balance between these areas from CSOs contacted (Table 4). Eight of the 13 CSOs that attended saw themselves as addressing all three areas of service delivery, capacity building and advocacy in their work.

**Table 4:** Self-Assessment of Nepali CSOs at CSO3 debriefing workshop

| CSO | Foundation | Service Delivery | Capacity Building | Advocacy |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cricket Association of the Blind | Abilis | | X | |
| Mother's Society of Intellectual disabilities | Abilis | x | x | x |
| Disable empowerment and Communication Centre | Abilis | x | x | x |
| Entire Power in Social Action | Abilis | | X | |
| Society of Deafblind Parents | Abilis | x | x | x |
| Nepal Haemophilia Society | Abilis | x | x | x |
| The Deaf Association of Rapti | Abilis | x | X | x |
| Federation of Community Forestry Users | Siemenpuu | x | x | x |
| South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy | Siemenpuu | X | x | X |
| Centre for Victims of Torture | KIOS | X | x | x |
| Childspace Foundation | KIOS | X | | |
| Independent Living Centre for Person with Disabilities | KIOS | | | X |
| Informal Sector Service Centre | KIOS | | | X |

Source: Notes of the debriefing workshop with partners at Hotel Malla, Kathmandu, March 10, 2017. Large X denotes the most important activity area

## 4.2 Complementarity, Co-ordination and Coherence

In this section, we assess:

- Have the Foundations' development co-operation work been co-ordinated with the work of other CSOs and development partners?
- Have the Foundations' development co-operation been complementary to the Finnish bilateral development co-operation?
- Have the MFA policies and interventions with regard to Foundations' development co-operation been coherent?

The new Finland Development policy highlights that "In Finland's partner countries, civil society representatives are urged to interact with Finnish diplomatic missions and to take account of other activities supported with Finnish development cooperation funding (MFA, 2016a, p. 44) and All Finnish development cooperation actors are encouraged to engage in regular exchange of information and interaction. Businesses, NGOs, local authorities and higher education institutions are invited to cooperate more closely and will be supported in these efforts. The aim is to make better use of the actors' complementary strengths to support sustainable development (MFA, 2016a).

In this evaluation, **Co-ordination** refers, for example, to joint activities and regular information exchanges with other CSOs, bilateral and multilateral interventions as well as with private sector initiatives. Here the other CSOs refer to those CSOs that are not direct beneficiaries or stakeholders of the CSO work – for example, sister organizations in Finland or other developed countries could fall into this category. **Complementarity** is seen in terms of division of labour between different development actors and MFA's bilateral cooperation interventions. **Coherence** focuses on assessing whether MFA support to the CSO is in line or in contradiction with other MFA policies and interventions – and vice versa.

### Coordination

Each of the Foundations manage a range of interactions with their respective networks:

**Abilis** links actively with disability organisations at international level and in Finland where information exchange occurs. Abilis is part of the International Independent Living and Disability Rights movement and has collaboration with several Finnish foundations and disabilities organisations including Siemenpuu, Rubic, KIOS, Kynnys ry, Kumpuvuori, Egencia, Administer, Zimios, and Roger (Abilis Website, 2016; Abilis, 2015). Abilis has been producing a number of both popular and academic publications. Many of the popular publications are through newsletters of other Finnish DPOs, mainstream journals and newspapers and TV and radio programmes in Finland, and international DPOs, UN agencies and newspapers abroad. The university teaching courses on global disability rights at Helsinki University annual hold about 100 students with Abilis staff as guest lecturers. Students from DIAK University and Åbo Akademi University regularly comes to Abilis for internship. In addition, primary and secondary schools are visited for global education. Seminars have been organized in collaboration with different actors such as with the university on

**Abilis has been producing a number of both popular and academic publications**

disability and global justice in 2015 and with other DPOs and the MFA on inclusive water and sanitation work in 2016. Abilis coordinates closely with its sister CSO, Disability Partnership, attending board and other meetings, and linking with its members such as the Threshold Association. Abilis has regular links also with the Disability Rights Fund, Open Society Foundation, African Disability Forum, Handicap International, International Disability Alliance (IDA) and Nordic DPOs as well as the MFA and other bi-lateral and multi-lateral donors and agencies.

**KIOS** had a more open and flexible funding approach in its earlier years which appeared to have less focus and a too fragmented programme, but this has evolved as a more carefully chosen strategic approach based on the demands of PBS as well as recent funding cuts (HR Adviser, MFA). There was less effort to link activities to other development cooperation of Finland or other donors. However, as a Foundation providing small grants, the modality may not naturally encourage such coordination and complementarity, or to guide funding to activities based on a stronger country context analysis and mapping. The DRC country strategy specifically mentions that a number of donors and CSOs are implementing projects relating to sexual violence and gender based violence (GBV), noting that funding for this specific issue is not very difficult to attain internationally. Thus it recommends that KIOS funds activities, which relate to other human rights violations in the country. This is a positive example of pulling away from sectors in which several development actors are already working. The Afghanistan strategy provides a short introduction to activities of Finnish development cooperation in the country and indicates that KIOS works in areas, which are not reached through bilateral development cooperation of Finland. Similar mapping should perhaps be carried out in other focus countries as well. While, KIOS staff do interact with Finnish Embassies on human rights concerns, enhanced coordination is called for between Finnish Embassies and KIOS (Al-Eryani, 2015a). More recently, KIOS is building a relationship with the Ariadne network (a European funder of human rights) in order to better collaborate with human rights funders.

**Siemenpuu**, because it often operates through regional networks and alliances and supports engagement in wider fora, such as the World Social Forum, has shown that coordination underpins its work with partners. It is very active in networking in various forums in Finland and internationally, where coordination of work with other similar initiatives is effective.

It can be noted that joint funding is not a common practice with the Foundations as they tend to manage their projects independently and do not seek co-funding arrangements. This limits the potential leverage and synergies that could be brought about by cooperation in this way.

Finally coordination occurs between the three Foundations themselves, involving shared discussions and exchanges over their engagement with MFA, and in supervision work on behalf of each other.

**Enhanced coordination is called for between Finnish Embassies and KIOS**

**Joint funding is not a common practice**

## Complementarity and filling gaps in Finnish aid

The Foundations offer a complementary approach to other forms of Finnish development cooperation

It is evident that the Foundations offer a complementary approach to other forms of Finnish development cooperation. **Abilis** provides funding for grassroots DPOs where the persons with disabilities themselves act and thus has strongly created cooperation and coordinated its work with other organisations at different levels. At the same time the good coordination and cooperation create channels for Abilis to promote its approach. The work of Abilis is also in line with Finland's former and current development policy, as well as with Finland's commitment to promote the rights of the persons with disabilities. Due to its disability expertise, Abilis is considered to have a clear added value for MFA in the implementation of the policy (Fiant, 2016).

**KIOS** provides a highly complementary channel for MFA to pursue its human rights agenda. It allows sensitive human rights work to be conducted without the direct involvement of the Finnish government, and for information flows to take place between the CSO and its partners and the formal Finnish channels. It is also easier for MFA to track the use of its funds through the Foundations when compared to the multilateral support that MFA also provides but which is then merged with other funders. There is also close communication between the Foundations, particularly KIOS, in informing MFA of human rights issues particularly around human rights defenders and abuses by state authorities. MFA acknowledges the strong expertise of the Foundations in their respective fields.

For **Siemenpuu**, complementarity appears good as well. Recipients noted to the evaluation that they appreciated the flexible and long term support without imposing any particular approaches which sets them apart from other donors. As a Foundation operating from Finland, it brings certain a profile of neutrality and little historical, colonial or political baggage. This allows NGO recipients to operate in sensitive situations and in a setting of mutual respect. Siemenpuu is also very active in networking and sharing information in different forums, where coordination of work with other similar and complementary initiatives is quite efficiently done. Some studies note that there is room for better communication and joint objective setting for the supported programmes and networks (Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015; Sunchindah & Theeratha, 2014; Simarmata, 2016).

Not enough use is made of the Foundations' expertise by MFA and embassies

On the other hand, there is evidence that not enough use is made of the Foundations' expertise by MFA and embassies in relation to bilateral cooperation and LCF grants as well as with NGOs acting in the field (Olesen and Endeshaw, 2013). Earlier the evidence showed that complementarity could be further enhanced through more thorough analysis of the country situation, and greater efforts to collaborate with other partners in those countries (Williams et al, 2008). A study on inclusive education also noted that there was little systematic coordination at country level in this area (Nielsen, 2015). However, Abilis has been supporting various regional and country networks to tackle this issue. Their support for the Africa Disability Forum is a good illustration of this.

## Added Value to Finnish Bilateral Interventions

By demonstrating the possibility of addressing and mainstreaming disability, environmental issues and human rights, the Foundations are able to make other Finnish development actors aware of the potential in this field, and for example the possibility for disabled persons themselves to act. This has increased the reach and influence of Finnish development cooperation action beyond the bilateral programme.

## Coherence

There may be occasions where, because the Foundations work through partners whose goal is to challenge the status quo, seek redress of rights and question state-led policies and programmes, there is a conscious lack of coherence with the predominant development modalities that may be growth-led or private sector rather than community-driven. This apparent dichotomy may not always apply and depends on local contexts. The local civil society organizations may aim to improve the existing policy situation, by drawing on field experience or international "best practices," or advocating that their national government implement international agreements that have been signed and ratified (Williams, 2008).

**There may be occasions where, there is a conscious lack of coherence with the predominant development modalities**

The Foundations do address MFA key policies around human rights, gender, disability and climate change. At the same time, they have not been fully aligned with the MFA's less developed county priorities, although the more recent strategies have shown a move towards such LDCs and fragile states. KIOS and Siemenpuu are still funding projects in India for example, while MFA has no major cooperation programme there (KIOS' support for Socio-Legal Information Center, SLIC, however is focused on regional capacity building in Bangladesh, Nepal and elsewhere, and Siemenpuu has closed one of its programmes, the Tamil Nadu Programme in India).

Abilis' introduction of disability diplomacy has strengthened its coherence in terms of influencing Finnish development policy around disability issues (Fiant Consulting, 2016). But the view of several reviews is that all three Foundations still have gaps to fill in terms of building further coherence and collaboration with the private sector and with some Finnish embassies. With the private sector, this is not easy and requires stronger communication to ensure Finnish private sector investments do not operate in a way that counteracts the work of the Foundations and to find ways to work in a more coherent and coordinated manner. While there is frequent contact and visits by the Foundations with relevant embassies, it is the view of one MFA adviser that there needs to be closer cooperation to improve coherence of activities.

## 4.3 Efficiency

### 4.3.1 Results-based management practices

In this section, we assess:

- Have Foundations focused its planning on programmatic results?
- Have the Foundations adequate human resources?
- Have the Foundations adequate financial management?
- Have the Foundations applied results-based monitoring, evaluation and reporting?
- Have the Foundations adequate risk management practices at place?
- Have sufficient resources been allocated to integrating CCOs and human rights into the programmes?

The CSOs are expected to have RBM systems

The MFA 2015 guidelines on RBM define the Results Chain Model – referring to inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts – as the key methodology for RBM, emphasizing also a six step risk management approach. The aim is to shift the management approaches from inputs, activities and processes to actual results and their usage. Although no specific methodology for RBM (MFA, 2015c) is imposed by the MFA, the CSOs are expected to have RBM systems with adequate planning, management and M&E. The CSOs have been able to select the RBM method most suitable for their organizational cultures, as long as they fulfil the following the key requirements:

- **Planning** – The CSOs have to produce clear programme-level plans, based on their own strategies and taking into account Finland's development policy and related guidelines. Clear programmatic objectives with indicators are expected to be defined. The Programme Plan is considered as a strategy-level plan that covers the whole period of the programme concerned, while the Annual Plans form the operational level of planning in the process, where funding is provided annually.
- **Management** – The CSOs are expected to ensure adequate programme, staff and financial management. The programme management refers to clear management systems based on strategies, planning processes and systems, M&E and reporting systems, and systems for using M&E data in management for learning. Staff management includes elements such as staffing plans, clear job descriptions and organograms, frequent development discussions and continuous staff training. Financial management comprises systems for budgeting, financial management and reporting and auditing.
- **Monitoring and evaluation** – The CSOs need to prepare Annual Reports for the MFA summarizing the lessons learnt from the monitoring and evaluation processes. The reports are expected to highlight results of the work by the CSOs, including their sustainability.

### Box 4. MFA Risk Management Approach

The risk management approach defined in the RBM guidelines includes the following steps:

- Determine the contextual risks such as global, region / country-level or global / thematic political risks.
- Identify potential programmatic and institutional risks. This includes, for example, programme failure or programme creating adverse impacts in the external environment. Institutional risks are for example related to internal risks of the partner or donor, or operational security and reputational risk issues.
- Estimate the level of likelihood and impact for risks with low/medium/high categories.
- Identify main risks according to their likelihood and impact with focus on risks with high likelihood and high impact.
- Identify risk response measures such as mitigation measures and/or avoidance of risk through reformulation of the programme/project.
- Active risk mitigation strategy during the implementation of interventions, including monitoring of risks and implementation of risk mitigation when necessary.

Source: MFA, 2015c

## Planning and decision-making practices

The Management structures of the Foundations are similar. Each foundation has its own Board which works on a voluntary basis and is responsible for the management of strategic planning and decisions such as funding decisions for the grants to local partners in the South. Additionally, the Foundations have a small paid staff for day to day management and communication. The Foundations management teams' develop their strategy with guidance from their respective Boards. This is then used to guide the selection of grant requests received from applicants in the South. The three Foundations are increasing efficiency and communication among themselves by sharing an office space since 2005. This has supported regular meetings among directors, visiting each other's projects, thematic trainings, common cyber space and other mutually supportive activities.

**The Management structures of the Foundations are similar**

**Abilis** is represented and managed by a Board of Directors, which currently comprises seven full members and two deputy members, who are elected for a term of two calendar years (Abilis Website, 2016). The Board appoints an Executive Director, who is responsible for administrative and financial management according to the rulings of the Board. At HQ Abilis had 13 permanent and one temporary staff member, however, due to budget cuts three members of staff were terminated in 2015 and 2016, while others have moved from full-time to part-time. HQ staff include project coordinators who liaise with POs in the Global South, financial officer, information and communication secretary, and research and development manager. POs work in-country with the grassroots projects, each of which have their own Abilis Review Board (ARB) members, leaders and facilitators.

**KIOS** is managed and represented by a Board of Directors, which meets approximately six times per year. The Board members were previously elected for a one-year term, but the revised rules of 2016 have extended this to two years (2016, 6 §). The eleven founding organisations of KIOS have a representative seat in the Board of KIOS, which has the mandate to formulate the strategy of the foundation and is its final decision making body. These organisations nominate a member and vice member to the Board. The Chairman of the Board holds the title of Chairman of the Foundation. The role of the Board is to ensure appropriate organisation of the foundation and to further develop its work. All applications require final approval from the Board (KIOS, 2002a). KIOS currently has seven full-time staff members including the Director, Communications Coordinator, Administrative Secretary, three Regional Experts, and a Fund- raising Assistant. KIOS also welcomes several interns annually.

**Siemenpuu** has a Council formed by its Founding organisations. The Council elects the Siemenpuu Executive Board annually. Each of the founding organisations has the right to appoint candidates to the board. The board's term of office is one calendar year, and it has approximately ten meetings during the year. Members of the Board (minimum 6 and maximum 10 members and their deputies) are elected in their personal capacity, rather than representing a specific organisation. The Board steers the strategic development of the Foundation and is responsible, among other duties, for approving all grants, and providing oversight on the activities of the Foundation, including monitoring of grants through periodic visits to its partners. The Chairperson receives a monthly honorarium, other Board members work on a voluntary basis, although they do receive reimbursement for expenses, such as monitoring trips. Siemenpuu has currently seven staff members including the director, five programme coordinators one of whom is also the communications coordinator and the Financial Coordinator.

Additionally, Siemenpuu has organised volunteer groups supporting the clusters of projects (earlier called cooperation programmes (Siemenpuu, 2009: Long Term Action Plan for 2010-2015). These groups consist of members of the Foundation Council, Executive Board, representatives of the founding organisations and other experts and activists. These groups develop and support their respective clusters (programmes) including identification of cooperation partners, preparing project funding decision, deepening cooperation and communication with the partners and supporting projects during implementation. (Siemenpuu, 2015: Long-term action plan 2016-2021)

## Planning and project selection

The Foundations prepare a range of planning documents including brief strategy papers and annual plans. Abilis has a 2010-2015 strategy and then a 2016-2021 strategy (approved by the Board in Dec. 2014). They have also produced country strategy papers for their principle countries of engagement. KIOS equally employs Strategies (2011-2015 and 2016-2020), country strategies, programme plan (for the MFA; the ongoing programme funding covers years 2016 and 2017), and annual plans. Siemenpuu also uses long-term action plans for example,2016-2021, multi-year plans (latest 2016-2018), annual action plans and annual reports.

By virtue of their constitution as grant-making bodies, the Foundations advertise through various channels for grant applications in their targeted countries. Through a range of past contacts and through their partner organisations these requests are prepared, screened and processed. The Foundations operate in somewhat different ways in terms of flexibility. Abilis provide a large number of small grants to many different grassroots formal and informal groups (DPOs), KIOS is working with a smaller set of longer-term NGOs who have often been working with KIOS over several years and normally have a track record in implementing HR work in their country of operation. Siemenpuu has moved towards a thematic programme approach in different regions, within which certain grantees are identified and supported often over several years.

The Foundations use human rights based approaches in their planning and project management and are thus well aligned with the HRBA of the MFA even though not all the aspects of human rights are equally weighted by the Foundations (except for KIOS).

MFA views are well incorporated in the Foundations planning procedures as the annual plans are approved by the MFA and since 2016 the MFA desk officers also approve all the Foundations' funding decisions of over € 2,500. The pre-approval process takes some time but also makes the desk officers more involved in the work of the Foundations and they also have opportunity to comment and get embassy feedback on the proposed projects.

## Human Resources

Overall, the Foundations have a relatively small number of HQ staff and many are operating on a part-time basis. The HQ staff is fully responsible for grant making and management of the ongoing projects, checking the reporting, monitoring etc. Staffing of the Foundations is explained in some more detail above.

**The Foundations have a relatively small number of HQ staff and many are operating on a part-time basis**

The Foundations do not traditionally have any staff in developing countries. Abilis has the most need for local presence due to the nature of the works supported through the grassroots DPOs. Earlier Abilis was using partner organisations in the focus countries to facilitate this work but is now moving towards a country office model as the partner organisation model often had difficulties in reaching the grassroots and avoiding political and social influencing. The country office model will be based on a local facilitator directly hired by Abilis. Country offices are being established in Tanzania, Uganda, and in Nepal. The local office and facilitator need to also have a broader accountability to a review board or some such mechanism which has not yet been practices in some countries (e.g. Nepal) where the process for establishing the office is in progress.

Since MFA is the sole source of funding currently for all Foundations, all staff are allocated to MFA-supported work. Overall, some 26 staff have handled a total PBS budget of € 54 million over the period. Compared to some other CSOs, the number of staff is quite small compared to the overall programme budget but on the other hand the Foundations are not directly supporting the implementation of the funded projects and programmes, so staffing levels are reasonable. The MFA funding cuts of 2016 have led to some staff being laid off and some moving to part-time contracts and this has caused quite a work load on the existing staff.

The Foundations comply with the MFA financial requirements

Foundations have spent 96% of budgeted funds

## Financial management

The Foundations comply with the MFA financial requirements in reporting, efficiency of financial management as well as in terms of raising the required 7.5% self-funding. The three Foundations have actually agreed and practiced collection of 10% self-financing from the supported projects, exceeding the MFA requirement. For example the Fiant (2016) evaluation states: 'The financial resources for managing grant-making mechanisms seem to be used in an efficient way, especially considering that the administration and programme costs were clearly under the percentages defined in the agreement with the MFA'.

Disbursements from the Foundations have been very efficient. Over the period 2010-2015, the Foundations have spent 96% of budgeted funds, with Abilis 96%, KIOS 102%, and Siemenpuu 91% disbursement rates over the period.

The Foundations have three categories of non-project costs: project planning and evaluation, information and publicity, and administration. Figure 2 provides an indication of the division of expenditures of PBS funding from 2010 to 2015. There are only small differences in division of expenditure between the Foundations with Abilis and KIOS spending 68-69% on project costs and Siemenpuu around 71% while the Project Planning and Evaluation and Resource development costs (called Project cycle management costs by KIOS) are slightly higher for Abilis and KIOS.

The financial management and grant management procedures and processes of the Foundations are efficient and adequate and the disbursements and follow-up of financial management is working well.

## Monitoring, reporting and evaluation practices

Foundations use the application process for ensuring that the grant applicants and the funded projects have clear baseline information and have taken into account the specific context while setting the targets for outputs and outcomes. If these issues are not clearly taken into account, additional information may be sought before the application is approved. The CCOs are taken into account in the application formats and the procedure of application screening and evaluation.

The monitoring and reporting mechanisms are briefly as follows:

1. Each organisation receiving funding is obliged to report the outcome and results of the project as well as the use of the grant in the final report of the project. Additionally, an interim report or two interim reports are submitted during project implementation.
2. During field trips, foundations monitor the work in the funded projects and work with the partner organisations in order to guarantee optimal results.
3. Each foundation documents its activities in its annual reports. For a broader audience, websites are a source of information regarding the foundation's work.

All three Foundations have also focused their activities towards a more limited number of countries and partners after the initial global reach. Abilis uses its POs to coordinate and support several projects in their countries, KIOS is

mainly supporting known partners in a limited number of countries and Siemenpuu has moved to a limited number of partnership programmes receiving majority of their funding. This has helped the foundations to be more strategic in targeting their support and to have a better overview of the results and the partner's capacity. Siemenpuu is also commissioning external evaluations of the partnership programmes every five years to learn, improve and reorient the programmes as necessary.

The indicator setting is left to the grant applicant but the application formats of the Foundations do not really focus on indicators. There have been moves towards developing programme level indicators and working to harmonise some of these with the projects to make aggregation possible. Abilis has been working on developing programme level indicators since 2012 that can be used broadly for aggregation of results and are also empowering the beneficiaries through focusing attention on issues of participation. These have been developed together with country facilitators and some of the DPOs. (Abilis, 2016b). KIOS has also worked on including more detailed indicators in their application formats. This has led to some lack of clarity around indicators especially for the outcome and higher levels. The output level normally does have relevant indicators.

**There have been moves towards developing programme level indicators**

The Foundations do monitor the funded projects but the mechanisms for this are somewhat varied. **Abilis** funds a large number of very small projects so they rely largely on the country level facilitators or the partner organisations for monitoring of individual activities while also doing field visits from Finland to some 80-90 projects per year. Field visits by the country facilitators include pre-appraisal visit and field visits during implementation. The visits are reported using standardised forms that include indicators. Monitoring has a strong focus on assessing how the beneficiary organisations and individuals have been empowered. The approach includes pre- and post-project questionnaires whereby the individual beneficiaries may report their experiences. Reporting is based on the size of the project; less than € 2,500 projects produce a final report, over € 2,500 projects mid-term and final reports.

**KIOS** has larger and longer term partnerships and often visits the partners before making the decision for funding and do conduct monitoring visits by KIOS's coordinators every 1-2 years to each project. Reports with recommendations are prepared after each field trip. Projects Report based on the instructions given in the KIOS Project Management and Reporting Guide. Short narrative reports are prepared, with some focus on results, for financial reporting clear templates are provided.

**Siemenpuu** works through the priority programmes under which there are often several small projects. The programmes are visited roughly annually for monitoring. Short mission reports with key findings and recommendations are prepared. The applicants also monitor the projects with their own systems. Reporting to Siemenpuu is conducted with the Foundation's standard forms for Progress Reports and Final Reports). Data from Final Reports is processed in Siemenpuu's Annual Report. Siemenpuu is in a process to develop some aggregated indicators for cluster (thematic) level results reporting.

The study for CSO 1 evaluation on the RBM mechanisms of the PBS organisations (Silfverberg, 2016) gives an outline of the database and knowledge management systems of the Foundations as well. The Foundations have the following systems in use.

**Abilis** has a rather comprehensive package of standardized tools including the following:

- Guidelines for internal processes (application processing and fund management, decision making, HRBA-guidelines, quality assurance, field visits, reporting)
- Manuals for applicants (Project planning manual, Proposal writing manual, Reporting manual, Good governance manual, HRBA manual)
- Templates and forms (application form, reporting forms, funding criteria, etc.)
- Database on projects including financial data as well M&E and reporting

The manuals for applicants are very simple and illustrative (reflecting the low capacity and even illiteracy of the supported groups) and are provided in the key languages of Abilis' partners.

**KIOS** include tools for programme management include the following:

- KIOS Strategy Document 2011-2015
- KIOS Application Guide and application forms
- KIOS Project Management and Reporting Guide and reporting forms
- Application assessment criteria and template
- KIOS budgeting and financial management tools

The Programme plan and specific country profiles and strategies provide strategic background for KIOS's management.

**Siemenpuu**'s tools include the following:

- Project administration process matrix
- Database for project management (internal + partly open for partners to be used for reporting and peer learning)
- Project concept paper and application forms
- Forms for assessment of applications
- Manual for financial management
- Progress report form for applicants and internal form for assessment of reporting
- Final report form for applicants and internal form for assessment of the report
- Guidelines for monitoring trips

Other tools include the by-laws, management regulations, guidelines on best practices and various policy documents and communications principles.

The Foundations report based on the MFA requirements drawing on the data from the grantee projects to report on the achieved outputs and outcomes. Still, as funding agencies, the Foundations have mainly been reporting on the grant disbursement and management with some description of outcomes and outputs. Indicators or systems for aggregating programme revel outcomes are being developed though, most notably by Abilis. Such systems are being developed through more systematic indictor setting presently.

The reporting and monitoring is based on HRBA principles and done by generally grassroots based or linked organisations representing the voices of the beneficiaries in most cases. The communication and advocacy work in Finland has been done but not in a large scale and the work of the Foundations is quite unknown for the greater Finnish public. Only recently the Foundations have started focusing more on communication work in Finland.

**Evaluations**: The Foundations have invested in a large number of evaluations over the past 5 years. Those available to the evaluation have been assessed in terms of their scope and results in Annex 7.

**The Foundations have invested in a large number of evaluations over the past 5 years**

**Abilis** has had external evaluations conducted in some of the supported countries. For example, in 2015-2016 evaluations covered Cambodia, Ethiopia and Vietnam (e.g. Fiant, 2016). Mostly evaluative processes are conducted internally by grantees as self-assessments, country facilitators evaluations and visits to completed projects. At the same time, internal evaluations have been conducted on some specific thematic areas (such as indicators, FTS, and the partnership model) as well as on specific countries (Kazakhstan, and Nepal). Findings from monitoring and evaluation are processed systematically through travel reports and processing of evaluation findings for Board discussions.

**KIOS** has commissioned over 10 external and additionally a few internal or semi-external evaluations of the supported projects in the past 5-6 years. The findings of evaluations are discussed at KIOS Board and are used for future planning. However, the partners have the main responsibility for taking action based on the evaluation recommendations.

**Siemenpuu** thematic programmes (project clusters) are evaluated approximately every 5 years. Sometimes, also project evaluations are conducted. Evaluations include external and self-evaluation processes. In addition, partners are encouraged to carry out their own self-evaluations and external evaluations. M&E plans are requested to be included in the applications but these are not an obligatory element of the application. Findings from project evaluations are first of all aimed to be used by the projects themselves for internal learning. Reports are reviewed using the report assessment templates, and based on the findings, guidance is given to the projects. Results data are collected in the reporting at project, cluster and Programme levels. M&E findings are used for development of the project cycle and guidance, calls for proposals as well as for substance-related developments at cluster level. In general, results feed to programme planning. To support programming, Siemenpuu tries now to develop some aggregated indicators for more cohesive assessment of results.

Reviews have pointed out the need for more thorough guidance on risk assessment and mitigation

## Risk Management

The Foundations have to manage the risks related to supporting diverse projects in often difficult contexts and without country presence in most cases. The main tool for managing the risks for all the Foundations is through their application procedures and the selection of implementation partners. Various reviews have pointed out the need for more thorough guidance on risk assessment and mitigation, especially at programme level. This could include the assessment of broader regional /country level or political risks in order to determine their influence on the broader programme objectives.

**Abilis** has used POs and lately country facilitators in the focus countries to support in reaching out to the partners and in supporting in managing the multiple small partners and projects throughout the process from application period through implementation, reporting and follow-up. Abilis also has Risk Management and Quality Assurance handbooks that are used to systematize the risk management of the large volume of projects they support. According to the interviewed board members, also the small size of the grants is one kind of risk management tool. As Abilis has strategically selected to support small and often new DPOs the project management capacities and procedures of the partners are low and thus the risks are quite high. The small funding amounts and working directly with the beneficiaries (often the DPO members are among the beneficiaries of the projects themselves) reduces the risk of financial mismanagement. Also the country presence and follow-up through the partner organisations and Abilis facilitators is used to manage risks as well as build the capacities of the implementing DPOs.

**KIOS** supports work in contexts that are often risky in terms of political and security concerns. The work is often also hard to monitor. The main risk management tool for KIOS is the partner selection process where they often invest in going to visit the proposed partner organisation and study their track record in implementing similar human rights work before making the funding decision. The analysis of the country context and situation is also important in guiding the funding decision and if KIOS does support work in risky context they do it knowingly weighting the importance of the supported work to the taken risk. Yet, KIOS recognises the need to further strengthen this critical area in its work going forward (Al-Eryani, 2015b).

**Siemenpuu** also manages the risks related to the supported projects and programmes mainly through the funding decision process as well as the overall project management systems. Siemenpuu often supports long-term programmes and the initial funding decision has often been based on existing connections to the supported organisation or at least analysis of their work in the past. The continued support to known organisations and the support to smaller CSOs and initiatives through known programme partners reduces the risks related to financial mismanagement and quality of supported work and reporting. Similarly to KIOS, Siemenpuu also analyses the contexts and in some cases projects in risky contexts are supported as the possible benefits are seen to outweigh the risks related to supporting such work.

### 4.3.2 Management of programme-based support by the MFA

In this section, we discuss the role of the MFA in efficient management of PBS and assess:

- Has the MFA an adequate framework and resources for overseeing the Foundations work?
- Has the MFA incentivized and supported results-based management by the Foundations?

There are two staff in the MFA CSO unit covering the Foundations (one covering Siemenpuu and the other Abilis and KIOS). These staff also have other project management responsibilities so they can only dedicate part of their time for monitoring and supporting the extensive programmes supported by the Foundations. As a result the time of the MFA desks covering the Foundations is largely taken up with going through and pre-approving the funding decisions of the Foundations since the funding decision duty has been brought back to MFA in 2016. This is a cumbersome task and in the case of Abilis the under € 2,500 projects are not pre-approved to reduce the work load. However, this work is also seen by the MFA staff to be beneficial in making them more involved and aware of the work supported by the Foundations. The MFA advisors for HR, environment, vulnerable groups and social protection support the work as necessary.

**The time of the MFA desks is largely taken up with going through and pre-approving the funding decisions**

Partnership meetings occur annually and the MFA desk officers are regularly in touch with the Foundations. Especially with the MFA decision to approve all new funded projects over € 2,500, the communication and feedback mechanism is quite active and the Embassies are also involved as the desk officers ask them about the context and the supported organisations in many cases. While there is regular engagement between the Foundations and the CSO unit, the CSO unit staff have limited opportunity to make field visits but when some MFA staff visit countries where work of the Foundations is supported they do also look into it to the extent possible (interviews with MFA staff 2017).

The MFA gives feedback on the annual reports, however the Foundations in general feel that MFA has provided limited feedback over the evaluation period, and it has also been difficult to follow the RBM guidance.

## 4.4 Effectiveness

### 4.4.1 Achievement of outputs

In this section, we assess:

- Have the Foundations outputs matched the intended targets?
- Have the Foundations outputs been of good quality?

In this evaluation, outputs refer to CSO activities such as capacity building, service and goods provision, networking and exchanges as well as advocacy in partner countries and Finland.

The annual reports have not aimed to aggregate the project portfolio

Projects achieve the set outputs well

## Achievement of outputs

The Foundations fund a large number of relatively small projects. The application procedure is used to ensure that the funded projects are feasible and aligned with the Foundation priorities and the CCOs and key policies of the Finnish development cooperation. The annual reports of the foundations have not aimed to aggregate the project portfolio rather giving descriptive account on the effectiveness of some of the funded projects. Only for the last (2015 and especially 2016) annual reports there have been more efforts on aggregation and improved indicator setting but the results of these efforts cannot be fully evaluated yet but the recent aggregation efforts and past evaluations indicate high level of output achievement.

In general, the projects achieve the set outputs well based on their reporting and monitoring as well as the past evaluations. Most of the projects complete the planned activities and achieve the planned outputs but of course in such a large number of projects there are also cases of unsuccessful projects due to either issues related to the implementing partner capacity or external circumstances making the achievement of outputs impossible. As reported by the Foundations themselves a very large percentage of the finished projects have met the set objectives (outputs) the percentages reported in the draft annual reports for 2016 are over 90%. Also the earlier evaluations conducted on the Foundations' projects largely indicate that the set outputs were achieved by large majority of the supported projects.

In the case of **Abilis** the recent programme level evaluation states that the expected outputs were usually achieved in all three countries (Fiant, 2016). Similar results are reported in the Abilis internal evaluation and monitoring reports. For example in 2016 Abilis supported 234 successful projects while 11 projects (about 4,5%) had to be terminated due to low implementation capacity of the implementing DPO. Thus over 95% of the supported large number of projects have been successfully implemented and have at least mostly achieved the set outputs. Similar results are reported in the 2015 Annual report. (Abilis, 2017; Abilis, 2015.)

From **KIOS** evaluations conducted over the past 6 years it is evident that the projects largely achieve and often exceed the set outputs. The project activities and immediate outputs have been reported fully met by several past evaluations (e.g. Bhattarai, 2016; FOHRID, 2013; Hipo-Africa, 2016; KIOS, 2015; Masitsa, 2014, Ngugi & Nduta, 2015; Tuladhar, 2016). The annual report of 2016 includes self-evaluation of the projects that ended in 2016 (22 projects). Out of those 2 are seen to have exceeded expectations, 18 succeeded as expected and only two had achievements below the expected. Thus, around 91% of the projects that ended in 2016 had at least achieved the set outputs. Similar results are reported on the 34 projects that ended in 2015 with around 90% at least achieving the set outputs. (KIOS, 2017; KIOS, 2016b) The self-evaluation of the partners of projects that ended in 2010-2013 also shows high level of output achievement (Al-Eryani, 2015a).

**Siemenpuu** project and programme evaluations conducted over the past 5-6 years report generally a very high level of achievement of the set output level targets years (e.g. Garg et al., 2012; Simarmata, 2016; Sunchindah & Theetharam,

2014). The same is reported in the Siemenpuu annual reports even though there is no clear aggregation of self-evaluation to give an overall picture of the percentage of output achievement. The financial reporting on the completed projects in for example 2016 and 2015 shows only very small number of financial issues encountered in the supported projects. (Siemenpuu, 2016; Siemenpuu, 2017)

As analysed above there is a positive overall trend of achieving the intended outputs in the project supported by the three Foundation but for example in the Abilis Fast-Track Review (Abilis, 2016a) a common obstacle was found among unsuccessful grantees setting themselves unachievable goals, e.g. purchasing overly expensive resources that were unable to achieve the expected profit. Similar issues in unrealistic objective setting especially at higher levels are found in some of the projects supported by all of the Foundations (e.g. Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015; FOHRID, 2013).

The high level of output achievement can be largely explained by the ownership of the projects by the implementing organisations who have applied for support for their own priority activities that they also diligently implement.

**The high level of output achievement can be largely explained by the ownership of the projects**

### 4.4.2 Achievement of outcomes

In this section, we assess:

- Have the Foundations' development co-operation work yielded intended outcomes?
- Have the Foundations' outcomes been significant and have there been unintended outcomes?

In this evaluation, outcomes refer to CSO achievements such as strengthened capacity for example in terms of skills, financing and organizational strength, access to quality services, increased awareness or improved legislation.

Overall, it is difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the Foundations in reaching the set outcomes of the projects they support as the past evaluations have mostly focused on small parts of the overall supported programme and there has been very little programme level aggregation of results and indicators during the evaluation period - although the most recent reports in 2016 do make attempts to do this.

**There has been very little programme level aggregation of results**

**Abilis'** internal and external evaluations have emphasised that the nature of working with grassroots DPOs and persons with disabilities perhaps requires a different approach, and an understanding that effects of CSO work are often less concrete, for instance, being based on psychological progress. Instead Abilis operationalises the HRBA through its selection process, training and manuals, as well as through measuring the achievements of targets. The Fiant evaluation 2016 recommended a further concretisation of Abilis' RBM objectives and HRBA at the global level.

The interviews and observations of the evaluation team also highlight the issue of difficulties in measuring the outcomes of the projects in many cases. On the other hand, the strategic decision to support small projects of small grassroots DPOs that are often new to project management is showing clear outcomes in

building the capacity and confidence of the involved individuals and organisations. The DPOs become more active and respected and are often able to access other funding, either from local government funds or external donors after the Abilis supported project. The involved individuals become more active leaders in their communities and strong advocates and role models for disability rights.

**Improved self-confidence, interpersonal communication, and social networking**

The 2016 external evaluation (Fiant, 2016), which studied Abilis' projects in Ethiopia, Cambodia and Vietnam emphasised the gap in monitoring data and analysis that limited findings on effectiveness and sustainability. However, the evaluation did highlight some results, including improved self-confidence, interpersonal communication, and social networking. Participants also got the opportunity to earn an income, however, there was less evidence of financial benefits at the individual level. In addition, the evaluation noted reduced discrimination and increased community encouragement (p. 5). In this respect, Abilis appears to be meeting its objective of creating a more enabling environment in the project locations, and contributing to the achievement of Finnish policy objectives and the CCOs, by reducing inequalities and promoting gender equality, although evidence was not found on climate change sustainability, which requires further analysis.

**The country office model has positive effects so far**

The introduction of the country office model, with national and regional coordinators, has been highlighted by the evaluation 2016 as having positive effects so far, in particular on strengthening project management and reporting (Fiant, 2016). In addition, with regards to the Fast-Track (FT) Scheme, most of the facilitators interviewed for the Fast Track Scheme Report (FTSR) (Abilis, 2016a) were of the opinion that FT projects managed to achieve their goals with longer-term effect. With the limited scope of FT projects, resource and timeframe, applicants that set clear and short-term goals were seen by interviewees as successful. Although some positive signs of effectiveness have been found both in previous evaluations and through interviews and observations for this evaluation, further analysis of the overall project portfolio is needed to provide more substantial evidence.

At the outcome level the improved self-confidence and inter-personal communication skills and social networking can be seen as very important outcomes (Fiant, 2016). This is further supported by recent results in Abilis' Annual Report 2016, where a growing level of data aggregation has been possible. Evidence here suggests that two thirds of beneficiaries knew about their rights and also took part of community social events following their involvement in Abilis-supported projects. The report states that participation of women and girls increased markedly.

**Reporting is largely output based**

**KIOS** has not been reporting on specific programme level outcomes or aggregated results of the supported projects. Rather, the annual reports have tended to provide generalised overviews of country situations and projects. KIOS partners do provide interim and final reports in which they are supposed to report on project results. KIOS experts/coordinators prepare a Finnish interim / final report on each project based on the reports provided by the partners and adding in their own observations and assessments. Reporting is largely output based, providing information on the number of trainings provided, number of

participants and so on. This has been largely due to lack of indicators for higher level targets of the projects. The recently developed new application forms and guidelines put more emphasis on indicator setting and measurement of results.

Partners have reported good performance of the supported projects and that KIOS does not shy from sensitive human rights issues and works with groups that do not receive much assistance from other donors, this is the added value of KIOS (Al-Eryani, 2015a). One interviewed partner indicated that larger donors are discouraged from working with sensitive issues because of government pressure and therefore direct their funding towards areas that are considered "safe" such as children's rights. The interventions are normally well planned and effective in reaching the set outputs and results even while working on sensitive issues in difficult contexts (e.g. Bhattarai, 2016; KIOS, 2015, Masitsa, 2014; FOHRID, 2013).

Past evaluations have also reported positive outcomes in terms of increased confidence and capacity of the beneficiaries (e.g. Bhattarai, 2016; Bukeni, 2015; Masitsa, 2014; Pörsti, 2013; Raghuram & Chaturvedi, 2014). Some of the evaluations also report substantial reduction of harmful practices such as female circumcision (Ngugi & Nduta, 2015) and violence against women (Bhattarai, 2016). Many of the projects have also been effective in building the capacity of implementing organisations and related CBOs, and these organisations have been able to continue the work and access other funding and a stronger status in national and international fora after the KIOS supported project ended (e.g. HIPo-Africa, 2016; KIOS, 2015; Raghuram & Chaturvedi, 2014).

**Positive outcomes in terms of increased confidence and capacity of the beneficiaries**

However, some of the past evaluations raise concerns about the effectiveness of the advocacy and policy level work of the supported projects while community level work has been effective (e.g. FOHRID, 2013; Tuladhar, 2016). In such cases there needs to be more detailed thinking on the targets and mechanisms for the advocacy work.

**Siemenpuu** largely supports advocacy and policy influencing work that has no easily measurable outcomes in the short term. In some cases clear policy or conservation results have been achieved during the project period but the work is valuable as a way of civic involvement, networking and continued advocacy. Thus, measuring the effectiveness of many of the projects is very difficult in terms of quantifiable outcomes or results. The supported projects do build the capacity of the partners and communities to raise their voice and advocate for their issues as well as link them to wider networks as well as supporting improved dialogue and learning between the South and the North. The work is largely focused on building the civil society and supporting civic and activist movements and agencies that may not otherwise have any funding support. In some cases there have been very clear outcomes, like granting of licenses for forest (Simarmata, 2016) and protection of natural areas, but the effectiveness of the projects in terms of reaching outcomes and impacts is highly reliant on the wider context and thus cannot be easily judged in many cases.

**Measuring the effectiveness of many of the projects is very difficult in terms of quantifiable outcomes**

The capacity development of partner organisations and support to organisational development and advocacy is valuable work but has not been always well planned and followed up. The capacities of the grantees for proper project management are varying and the implementation is often suffering from high staff

turnover and lack of systematic planning and follow-up. According to some reports, Siemenpuu needed to develop ways to analyse and build the capacities of their partners in a well-planned and targeted manner. (e.g. Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015; Sunchindah & Theeratha, 2014; Simarmata, 2016).

**Outcomes were more tangible in projects supporting grassroots movements**

The project outcomes were found to be more tangible in projects supporting grassroots movements and conservation groups while the outcomes achieved through the research and dialogue supported were hard to grasp and verify.

All projects established objectives involving social processes and did not always contain indicate measurable outcomes. This is gradual being tackled e.g. through the Abilis M&E system. However, there are limits to what can be reliably measured when working in such sensitive and gradual processes as protection of human rights and environmental change.

### 4.4.3 Contribution to outcomes

In this section, we assess:

- How well can the Foundations' outputs be linked to outcomes?
- How well the outcomes can be attributed to the work supported by the Foundations?

Here we seek to assess the links between inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes.

The Foundations support diverse projects and programmes that work at different levels and on very varying activities. Thus, it is very hard to say anything exhaustive about the contribution to broader outcomes at a general level. As analysed above (4.4.1) the supported projects very largely successfully implement the planned activities and achieve the planned outputs. The clarity of the links from inputs and activities to outputs is often quite clear and the application process helps to ensure this clarity. The contribution of the set outputs to broader outcomes is often less clear and the application formats and guidelines have not been providing enough guidance towards clear indicator setting at this level. However, as noted above positive outcomes are achieved by the majority of the supported projects.

**Positive outcomes are achieved by the majority of the supported projects**

The projects supported at grassroots level and often working with groups with not much other funding or other project activities can demonstrate clear contribution and even attribution of the achievement to the implemented work. This is especially the case with the work of small DPOs that the Abilis supports in many cases. Such work is often a major part of the activities that the supported organisations implement as a whole. The other Foundations also work with some such grassroots groups where contribution and even attribution can be easily seen.

As analysed above in 4.4.2 the major outcome of the supported projects at all levels is often the development of capacity and confidence of the supported individuals and organisations. This is in many cases a clear contribution of the supported flexible funding and support from the Foundations during the process from application to implementation and reporting. This contribution can be the major outcome of the supported projects in many cases and lead to

**The major outcome is often the development of capacity and confidence**

continued work of the individuals and organisations on similar issues in their local communities, nationally and even internationally.

The supported advocacy and policy work is generally contributing to larger processes where there are many actors working on the same issues and the political and context changes can play a crucial role in achievement of outcomes. Thus, the actual level of contribution of the supported activities is often hard to measure or verify. In some cases there are outcomes that can be quite well linked to the contribution of the work supported by the Foundations though (e.g. HIPo-Africa, 2016; KIOS, 2015; Raghuram & Chaturvedi, 2014; Simarmata, 2016).

**Supported advocacy and policy work is generally contributing to larger processes**

## 4.5 Impact

In this section, we assess:

- How well can the Foundations development co-operation outcomes be linked to a wider impact?

In this evaluation, impact refers to the CSO contribution or hindrance to wider development, for example, in terms of reduced poverty and better living conditions, sustainable development, human development in terms of improved health or skills, vibrant civil society, changed attitudes, enhanced democracy as well as improved human rights and security situation.

### Impacts Achieved and Level of Attribution

The Foundation modality is aimed at supporting the development of the civil societies in the targeted developing countries and of raising awareness of the thematic issues that they each support. As such the most notable impacts are expected to be (i) in the development of capacities and confidence of the supported organisations and individuals through their improved capability to act and advocate for their issues independently and (ii) in building greater understanding and achieving recognised permanent changes in legislation or in the acknowledged rights of people and communities.

For the first element, capacity development has been part of the Foundations' projects and programmes since the beginning but had not been very systematically planned and implemented. The evaluation of 2008 (Williams et. al., 2008) recommended that the Foundations should systematise the way they assess and develop the capacities of their partners and their work in building longer term partnerships. Since then the Foundations have partly moved towards more programmatic and longer term partnership modalities but there seem to still be less success in systematically assessing and developing the partnership organisations' capacities.

**Less success in developing the partnership organisations' capacities**

For the second element, achieving changes in rights and legislation related to the Foundations' areas of concern has been in some instances very clearly achieved while in other situations the processes involved have been more challenging.

The Foundations' projects often work for long-term social and political changes so the impacts are often hard to measure during the project periods and also

**Long-term social and political changes so the impacts are often hard to measure**

**Many others offer weak and subjective evidence around level of impact**

there is generally a lack of clear impact level indicators. These challenges have beset many of the evaluations conducted in the past (Annex 7), and our assessment is that while there are some best practice examples, many others offer weak and subjective evidence around level of impact. Too many use a very limited number of cases to analyse results, have no baseline to compare results with, and do not assess the level of attribution.

Abilis support has caused impact in increased self-confidence and self-esteem in DPO groups which has led to an improvement in community attitudes in the project locations. (Fiant, 2016 and Abilis, 2016a). Additionally, the Fiant evaluation found the following types of impacts in Ethiopia, Vietnam and Cambodia: increased income in some projects and self-confidence had enabled more independent participation of project participants in social activities outside their home; some DPOs increased their collaboration and/or felt recognised by the local authority. In a few cases DPOs had achieved funding from other sources after Abilis.

**The small size of FT grants also brought limited impact**

The FTSR (Abilis 2016) additionally noted that FT projects have: created job opportunities and/or increased income of persons with disabilities and their families; met basic needs of persons with disabilities and their families; built capacity of project management of the grantees; gained support from the local government (e.g. free land, premises, electricity supply); obtained registration of the groups/DPO. However, both evaluations found that the small size of FT grants also brought limited impact in some cases. Members of a few FT projects who did not benefit or had minimal benefit from the grants often became dissatisfied, which has led to internal conflict (Abilis, 2016a). Abilis can also fairly claim that its support in Nepal has contributed to significant national legislative reform that is bringing improved recognition of rights of persons with disabilities in a disability rights bill.

As shown in Table 5, out of the 97 projects that were completed in 2016 only 3 reported no positive change in the overall status and funding of the organisation after the project. Over half of the DPOs reported increased membership, activity, appreciation as well as cooperation, and around 20-30% reported increased funding which, though a significant achievement under the circumstances still indicates that there is still more work to be done to ensure that the supported organisations can continue and expand their activities after the initial Abilis grant. Only 3% of the organisations report no change after the Abilis supported project. (Abilis, 2017)

**Table 5:** Self-Evaluation of Abilis supported projects that ended in 2016 (97 projects)

| Indicator and positive change | % of DPOs reporting the change |
|---|---|
| Increased membership | 53 % |
| Increased number of active members | 60 % |
| Increased income of the organisation | 34 % |
| Increased cooperation with the authorities and decision makers | 75 % |
| Increased cooperation with other organisations | 61 % |
| Increased appreciation and approval in the community | 81 % |
| Increased funding sources (new funding sources found) | 23 % |
| No change | 3 % |

Source: Abilis 2017.

**KIOS** projects work on sensitive human rights issues where it takes time to reach wider impacts. The main impacts reported in the project evaluations are found on the improved confidence and capacity of the implementing organisations and beneficiaries to bring up their issues and on bringing targeted human rights issues into the national discussions and initiating work on improvement of legislation or the operationalisation of the existing legislation (e.g. Bhattarai, 2016, HIPo-Africa, 2016, Masitsa 2014, Pörsti, 2013, Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice 2014).

In the projects supporting human rights education at the community level the main goal is greater respect for human rights leading to social change and thus is to be evaluated in the context of political, economic and social context of the communities (UNHCR, 2011). Thus, the impacts of these projects are hard to measure and largely the impacts are initiations of long-term processes for such changes. The past evaluations report impacts on improved knowledge and awareness, increased capacity of the victims to seek redress, establishment of mechanisms to support the victims of violations, promotion of better organisation and strengthening cooperation in the communities and between communities as well as increasing recognition of the advocated issues at the local administration level. (e.g. Bhattarai, 2016; KIOS, 2015; Masitsa, 2014).

Many of the projects supported by KIOS work more at national level on improvement of legislation, administrative guidelines and mechanisms to monitor, receive and address cases of human rights violations. The impacts of these projects are also often difficult to define in the short-term as the processes supported take time and are often not taken positively forward by the national governments. The main impacts reported in such cases may be about the advancement of national processes but more often the main impacts are on bringing human rights violations to light and to legal processes and the improved understanding and recognition of the advocated issues by the related stakeholders, networks and partnerships making further advocacy more effective and establishing precedents and cases of proper follow-up and redress of human rights violations. (e.g. FOHRID, 2013; Raghuram & Chaturvedi, 2014; Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice 2014).

Many of the past evaluations have also noted the difficulty of measuring the impacts of the supported work due to its nature as contribution to long term social and political change processes (e.g. Masitsa, 2014; Ngugi & Nduta, 2015; Raghuram & Chaturvedi, 2014). Some evaluations also highlight the lack of clear impact level indicators or measurable strategic goals (Nsubuga, 2014; Tuladhar, 2016).

**Siemenpuu** projects and programmes impacts are mainly felt in the improvement of local communities' rights and access to the land and natural resources in their area and in the increased capacity and networks of the partners and beneficiaries for further advocacy and activism. In many cases the programme and projects work to influence government policies and their implementation and the impacts in these issues can be found in many cases such as in ensuring protection of community rights on forest areas (Simarmata, 2016) and influence in national policies and processes (Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015). From our fieldwork in India, the Adivasi alliance has been very well supported to pursue cases in the courts concerning land rights, increase registration of community and individual forest rights, and to put into practice the Forest Rights Act. There is also reasonable evidence that SADED India has contributed to revisions to the National Health Policy recently issued in 2017. SADED's own analysis offers a balanced view of which elements of its lobbying work have led to policy reform, and which have not (Measure of Key Initiatives and Impact Assessment, SADED, 2017).

More often the impacts of the supported work are in creating better awareness and understanding on the importance of the promoted issues and on capacities of the supported partners and networks to do further advocacy in the future (Cordeiro & Marchesino, 2015; Sunchindah & Theeratham, 2014). Often the communities also become more aware of the need to protect their environment and launch their own initiatives for protection and sustainable use of natural resources (Simarmata, 2016).

## 4.6 Sustainability

In this section, we assess:

- How sustainable have the Foundations outcomes been or are likely to be?
- Have the Foundations ensured partner ownership of its work?
- Have the Foundations practices fostered financial sustainability?
- Have the Foundations ensured exit strategies for their partners?

**The ability of the Foundations to systematically monitor the sustainability of projects has been limited**

### Foundations monitoring of sustainability

The Foundations do include questions on sustainability on their proposal forms and in their guidelines on reporting. Yet the ability of the Foundations to systematically monitor the sustainability of projects has been limited until quite recently, when they have started to introduce some related indicators, for example in the Abilis M&E system that collects indicators related to empowerment and capacity development of the supported individuals and organisations. The introduction of country offices has also helped Abilis to monitor sustainability

issues as in the case of Nepal, where DPOs are encouraged to apply for funds from local government offices and to link with the local government mechanism, and so make sustainability plans. Nevertheless, as the recent Abilis programme evaluation (Fiant, 2016) noted "even though the short-term nature of projects and the small size of grants are intended to contribute to prevention of aid-dependency of supported DPOs, they can be seen as challenges from the perspective of sustainability". KIOS or Siemenpuu emphasise the partner selection procedure and aim to choose effective local partners and thus the ability to track sustainability is enhanced. Examples include Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) in Nepal, which has been established since 1991 and has 140 staff that permit more rigorous monitoring. INSEC is also among the larger, cabable and established partners visited during the field work. In Siemenpuu's case, the long established partners in the National Adivasi Alliance have been able to monitor their village-level projects over many years.

### Sustainability of different types of outcomes and changes over time

The outcomes most commonly identified are related to social and personal changes in such things as the level of empowerment and the awareness of rights. These cover rights related to disability, the environment especially land rights, and of course human rights in general. There is less firm evidence of economic sustainability. Many past evaluations use qualitative evidence such as personal testimonies to show the reduction in issues such as domestic violence, preventable diseases, girl child school drop-out (HIPo-Africa, 2016), community organizations initiating learning and business alliances (KIOS, 2015), and changes in knowledge and attitude of rights (Shamsuzzaman. M. 2014). See Annex 7 for more examples.

It is also the case that many outcomes such as legal court processes are lengthy and may take years. Hence in these situations, sustainability cannot be easily assessed. Moreover, Foundations support cannot easily be linked to such long-term and often complex outcomes that come up against resistant or bureaucratic state authorities. In many examples, funding may terminate before the process has been completed (Al-Eryani, 2015a) thus jeopardizing the sustainability of these outcomes. Many of the evaluations listed in Annex 7 also raise this issue (see CVICT Nepal, 2016; Fiant, 2016; Sunchindah & Theetharam, 2014).

Nevertheless, some of the Foundations' own reports rate sustainability very highly. Abilis' FT review (Abilis, 2016a) for example estimates 90-100% of FT project activities are sustainable in Myanmar, Mozambique, Tajikistan, Uganda, and Vietnam, while 70-80% in Bangladesh, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, and Tanzania. This is credited to the full participation of the beneficiaries, their increased capacity and ownership and links with local authorities.

**Some of the Foundations' own reports rate sustainability very highly**

At the same time, field evidence from this evaluation suggests that sustainability can be difficult partly because many of the projects are sole-funded by the Foundations, which raises the risk of the ending of the project activities before they have reached a sustainable basis to continue. For short-term support provided at grassroots with small groups of persons with disabilities embarking on animal or handicraft project this may not be so difficult, but in advocacy

**Exit strategies and linking to possible other funding agencies are often not thought out from the beginning**

work such as defending legal rights where cases may run for years this may be more problematic. Exit strategies and linking to possible other funding agencies are often not thought out from the beginning of the support.

The most likely outcomes to be sustained are those related to changes in knowledge and attitudes, the building of confidence and attitudes whether around disability rights, defence of human rights or environmental action. Effective outcomes are often found in the personal understanding and awareness about rights and ways to address violations. These outcomes are seen to be sustainable (Bhattarai, 2016; FOHRID, 2013). Other outcomes such as the created groups and improvements in the mechanisms to report and support addressing human rights violations can be sustainable if there are continued support mechanisms. But in many cases the sustainability of these institutions and mechanisms after project support ends is questionable (Bhattarai, 2016; Masitsa, 2014). The networks and forums for advocacy that are created also have a good chance of being sustainable due to the relevance of the issues to the participating individuals and organisations (FOHRID, 2013).

More widely, where the work of the Foundations takes place in a context where governments are not committed to HRBA or the needs of the constituent groups that are supported by Foundation funding, then there will be pressure that limits outcomes. This has delayed outcomes and limited sustainability in several instances. For example, in the case of the Siemenpuu Mekong programme, "the priority factors that will limit the sustainability of the impacts in the energy sector development include insufficient national financial and manpower resources, technical weaknesses in ability to achieve the outputs/outcomes, weaknesses in national institutional support, and lack of national commitment to this issue" (Suchinda & Theetharam, 2014).

### Partner ownership and handover

**Partners in country have very high ownership**

Because of the grant-making approach of the Foundations, partners in country who oversee the planning and implementation of funds have very high ownership. The grassroots groups who receive the funds also have very firm ownership of the resources, since they have generally chosen the assets or activities and carry them out directly themselves. In most cases, there is very clear bottom-up driven planning. In some cases the facilitator or partner assists the groups in terms of translation or explanation, but it seems that there is still firm local ownership.

Occasionally there may be instances where local partners take too much control of the planning and use resources – as the Abilis experience in Kazakhstan illustrates. Here, the local partner did not operate in a correct and transparent manner and this led to issues of governance that had to be addressed (Abilis Field Trip report, 2014).

Local ownership is seen as a strength of the Foundations' programme partnerships, and is strongly emphasised within their grant making mechanisms. However, the low capacity of many DPOs in project management has also meant less sustainability. For instance, 14 of Abilis' projects were terminated in 2015 due to 'deficient capacity of the implementing organisation' (although no evidence of misuse of funds was found) (Abilis, 2015). This is a small percentage of

the overall supported projects, as 222 projects were successfully completed in the same year. The country office provides more project management strength, however, there is the possibility that there will be less local ownership, which could also be detrimental to sustainability. More analysis will be needed on the longer-term results of the country office model.

### Use of core funding

Grant funding is not often used as a form of core support

Although MFA rules permit Foundations to offer core funding, for many partners, especially more well established ones, grant funding from the Foundations is not often used as a form of core support. The grants are instead usually designed to allow the grantees to carry out activities as proposed, while salaries and overhead running costs are not usually funded. For Abilis, most of the small groups of persons with disabilities that receive grants utilise the money to carry out a few particular activities. There are exceptions, though, and KIOS in particular feels that core funding is vital to support fragile local organisations operating in sensitive and rapidly changing settings where flexibility is key (feedback to Inception Report 2017), especially if they are young and not well-established. Siemenpuu also has provided basic operating costs for some of its long-term partners such Coorg Organisation for Rural Development (CORD) and SADED. The financial records available from the Foundations do not make is possible to isolate in all cases the proportion of funding allocated to core support for all POs and grantees compared to the project activity based support that forms the clear majority of the provided funding.

### Explicit exit strategies designed and implemented

The Foundations could do more in terms of devising exit strategies

The Foundations could do more in terms of devising exit strategies to ensure wherever possible that outcomes can continue to be delivered. This means seeking ways to ensure that the supported entities (organisations as well as individuals) have greater capacity to manage their projects and/or alternative support can be identified to continue to work. Several longer-term partners of KIOS and Siemenpuu have received support for several rounds of financing over several years, and there has been limited attention paid to articulating how and when Foundation support should end and under what circumstances (Joshi & Ronkainen, 2012; Al-Eryani, 2015a). In the case of the short-term grants and in particular the FT grants from Abilis, on the other hand, it is clear from the outset that the support of up to € 2,500 is usually limited to one year of support. This short injection of resources is on the basis that it will catalyse the recipients to initiate a particular activity or training so that they will have the confidence and skills to begin to move forward on their own and manage larger projects funded by others. This is a viable model but as shown by the self-evaluation of ended projects in 2016 (Abilis, 2017) there is still more to be done to raise the number of organisations finding other funding sources from the present 20-30%, even though this a significant proportion under the circumstances where people with disabilities are managing their own development (see Table 5).

In terms of whether partners have ***established sound operational and financial practices likely to be able to attract other external support***, the evidence indicates a very mixed story, due to different target groups and contexts. For the multitude of very small groups of persons with disabilities assisted by Abilis, support is provided deliberately at small and newly-formed groups who have limited experience in this area. On the other hand there are many cases of larger, well established CSOs that like the Socio Legal Information Centre in Delhi (funded by KIOS) that have many other sources of funding and are competent at reporting to all their funders and managing their operations in a sound manner. These are though likely to be the exception. The Foundations in general aim to support generally small CSOs who have limited sources of alternative funding. With such a heterogeneous body of partners and grantees, there has been no clear analysis on this issue that the evaluation could use.

# 5 CONCLUSIONS

## 5.1 Validity of the Theory of Change Assumptions

### 5.1.1 From inputs to outputs

In this section, we assess the validity of the following key assumptions of the generic ToC related to how resources for CSO development co-operation link to outputs:

- MFA's long-term programme partnership with the Foundations, based on mutually agreed objectives, is able to deliver support to CSOs in developing countries and reach the grassroots, including the vulnerable and socially excluded. (This assumption is implicit in the precedence MFA gives to its PBS over other forms of civil society funding. It also recognises that strengthening civil society and development change more generally is complex and requires long-term effort and requires continuing space and support for CSOs).

The Foundations do have quite long-term engagement especially in the case of KIOS and Siemenpuu (sometimes over five years), and this has enabled effective delivery of support at the grassroots. Abilis has also reached the grassroots and marginalised groups very well especially when using local partners or facilitators. The PBS 3-4 year cycle has given space for this, but even before the current PBS model the Foundations were able to maintain medium-term partnerships.

- The Foundations develop their strategic direction in collaboration with their Finnish constituency, networks of international partners, including the philosophy, brand, or operational platforms, and in this way complement Finland's bilateral, multilateral and private sector work.

The Foundations all have solid networks and memberships that underpin their strategy. Their philosophy is inherently drawn from their constituency members and founders. As grant-making Foundations, branding is less important. Complementarity is on the whole strong as the Foundations offer a useful and alternative channel for development cooperation reaching beneficiaries and addressing issues often not tackled with other forms of development cooperation, but the assumption does not always hold, where embassies are less engaged, and where the private sector may offer an alternative vision of engagement in the South that reflects more globalist, growth-based action.

**The Foundations all have solid networks and memberships that underpin their strategy**

### 5.1.2 From outputs to short-term outcomes

In this section, we assess the validity of the following key assumptions of the generic ToC related to how the outputs of CSO development co-operation link to short-term outcomes:

- Civil societies in developing countries have the required operational, civic and cultural space to exercise their influence after receiving external support.

Given the reducing civil society space in many countries where the Foundations operate, this assumption may be severely challenged in several contexts. On the other hand where conditions are more conducive (such as in Nepal where civil society platforms are able to operate relatively freely), or where the Foundations local partners and grantees have been effective, this assumption holds fairly well.

- A continued and supportive partnership between Finnish CSOs and CSOs in partner countries strengthens national CSOs' identification and ownership of the same values.

Since Foundations are flexible and non-directive this permits such a strengthening to occur and local ownership is high as the support is provided for projects planned by the implementing organisation based on their funding application, so this assumption is generally correct in many areas where they provide support.

- CSOs can use their knowledge of and linkages with the grassroots to raise awareness of and educate the Finnish public about development cooperation.

**The Foundations do use their knowledge and linkages to raise awareness in Finland**

Within their limited resources the Foundations do use their knowledge and linkages to raise awareness in Finland. This is done through various media channels, teaching and workshop events. More resources put into this area could prove even more effective.

### 5.1.3 From short-term to long-term outcomes

In this section, we assess the validity of the following key assumptions of the generic ToC:

- Sustainable and equitable development is based upon constructive cooperation, and even partnership, between civil society, the state, and the private sector, where respective duties and roles are mutually understood, and even used to achieve more positive impact than would have been possible without this cooperation.

It is very difficult to test this assumption in the case of the Foundations, because of limited experience of cooperation between state, private sector and civil society. They work largely independently of the state and the private sector, or indeed actively advocate or pursue agendas to counter- balance the policies and actions of them.

- A strong, pluralistic civil society which demonstrates an active respect for human rights and inclusive values is a key contributor to improved citizen participation, greater government responsiveness and more inclusive service delivery.

Human rights and inclusivity are at the core of the Foundations work and their work demonstrates that at local level especially this assumption can hold true.

There are many examples that show how their support led to greater citizen participation, government responsiveness and more inclusive development.

## 5.2 General Conclusions

This evaluation has examined the performance of the three Foundations (Abilis, KIOS and Siemenpuu) over the 2010-2016 period through the lens of partnership support using the PBS instrument. The implementation of the programme based approach in the past 5 years has overall been a positive experience for the Foundations, and has been linked to a substantial growth in resources up till 2015. The effect of the MFA budget cuts in 2015 was a major disruption, especially for KIOS and Siemenpuu, bringing their funding back to 2007 levels. This volatility has alerted the Foundations to sharpen their risk management strategies and to begin to mitigate their over-reliance on MFA funding by seeking other forms of support. They have reduced the number of countries where they work, limited the open calls for applications, and have steadily improved their project planning and screening as well as M&E and risk management tools. At the same time, risks affecting their mainly grassroots beneficiaries have increased as civil society space has narrowed and grantees have become more exposed to both natural and socio-political dangers.

**The effect of the MFA budget cuts in 2015 was a major disruption**

Alignment with MFA policies is in general good and there is a strong commitment to and pursuit of HRBA. In terms of CCOs, there is a need for KIOS and Abilis to build further on environmental awareness and climate change mitigation where appropriate, while Siemenpuu has work to do on further integrating gender equality and reduction of vulnerability in their procedures and guidelines. There has also been good coordination and complementarity between the Foundations and other arms of MFA development cooperation and its political organs. The alternative channel offered by the Foundations is much valued by MFA, and with their sound reputations and trusted relationships, there are strong grounds for this channel to continue.

**The alternative channel offered by the Foundations is much valued by MFA**

The efficiency of the Foundations programmes is generally high. The financial management and grant management processes of the Foundations are efficient and adequate and the disbursements and follow-up of financial management is working well. The M&E systems and reporting could benefit from more clarity on indicator setting and aggregation of results at the programme level.

The programmes and the funded projects are generally effective in achieving the set outputs well based on their reporting and monitoring as well as the past evaluations. Most of the projects complete the planned activities and achieve the planned outputs but naturally within such a large number of projects there are also cases of unsuccessful projects due to either issues related to implementing partner capacity or external circumstances making the achievement of outputs impossible. As reported by the Foundations themselves a very large percentage of the finished projects have met the set objectives (outputs) and the percentages reported in the draft annual reports for 2016 are over 90%. Also, the earlier evaluations conducted on the Foundations' projects largely indicate that the set outputs were achieved by large majority of the supported projects.

**While outputs are usually well captured, changes in the lives of beneficiaries are more difficult to assess and aggregate**

Measuring outcomes is more difficult in the fields in which the Foundations are working. Moreover, the flexible and locally-owned nature of the grants, their small scale and diversity, as well as the lack of RBM experience of the grantees in this area, also makes RBM very challenging. Thus while outputs are usually well captured, changes in the lives of beneficiaries are more difficult to assess and aggregate. The careful selection and close monitoring by the Foundations of their grant outputs therefore underpins our confidence in their reported achievement but there is room to improve the collection of outcome data, introduce more standard indicators and improve the quality of evaluations. This requires further building the capacity of local partners and grant recipients to capture simple changes in awareness, knowledge, use of services or results of advocacy. It also requires more rigorous evaluation approaches that can objectively and robustly measure programme delivery. This means defining carefully what measurable changes are expected to occur whether in individual capacity, protection of rights, legislative change or in livelihoods as a result of the interventions supported. Evaluation analysis would then seek to isolate how far these changes are due to the support provided (rather than to external factors).

As analysed above in 4.4.2, the major outcome of the supported projects at all levels is often the development of capacity and confidence of the supported individuals and organisations. This is in many cases a clear contribution of the flexible funding and support from the Foundations during the process from application to implementation and reporting. This contribution can be the major outcome of the supported projects in many cases and lead to continued work of the individuals and organisations on similar issues in their local communities, nationally and even internationally. The supported advocacy and policy work is generally contributing to larger processes where there are many actors working on the same issues and the political and context changes can play a crucial role in achievement of outcomes. Thus, the actual level of contribution of the supported activities is often hard to measure or verify. In some cases, however, there are outcomes that can be quite well linked to the contribution of the work supported by the Foundations.

**Sustainability remains a concern**

Sustainability remains a concern for many of projects supported by the Foundations. Where weaker, grassroots actors are targeted with short-term assistance there are risks around how long benefits can be retained, even though initially there may be remarkable changes in the attitudes and achievements of the beneficiaries. There is mixed evidence on the question of sustainability from the past reviews and evaluations. Positive factors include the building of networks and allowing local ownership to flourish. With limited resources available, the Foundations are most effective when they demonstrate how it is possible to target the excluded, those suffering abuse or curtailment of their rights. Documenting and sharing these achievements allows them to leverage their funds by persuading others with more resources to adopt similar methods and models of action.

# 6 LESSONS LEARNED

## 6.1 Strategic programme-based choices

In this section, we consider what wider lessons MFA, the Foundations and other CSOs may draw from the experience arising from Foundations' adoption of PBS in terms of strategic alignment.

### Lessons arising around alignment when using PBS

The Foundations have a 'built-in' alignment given that they were established to address key areas of MFA policy. Thus given that they were established to address key thematic areas of concern to Finnish development cooperation, they did not have to change a great deal to align. Yet, the Foundations have operated as grassroots-led grant-making entities that aim to provide the means to support a wide range of applicants. Alignment has therefore required balancing local needs with an increasing programmatic focus, something that is on the way to being successfully achieved. The experience of the Foundations shows that this can be done using stronger country and regional strategies, building international networks in their thematic areas, developing better RBM tools and finally setting out a broader fundraising strategy.

### Lessons arise around complementarity, co-ordination and coherence when using PBS

The PBS modality has encouraged the Foundations to consider more carefully and to document their strategic alignment with MFA, in order to justify their application for PBS funding. PBS has also encouraged a gradual increase in focus towards the MFA's priority LDCs and Fragile states. The Foundations' programmes supported through PBS offer a complementary channel for Finnish development cooperation reaching beneficiaries and addressing issues that would be hard to tackle through other channels - such as sensitive human rights, disability rights and environmental issues. The co-ordination and coherence with the other forms of Finnish development cooperation could be further improved in many cases through more active involvement of the Embassies in coordinating different forms of cooperation.

## 6.2 Programme implementation and results performance

In this section we consider what wider lessons MFA and other CSOs may draw from the Foundations' experience of managing and delivering using a PBS.

### Lessons arising around the management of PBS and use of RBM

Generally, PBS has proved a positive instrument for the Foundations. They have received more consistent and increased levels of funding with more predictability over the past five to six years until 2016.

The challenges of adopting RBM tools were more serious than expected, and particularly given the way Foundations operate, it has been difficult to develop systems to capture reliable and meaningful results at programme level and moving beyond tracking expenditure and activities as to outcomes and impacts. While MFA offered flexibility of approach in how to adopt RBM, the learning curve has been steep for Foundation staff. Equally, many of the grant recipients being from the grassroots were not from a background that was very familiar with these tools. Abilis has developed programme level indicators that have been designed together with the grantees to both capture results and empower the beneficiaries. The other Foundations are working to improve the tracking of outcomes and for example, KIOS is introducing new application forms and guidelines that aim to ensure inclusion of systematic project logic and indicators by the grant applicants including on the outcome and impact levels.

### Lessons arising around effectiveness when using PBS

Even small grant-making organisations such as the Foundations can build solid project tracking systems in order to report on PBS funds. The effectiveness of the grant making mechanism and the supported projects is generally very high and the project level results are impressive. Nevertheless, aggregation of results is difficult when working through grant-making mechanisms where grantees have flexibility to determine their measures of success. Experience from Abilis has shown that with careful field-testing and by keeping indictors to a minimum, it is possible to develop workable M&E tools to collect relevant indicators of results.

Good results occur when trust is built up between grant-maker and grantee, diligent assessment of proposals is carried out, and close communication takes place between the two.

## 6.3 Cross-cutting objectives and HRBA

In this section, we focus on drawing wider lessons related to CCOs and HRBA.

### Lessons arising around the CCOs within PBS

The Foundations directly address MFA's cross cutting objectives, and the experience over the past five years shows that their mainstreaming can be effectively achieved using PBS. While the Foundations naturally address the CCO that is closely linked to their focus of support, the adoption of a more programmatic modality has reinforced the attention paid by each Foundation to all of the CCOs, for example Abilis has introduced guidance to improve the adherence of their projects to environmental resilience, KIOS is doing the same and Siemenpuu is paying more attention to inclusion of gender equality in the grant application evaluation procedures.

### Lessons arising around following HRBA under a PBS

The Foundations operations are underpinned by HRBA, and under PBS as well as MFA policy guidance, this has been made more explicit. The problems related to collecting and presenting higher level results especially at the programmatic level have also been approached through establishing human rights based indicators and monitoring systems for their work. While the grant-management procedures give strong attention to HRBA on the ground and at project level, an important lesson for the Foundations (who are not so well known in Finland) is for them to build a wider understanding of HRBA issues with the Finnish public.

# 7 RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7.1 Recommendations for Foundations

For the Foundations in general:

1. While alignment is generally good, the Foundations should further refine their programmes to more fully target Finland's priority countries (LDCs and fragile states); KIOS and Abilis should seek to address the environment as a cross-cutting objective, while all three Foundations should develop more detailed guidelines for addressing gender equality and vulnerable groups.
2. There has been good coordination and complementarity between the Foundations and other arms of MFA development cooperation. But there is evidence that not enough use is made of the Foundations' expertise by MFA and its embassies in relation to bilateral cooperation and LCF grants as well as with NGOs acting in the field. There are also opportunities for the Foundations to find greater synergies at country level to improve efficiency. The Foundations and MFA should map out and identify more ways for Foundation grant activities to complement other arms of Finnish development cooperation and also political/diplomatic action in a chosen country. Complementarity could also be further enhanced across the three Foundations where synergies exist.
3. The last five years shows that Foundation funding has been volatile and this has affected their delivery of programmes and their relationships with partners and recipients. Until recently there has been little effort by the Foundations to seek alternative funding. Steps to seek EU funding and consultancy income offer promising opportunities. The Foundations should now go further to seek alternative channels of support. They should also leverage their grants by seeking co-funding opportunities and consider pooled funding with like-minded partners.
4. Sustainability can be difficult partly because many projects are sole-funded by the Foundations, which raises the risk that the project activities will end before they have reached a sustainable basis to continue. Ill-defined outcomes also do not to help to set exit pathways. The Foundations (especially KIOS and Siemenpuu) should work on exit strategies by (i) specifying more carefully at the start of support what the eventual outcomes will be, (ii) differentiate the funding phase from long-term partnerships, (iii) plan exits ahead of time and assist in finding alternative forms of funding, including use of co-funding or pool funding, and (iv) conduct a long-term study on a sample of grantees after funding has finished to understand what happens after support ends and the factors that influence how grantee capacity or assets survive or grow.
5. Evidence of impact is difficult to obtain in fields that are complex and take time to measure (empowerment, human rights, environmental change). Past evaluations conducted by the Foundations are of mixed quality. While there

are good examples, many suffer from insufficient independence, weakly defined outcomes and sometimes with weak evidence. In order for the Foundations to meet the emphasis on demonstrating results in the future, they should (i) build up their M&E systems further by setting more measurable short-term outcomes that can be reliably and affordably measured by their grantees and (ii) emphasising higher quality but fewer evaluations. (iii) consider conducting joint evaluations on particular themes e.g. on human rights or on sustainability.

6. There are many examples of good practice in terms of targeting hard to reach minorities, working at grassroots where planning and implementation is done by persons with disabilities, supporting HR defenders in difficult contexts, promoting access to land. Given limited funding resources, the Foundations will not address the problems directly on a sufficient scale to make a global difference, but they can act as a very effective model of aid delivery that others with far greater resources can replicate. Therefore, the Foundations should increase resources on sharing results from the successful model of grant-based support. They should do this through bringing sound evidence and case studies into international fora and networks by media events, publication and consultancy work. Naturally, this should be done in a way that respects the confidentiality needs and security any concerns of the actors involved.

7. While the Foundations have improved their risk management processes, there are still elements of the RBM risk approach that can be addressed. These are important in a grant-making setting and would help risk mitigation. The Foundations should therefore improve risk management in several areas including: developing country and regional strategies, selecting proposals for funding, and managing local offices or facilitators so as to ensure suitable governance checks and balances are in place.

## 7.2 Recommendations for the MFA

8. Foundations offer an important alternative channel of support for Finnish aid that reaches constituencies outside of other channels. The long-term partnerships have built trust and valuable networks and a good reputation in their respective fields. PBS has helped focus the programmes and increase focus on results. Disbursements have matched budgets and efficiency is high. MFA should continue funding to the Foundations with emphasis on defining future programmes by more measurable outcomes including demonstrating a link to building a vibrant civil society.

9. Funding constraints have made the work of MFA staff difficult in administering and guiding the Foundations' work. There has been reasonably good communication between the Foundations and MFA, and value of the Foundations' expertise is recognised. But there is evidence that not enough use is made of their expertise by MFA and their embassies in relation to bilateral cooperation and LCF grants as well as with NGOs acting in the field. MFA should carefully review staffing and resourcing levels for the Foundations, and seek to increase staff capacity as well as to improve coordination with the Foundation supported NGOs working in the field in make more use of the Foundations' expertise.

# REFERENCES


Abilis. (2010). Abilis Foundation 5-Year Strategy 2010–2015. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2012). Abilis Regional Activities in Mekong area - Concept paper by Abilis Foundation –Version May 2012. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2014a). Abilis Foundation Strategy through 2021. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2014b). The Human Rights Based Approach in Abilis Foundation. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2014c) Field Trip Report, Kazakhstan. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2015). Activity Report 2015. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2016a). Fast Track Scheme Review Report, October 2016. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis (2016b). Logframe of the Abilis Foundation. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2016c). Theory of Change of Abilis Foundation in conjunction with the Theory of Change for Finnish Civil Society in Development Policy. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2017). Annual Activity Report 2016. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Al-Eryani, Y. (2015a). Ex-Post Evaluation; KIOS-Funded Projects that Ended in 2010–2013, May 2015, (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Al-Eryani, Y. (2015b). Response to Post Project Evaluation. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Bhattarai, R. (2016). Break to the Violence Against Women: Community Empowerment. Final Evaluation.

Brusset, E. (2017). Evaluation 2 on the Civil Society Organisations receiving Programme-based Support and Support for Humanitarian Assistance: Synthesis Report. Evaluation Report. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Bukeni, J. Y. (2015). Rapport d'évaluation externe de fin du programme de lute contre les violences sexuelles financé par KIOS de 2009 jusqu'en 2015. (Final evaluation of the ACADHOSHA project.). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Carothers, T. (2015). The Closing Space Challenge: How Are Funders Responding?. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. November 02 2015. Accessed on: http://carnegieendowment.org/2015/11/02/closing-space-challenge-how-are-funders-responding-pub-61808

Cordeiro & Marchesino. (2015). The Siemenpuu Foundation – Latin America Programme. Evaluation Report. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Fiant Consulting Oy. (2016). Evaluation of Abilis Foundation between 2012-2015 with the Case Studies on Cambodia, Vietnam, and Ethiopia regarding Income Generating Projects and Projects of Empowering Women with Disabilities. Final Evaluation Report, 5 April 2016. (n.p.): Fiant Consulting Oy.

FOHRID. (2013). Evaluation Report on Initiative for protection and promotion of ESC rights. Kathmandu: Human Rights and Democratic Forum.

Garg, S. et. al. (2012). Self-Assessment of the South Asian Dialogues for Ecological Democracy (SADED) Programme. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

HIPo-Africa. (2016). Partnership Project (P.P) for Community Based Organizations on Sub-granting in Uganda; focus - Right to Health, Food & Protection. Final Assessment Report. Harnessing Indigenous Potentials in Africa. (n.p.): HIPo-Africa.

HRW. (2015). World Report 2015: Bangladesh; Events of 2014, Human Rights Watch, accessed on 6.1.2016 through https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2015/country-chapters/bangladesh Human Rights Watch.

ICMHD. (2013). Ending Gender Based Violence in Bangladesh, 26.8.2013, accessed on 6.1.2016 through https://icmhd.wordpress.com/2013/08/26/ending-gender-based-violence-in-bangladesh/ International Centre for Migration Health and Development.

Joshi, S. & Ronkainen, L. (2012). Evaluation of KIOS funded NGO projects in Nepal. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Katsui, H. et al. (2014). Reducing Inequalities: A human rights-based approach in Finland's development cooperation with special focus on gender and disability. Turku: Institute for Human Rights.

KIOS. (2002). Statutes of the Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights, Approved by the National Patent and Registration on May 20 2002. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2004). The Finnish NGO Foundation for Human Rights Strategic Plan for 2004-2010; Human Rights for the Most Vulnerable, Approved by the Board of Directors on February 5 2004. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2010a). Annual Report Summary in English. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2010b). KIOS in strategia-asiakirja vuosille 2011-2015. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2013). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin Toimintakertomus vuodelta 2012 (Annual Activity Report 2012). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2014a). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin toimintasuunnitelma vuodelle 2014. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2014b). KIOS Application Guide. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2014c). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin toimintasuunnitelma vuodelle 2015. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2015). End of Project Review & Evaluation Report. Promoting the Implementation of the Constitution through Policy and Legislative Advocacy in Kenya. (HakiiJamii). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2016a). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin Toimintasuunnitelma vuodelle 2016 (Action Plan for 2016). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2016b). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin vuosiraportti 2015 (Annual Report 2015). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2017). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin Vuosiraportti 2016 (Annual Report 2016). Draft. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS (no date). KIOS in hankehakemusten hyväksymiskriteerit (KIOS Application Approval Criteria), provided to the evaluation team. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Masitsa, Hezron. (2014). Evaluation of the "Enhancing women understanding of their human rights" project. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

MFA. (2007). Development Policy Programme 2007. Towards a Sustainable and Just World Community, Government Decision in Principle. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2010). Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2012). Finland's Development Policy Programme, Government Decision-In-Principle, February 16

MFA. (2013a). Instructions concerning the Partnership Agreement Scheme, Updated on 19 July 2013. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2013b). Evaluation Manual. Helsinki:Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland 2012, Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2015a). News on the MFA website (formin.fi) on 30 June 2015. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2015b). Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation – Guidance Note 2015. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2015c). Results Based Management (RBM) in Finland's Development Cooperation – Concepts and Guiding Principles. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2015d). Evaluation of Finland's Development Policy Programmes from a Results-Based Management Point of View 2003-2013 (2015:1). Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2016a). Finland's Development Policy. One world, common future – towards sustainable development. Government Report to Parliament. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2016b). Manual for Bilateral Programmes. Latest update (10/2016). Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2017). Development Cooperation Appropriations and Disbursements 1989-2016. Accessed on: http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=167237&GUID={EA4230EC-5BA5-4199-ABDF-ED03094B95F4}.

Ngugi, K. & Nduta, S. (2015). Evaluation Report of Samburu Women Trust Project. Enhancing human rights of Indigenous Girls and Women in Samburu Community June 2014-May 2015. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Nielsen, H. D. (2015). Evaluation – Inclusive Education in Finland's Development Cooperation in 2004-2013. Desk study Finland's Cooperation to Enhance Rights and Equal Opportunities of Participation of People with Disabilities. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation

Nsubuga, M. (2014). Final evaluation of the "Demystifying social and economic rights" project in Uganda. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

OECD/DAC. (2010). Quality Standards for Development Evaluation, DAC Guidelines and Reference Series, New York: Development Assistance Committee.

Olesen, G. & Endeshaw, Y. (2013). A case study on complementarity in the NGO instruments, Evaluation report. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Porsti, A. (2013). Strengthening Civil Society Organisations, Studying Mechanisms of CSO Empowerment, Master Thesis. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.

Puri, M., Misra, G. & Hawkes, S. (2015). Hidden voices: Prevalence and risk factors for violence against women with disabilities in Nepal. (n.p.): BMC Public Health.

Raghuram, S. & Chaturvedi, K. (2014). External Evaluation of PWESCR - Regional Training to Promote Women's Human Rights for Dignity and Equality in the Context of the ICESCR (South Asia Region). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Räsänen, S. (2015). Ilmastonmuutoksen vaikutukset haavoittuvuuteen ja inhimilliseen turvallisuuteen KIOSin fokusmaissa. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation

SADED. (2017). Measure of Key Initiatives and Impact Assessment, March 2017. South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy. (n.p.): South Asian Dialogues on Ecological Democracy

Shamsuzzaman Md. (2014) Final evaluation of Improving Access to Justice of Dalit Community, SHaree. (n.p.). KIOS Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2009). Siemenpuu Foundation Long Term Action Plan. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2015). Long-term action plan (LTAP) 2016-2021. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2016). Siemenpuu vuosiraportti 2015 (Annual Report 2015). (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2017). Siemenpuu vuosiraportti 2016 (Annual Report 2016). Draft. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Silfverberg, P. (2016). Result-based Management in the CSOs. in Stage, O., Brusset, E., Mäkelä, M., de la Rosa, T. Evaluation of the Programme-based support through Finnish civil society organisations I; Synthesis and Results-Based Management Approaches. Annex 5 p. 109-152. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Simarmata, M. (2016). Evaluation Report of Siemenpuu Partners in Riau. Grants period of 2012-2017. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Singh, S. et. al. (2015). Evaluation Report. National Adivasi Alliance Programmes 2013-2015. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice. (2014). Crimes Against Humanity in Sri Lanka's Northern Province: A legal analysis of post-war human rights violations. Sri Lanka Campaign for Peace and Justice. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Stage. O, Brusset, E., Mäkelä, M. and Rosa, T. (2016). Evaluation 1 - Programme-based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organisations. Evaluation Report. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

Sunchindah & Theetharam. (2014). Evaluation of Mekong Energy and Ecology Network. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Tuladhar, I. (2016). Report on External Evaluation of Project 'Provision of free legal aid through a strengthened legal aid system'. (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

Williams, P. et. al. (2008). Evaluation; Finnish NGO Foundations. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

# THE EVALUATION TEAM

**Dr Nick Chapman**: Team Leader and Freelance Consultant. He has 35 years of experience working on development cooperation, teaching, researching, designing projects as an agro-economist and geographer, and leading complex evaluations for a range of development agencies. He has experience in Africa, Asia, Caribbean and Middle East. He holds a PhD from University of London, an MA and a Bsc.

**Mr. Ilmari Saarilehto** Team Member and Evaluation Expert from FCG International Ltd has over 12 years of experience in development cooperation implementation, management and evaluation. He has strong field experience working in the sanitation, hygiene, water and environment sectors especially in Asia and the Middle East. He was part of the CSO2 evaluation in 2016-2017 for the evaluation of Fida International and WorldVision Finland. He has also led a review of urban sanitation practices in Nepal as well as a Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Study (WB funded) and been part of the team drafting the programme guidelines for the Finnish partnership organisations as well as for the MTE and planning of the Finnish water sector project in Ethiopia. Mr. Saarilehto is currently coordinating four large water, wastewater and waste management infrastructure and institutional capacity development projects in Turkey and three water sector development projects in the Palestinian territories as well as other smaller projects in the environmental sectors. During his long-term field assignments in a large bi-lateral Finnish project and with UNICEF Nepal Mr. Saarilehto has been strongly involved in designing and implementing project as well as sector level monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. He is an IPMA certified project manager and has an MSc in Development Studies and BA in Indology from the University of Helsinki.

# ANNEX 1: TERMS OF REFERENCE

**Evaluation 3 on the Programme-based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organisations, Foundations and Umbrella Organisations**

## 1. BACKGROUND TO THE EVALUATION

Civil society actors are an essential and integral element of Finland's development cooperation in its entirety. Previously, the volume of development cooperation conducted by civil society organisations (CSOs) increased steadily, e.g. the programme-based support from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) arose from € 59,335,460 in 2010 to € 83,776,140 in 2015. Budget cuts were decided upon in 2015 and implemented in 2016, leading to reductions also in CSO funding.

The development cooperation of the CSOs has been part of several thematic and policy level evaluations and reviews during the recent years; the most recent, comprehensive and relevant being: Complementarity in Finland's Development Policy and Co-operation (2013) and Results on the Ground, an Independent Review of Finnish Aid (2015). The Complementarity evaluation highlighted the limited complementarity between the Finnish Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) and other aid modalities as well as between different NGO instruments. Finnish Development policies encourage complementarity but there is no systematic coordination across program types. However the evaluation concludes that complementarity in general was supported by the MFA and most NGOs, whereas some feared that the distinction between state and civil society might become blurred.

The independent review concluded that the assessment of results in the Finnish CSO support was difficult due to lack of evaluations on results. The latest evaluation about the MFA support to Finnish foundations and Partnership agreement scheme was conducted in 2008 and the support to DEMO was evaluated in 2009 and KEPA in 2005 but little is said about the results in any of these evaluations. The latest comprehensive evaluation on the results and impact of CSO development cooperation funded by the MFA dates back to 1994. MFA commissions regularly performance audits on the cooperation of the partnership scheme organizations: two organizations are audited each year, the most recent being FIDA International and Free Church Federation of Finland.

In 2015 the Development Evaluation Unit (EVA-11) of the MFA initiated a series of evaluations to assess **the multiannual programme-based support through Finnish CSOs, umbrella organisations and special foundations**. The decision to carry out these CSO evaluations was made when the **MFA's guidelines for the evaluation of development cooperation were revised in February 2015 to cover all development cooperation funded by the MFA**. The Guidelines (in Finnish) can be found on the MFA webpage:

http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=150815&GUID={4B7FB9F6-1587-4772-9A08- B410EF-C5B309}. The evaluation practices of the MFA are based on the principles agreed internationally within the OECD and the EU. The **MFA evaluation manual** steer the implementation of evaluation of Finland's development cooperation.

The first CSO evaluation will be finalized in September 2016. The second CSO evaluation is on-going and will tentatively be ready in March 2017. This evaluation is now the third and last CSO-evaluation of the series and will cover the programmes of the ten remaining CSOs, umbrella organisations and special foundations.

**The CSOs included in this evaluation are:**

- Political Parties of Finland for Democracy (Demo Finland)
- Free Church Federation in Finland (Frikyrklig Samverkan, FS)
- Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland (SASK)
- International Solidarity Foundation (ISF)
- Disability Partnership Finland

**The umbrella organisations are:**

- Service Centre for Development Cooperation (Kepa)
- The Finnish Non-governmental development organization NGDO Platform to the EU (Kehys)

**The special foundations are:**

- Abilis Foundation
- Kios Foundation
- Siemenpuu Foundation

The evaluation will produce 9 reports: a separate report on each of the CSO programme evaluations of the five CSOs, a report on the programme evaluations of the umbrella organisations, a report of the programme evaluations of foundations, a report synthesizing and aggregating the most important findings of these evaluations and furthermore a meta-analysis to synthesize the results of all three rounds of CSO evaluations (CSO1, CSO2 and CSO3).

## 2. CONTEXT

The development cooperation objective of civil society actors and organizations is a vibrant and pluralistic civil society. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs uses many forms of support to contribute to CSOs' development cooperation activities: programme-based, project support, development communications and global education support and the national share of EU funding for CSOs.

The programme-based support is channeled to CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations. Each of these categories has a different background and somewhat different principles have been applied in their selection. However, they have all been granted a special status in the financing application process: they receive funding and report based on 2-4 year program proposals granted through programme application rounds, which are not open to others. On the policy level, nevertheless, they are all guided by the same policy guidelines as the rest of Finland's support to CSOs.

### Partnership agreement organisations

According to 2013 instructions concerning the Partnership Agreement Scheme of the MFA, the aim of partnerships between the MFA and CSOs as well as organisations' mutual collaboration is to strengthen the position of civil society and individual actors as channels of independent civilian activity in both Finland and developing countries. Other objectives are to boost global solidarity, empower locals to exercise influence, and improve cooperation and interaction between the public authorities and civil society actors. The ongoing dialogue between the MFA and the partnership organisations includes annual partnership consultations, partnership forums and seminars for CSOs as well as close contacts between the CSO and the responsible official in the Unit for Civil Society (KEO-30).

The Finnish CSOs have their own partners in developing countries with whom development cooperation is carried out. The partners have various roles in societal development – they promote social equity, carry out global education and activate people to improve their personal situations.

Finnish CSOs support their partners and strengthen their capacities, contributing to the strengthening of civil societies in developing countries. The partnership organisations are thus important to the MFA as partners of dialogue and advocacy.

The third round of CSO programme-based support evaluations includes five CSOs of which four are partnership organisations: SASK, International Solidarity Foundation, Disability Partnership Finland and FS. Demo Finland receives programme-based support.

### Special foundations

Through its special foundations modality, the MFA supports three Finnish foundations which each provides small grants to NGOs in developing countries. Each special foundation focuses on different issues: Abilis on disability, KIOS on human rights issues and Siemenpuu on environmental issues. All three foundations were established in 1998. Whereas Abilis and KIOS have been receiving MFA funding since the beginning, Siemenpuu received its first grant only in 2001. Siemenpuu has received public funding also from the Ministry of Environment.

The foundations were originally established by a group of Finnish NGOs and civil society activists to manage small-scale flexible grants to support the development of civil society in developing countries. More than 90% of the funding to these foundations comes from the MFA, but other sources of funding have emerged, including other official development cooperation donors, multilateral organisations and individual donations. The contributions by the partner organizations funded by the foundations are considered as the required self-financing. Since over 50% of the funding is received from the Government of Finland, the foundations are required to follow the Government regulations on the use of discretionary Government transfers.

The foundations were evaluated in 2008. The evaluation confirmed that the foundations are relevant for providing smallscale NGO support. The foundations assist to implement Finnish development cooperation policy by supporting key cross-cutting objectives and the human-rights based approach to development.

### Umbrella organisations

The MFA grants programme-based support also to umbrella organisations Kepa and Kehys. Kepa is the umbrella organisation for Finnish CSOs who work with development cooperation or are otherwise interested in global affairs. Kehys, offers services to NGOs on EU development policy issues. Kepa and Kehys have received programme-based support from the beginning since their role as providing support, guidance and training to Finnish CSOs has been seen as instrumental in improving the quality, effectiveness, impact and efficiency of development cooperation by CSOs.

## PROGRAMMES OF THE SELECTED CSOS

#### Political Parties of Finland for Democracy, Demo Finland

http://demofinland.org/?lang=en

Demo Finland functions as a co-operative organisation of all the eight Finnish parliamentary parties. It seeks to enhance democracy by carrying out and facilitating collaborative projects between Finnish political parties and political movements in new & developing democracies.

Demo Finland works to strengthen equality in participation, constructive cross-party cooperation, a pluralistic political discussion and the ability of politicians to peacefully impact socio-political development. With its partners, it organises multi-party training programs and dialogue initiatives, which help to promote understanding between opposing parties and a discrimination-free political culture. Demo Finland bases its operations in the particular needs of its partners and parties. According to its strategy, Demo Finland focuses on ensuring that more equal possibilities exist for women and youth to participate in politics, and to establish co-operation that spans across party lines.

Currently, Demo Finland has long-term activities in three countries: Myanmar, Tunisia and Zambia. Long-term projects in Nepal and Tanzania ended in 2015 as well as a more recent project in Sri Lanka.

The MFA granted Demo Finland's 2013-2015 programme-based support € 900,000 in 2014, € 1,000,000 in 2015 and € 570,000 in 2016, even though first actual programme document is for 2016-2018. Earlier Demo Finland was funded through the political department of MFA, but then MFA decided to shift Demo into the programme-based support scheme.

#### SASK - The Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland

http://www.sask.fi/englanti

SASK is the solidarity and development cooperation organisation of Finnish trade unions. Approximately 1.7 million Finns belong to SASK through their trade unions. SASK was founded by the Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions and its affiliated unions in the end of the year 1986. Since then, SASK has become a widely representative solidarity body of the Finnish trade union movement with two central organisations and 35 national federations as affiliated members.

As part of the Finnish and international trade union movement the function of SASK is to strengthen trade unions in every corner of the world, in order for them to raise their members out of poverty and defend their human rights. Strengthened unions also contribute to broader societal changes, such as improving labor legislation and social security. SASK strives to put an end to exploiting cheap labour and child labour abuse. Improving dangerous working conditions is also at the core of SASK's work.

SASK's partners are Global Union Federations, other solidarity support organisations and trade unions in the South. It has more than 40 development cooperation projects in Africa, Asia and Latin America – the main countries being Philippines, Indonesia, India, Nepal, Mozambique and Columbia.

Through a partnership agreement, the MFA supported SASK with € 4,530,000 in 2014. MFA's framework agreement with SASK included a support of € 5,000,000 in 2015 and € 2,930,000 in 2016.

#### The International Solidarity Foundation (ISF)

http://www.solidaarisuus.fi/in-english/

The ISF is a Finnish non-governmental organisation established in 1970. The ISF mission is to support development that strengthens democracy, equality and human rights internationally and challenge people in Finland to work to build an equitable world. Through long-term development cooperation projects, ISF aims at improving living conditions of the poorest people in Somaliland, Kenya and Nicaragua.

ISF development cooperation programme has two main goals. First, to promote gender equality by prevailing harmful traditions, violence against women and high total fertility rates that restrict women's opportunities to decide upon their lives. Second, to improve men and women's livelihood resilience in economically and ecologically sustainable way.

In all projects, ISF encourages women to participate in the development of their communities. The main objective is to strengthen women's social, economic and political status and to provide the poorest people with opportunities for decent work.

The MFA supported ISF's 2013-2015 programme with € 2,377,700 in 2014, € 2,450,000 in 2015 and € 1,470,000 in 2016.

#### Disability Partnership Finland

http://www.vammaiskumppanuus.fi/development-cooperation/

Disability Partnership Finland's work is based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Partnership's development cooperation programme is implemented by the Partnership's member organisations (at the moment 7 Finnish Disabled People's Organisations) and coordinated by a Secretariat.

The work aims at a world where the rights of persons with disabilities are fulfilled and persons with disabilities work themselves to develop their own communities at local, national and international levels. With a true human rights based approach to the work, persons with disabilities in developing countries - the Rights Holders - and the Southern organisations that represent them, are the ones that set the objectives for the work. The programme imposes two of the five programme components on all project implementors: Each organisation receiving funds from the Partnership should commit to create and maintain adequate administrative systems and democratic decision making mechanisms in their organization (Outcome 1) and work towards eradicating gender based discrimination in their work (Outcome 5). Other than that, the Southern organisations are free to choose the approach how they address the rights issues of persons with disabilities. Many partners choose to combine advocacy (Outcome 2) with more direct means of improving the educational (Outcome 3), employment (Outcome 4) or social circumstances of persons with disabilities in their respective countries.

Disability Partnership Finland supported almost 30 projects in Africa, Balkans, Central Asia, South America and Middle East in 2015 (21 projects in 2016 and 18 in 2017).

The MFA granted Disability Partnership Finland's programme € 2,600,000 in 2014, € 2,700,000 in 2015 and € 2,630,000 in 2016.

#### The FS

http://www.frikyrkligsamverkan.fi/wp1303/in-english

The Free Church Federation in Finland (FS), which was founded in 1936, is an umbrella organization for six Swedish speaking evangelical free church denominations in Finland. FS represents about 4,500 members in the Swedish speaking parts of Finland. Swedish is used as the main work language. The cooperation through FS has developed over the years and today the main function of the organization is to coordinate the member organizations development aid projects. The coordination of the member organizations development aid projects is called FS Global. The mission of FS Global is to help the poorest and most vulnerable people in the world. This is realized thru the development program which is concentrated on two components, education and health. The projects takes place in societies where member organizations work in collaboration with local partners and local authorities.

FS Global targets countries are in Asia, Africa and South America. The organizations work is based on broad and long missionary work and on long experience and personal relationships contacts in the work field. The development aid work is well rooted in the civil society since long time, most of the member organizations are more than 100 years old. This provides a broad and strong support in the civil

society through the member organizations local churches and their broad networks. FS Global is currently working in Benin, Burundi, Ethiopia, Kenya, South Sudan, Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Cambodia, India, Laos, Philippines, Thailand, The Palestinian territories and Guyana.

The MFA's framework agreement with FS included a support of € 1,814,000 in 2014, € 1,962,000 in 2015 and € 1,160,000 in 2016.

## PROGRAMMES OF THE SUPPORTED FOUNDATIONS

### Abilis Foundation

http://www.abilis.fi/index.php?lang=en

Abilis Foundation, found in 1998, supports project activities that contribute toward equal opportunities for persons with disabilities in society in the Global South through human rights, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency. Special priority is given to projects on advocating for human rights of persons with disabilities, to projects at the grassroots, and to activities developed and implemented by women with disabilities.

Abilis Foundation gives small grants to projects planned and implemented by persons with disabilities in the Global South. Abilis supports organisations that are run by persons who have a disability, be it related to mobility, vision, hearing or any other type of disability. Organisations that are run by parents of children with disabilities can also be supported by Abilis. Abilis' objective is to support projects that promote equal opportunities, independent living, human rights and independent livelihood. Abilis supports projects in countries which the United Nations and the OECD have defined as qualifying for Official Development Assistance (ODA). The focus countries in 2014-2015 were: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Kyrgyzstan, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Uganda, Vietnam, and Zambia.

The MFA granted Abilis Foundation € 2,800,000 in 2014, € 2,900,000 in 2015 and € 2,750,000 in 2016.

### Kios Foundation

http://www.kios.fi/en/

KIOS Foundation strengthens the realization of human rights by supporting the human rights work of civil society in developing countries. In the supported projects, human rights are strengthened by human rights education, awareness raising, campaigning, monitoring and documentation of the human rights situation, advocacy work and legal aid, among other activities. In addition to project funding, KIOS supports the organisations by strengthening their capacity, networks and security. KIOS was founded by 11 Finnish human rights and development NGOs.

Support is mainly channeled to 6 focus countries in East Africa and South Asia. Work is supported in East Africa in Kenya, Rwanda and Uganda. In South Asia support is channeled to Nepal, Sri Lanka and to Tibetan civil society organisations in exile. Some long-term partner organisations of KIOS are also supported in Bangladesh, Burundi, Ethiopia and Pakistan. In Finland, KIOS raises awareness on the significance of human rights and the work of human rights defenders in developing countries. In addition, KIOS advocates for the development of good practices to Finnish foreign and development policy to support human rights defenders.

The MFA granted KIOS € 1,800,000 in 2014, € 1,900,000 in 2015 and € 1,120,000 in 2016.

### The Siemenpuu Foundation

http://www.siemenpuu.org/en

The Siemenpuu Foundation supports environmental work and global cooperation of civil society organisations (CSOs) in developing countries. In addition to environmental issues, focus is also on human rights, social justice and cultural diversity. Siemenpuu's support is channeled to projects planned and implemented locally by CSOs. The projects aim to strengthen the rights of local communities, improve the state of the environment, advocate comprehensive ecological democratisation of society, and enhance the transition to a sustainable economy. Sharing and learning from the experiences in the Global South is an integral part of Siemenpuu's work; for instance through the production of publications and events.

The Siemenpuu Foundation was founded in 1998 by fifteen Finnish environmental and development policy CSOs. Since 2002 it has funded more than 600 environmental projects in over 50 developing countries. Siemenpuu has regional and thematic programmes, through which most of the financial support is directed. Currently, Siemenpuu has programmes in India, Indonesia, Nepal, Mali, the Mekong Region as well as in Latin America. It also grants project support to some Eastern and Southern African CSOs.

The MFA granted Siemenpuu Foundation € 2,000,000 in 2014, € 2,100,000 in 2015 and € 1,250,000 in 2016.

## PROGRAMMES OF THE UMBRELLA ORGANISATIONS

### Kepa

http://www.kepa.fi/international/english

Kepa is the umbrella organisation for Finnish CSOs who work with development cooperation or are otherwise interested in global development. At the moment Kepa has more than 300 members, ranging from small voluntary-based organisations to major national organisations in Finland.

Kepa was founded in 1985 to coordinate the Finnish Volunteer Service, through which professional volunteers were sent to work in developing countries. The service was scaled down after 1995, and today Kepa's work mainly involves strengthening civil society both in Finland and in developing countries, with the ultimate goal of eradicating poverty and inequality. Kepa together with the member organisations aims at influencing political decision making and creating public awareness in Finland, and strengthening the capacities of CSOs.

The key themes of Kepa's work are development cooperation, global economic policies, climate justice and strong civil society. Kepa's main activities include advocacy, awareness raising and global education, capacity development services and national and global networking. Currently Kepa has field operations in Mozambique and Tanzania where it has partnerships with local CSOs.

The MFA's cooperation agreement with KEPA included a support of € 5,900,000 in 2014 and € 6,000,000 in 2015, and € 3,680,000 in 2016.

### Kehys

http://www.kehys.fi/en

The Finnish NGDO Platform to the European Union, Kehys, is an advocacy network of Finnish NGOs. Kehys works for Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development; better and more coherent policies in the fields of human development, security and development, and green and sustainable economy. Kehys also works for active citizenship and a stronger civil society. Kehys functions include advocacy on EU

development policy, global citizenship education and networking, and advice and training on EU funding. Kehys has approximately 40 member associations which are Finnish NGOs working on development issues.

Kehys is the Finnish national platform within the CONCORD. CONCORD has 28 national associations, 20 international networks and 3 associate members that represent over 2,600 NGOs, supported by millions of citizens across Europe. Through Kehys the Finnish NGOs are represented in the CONCORD hubs and can affect actively on European development cooperation debate.

The MFA granted Kehys € 360,000 in 2014, € 500,000 in 2015 and € 300,000 in 2016.

## 3. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

*Purpose*

This evaluation serves the dual purpose of accountability and learning. It will provide evidence-based information on the CSOs', foundations' and umbrella organisations' performance and results achieved through programme-based support. The evaluation will also give guidance on how to enhance the strategic planning and management of the programme-based support funding modality in the MFA.

As such, the evaluation will promote joint learning of relevant stakeholders by providing lessons learned on good practices and needs for improvement in terms of future policy, strategy, programme and funding allocation of the CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations as well as the MFA. The results of this evaluation will be used in the reform of programme-based support, in the next update of the Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy and in the planning of CSOs, foundations' and umbrella organisations' next programmes.

*Objectives*

The objectives of this evaluation are to provide independent and objective assessment

1) on the performance and results achieved by the programmes of the five CSOs, three foundations and two umbrella organisations;
2) on their value and merit from the perspective of the policy, programme and beneficiary level; as well as
3) on the management of CSO programmes from the point of view of MFA, CSOs, foundations, umbrella organisations and partners.
4) In addition based on all three CSO evaluations the meta-analysis will synthesize the evaluation results, including the strengths and weaknesses of the programme-based support funding modality.

## 4. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The evaluation consists of the programmes of the five selected CSOs, three foundations and two umbrella organisations and their main objectives (described earlier). It covers both financial and nonfinancial operations and objectives in their programmes.

All findings, conclusions and recommendations will be published in an individual report for each CSO, one report for the special foundations and one for umbrella organisations. The most important findings from the seven separate reports will be presented as aggregated results in a synthesis report. In addition, there will be a meta-analysis to synthesize the evaluation results, including the strengths and weaknesses of the programme-based support funding modality. This meta-analysis covers all three CSO evaluations.

The evaluation covers the following policies and guidelines: Development Policy Programmes of Finland (2007 and 2012), Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Policy (2010) and Instructions Concerning the Partnership Agreement Scheme (2013). In addition guidelines on Results based management (RBM) in Finland's Development Cooperation, Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation and Finland's Development Policy and Development Cooperation in Fragile States as well as MFA's Democracy Support Policy are important documents in this particular case (links to these and other policies can be found in the annex 1). Democracy Support Policy is particularly important with the assessment of Demo Finland. The special characteristics of democracy support, which are partly different to the basis of development cooperation, have to be taken into account in the assessment of especially relevance and effectiveness of Demo Finland.

The evaluation covers the period of 2010–2016.

## 5. EVALUATION ISSUES IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE OECD-DAC CRITERIA

The CSO programmes will be evaluated in accordance with the OECD-DAC criteria in order to get a standardised assessment of the CSO programmes that allows the compilation of the synthesis report.

### Evaluation issues on CSOs and foundations

Relevance

- Assess the extent to which the programme has responded to the needs, rights and priorities of the partner countries and stakeholders and beneficiaries/rights-holders, including men and women, boys and girls and especially the easily marginalised groups.
- Assess the extent to which the programme has been in line with the Finnish Development Policy (2007, 2012) and the Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Cooperation.
- Assess the selection of themes and partner countries of the programmes.

Impact

- Assess the value and merit and validate any evidence or "proxies" of impact, positive or negative, intended or unintended, that the programme has contributed for the beneficiaries/rights-holders including the empowerment of civil societies.

Effectiveness

- Synthesise and validate the outcomes (intended and unintended) and assess their value and merit.
- Assess the factors influencing the successes and challenges.

Efficiency

- Assess the costs and utilization of financial and human resources against the achieved outputs.
- Assess the risk management including the efficiency of monitoring practices.
- Assess the management of the programme at different levels, including guidance by the Unit for Civil Society and the MFA.
- In the case of foundations, assess the value-added of the funding model.

Sustainability

- Assess the ownership and participation process within the programme.
- Assess the organisational, social and cultural, ecological and financial sustainability of the programme and its results.

Coordination, Coherence, Complementarity

- Assess the extent, to which the CSOs' and foundations' programme has been coordinated with other CSOs, development partners and donors.
- Assess the extent, to which the CSOs' and foundations' programme is coherent with national policies and strategies in the partner countries.
- Synthesise and reflect the extent to which the CSOs' and foundations' programme has been able to complement (increase the effect) other Finnish development policies, funding modalities (bilateral, multilateral) and programmes by other CSOs from Finland or developing countries.

### Evaluation issues for umbrella organisations

Relevance

- Assess the extent to which the programmes have been in line with the CSOs' overall strategy and comparative advantage.
- Assess the selection of themes, partner countries and different activities of KEPA's programme.

Impact

- Assess the value and merit and validate any evidence or "proxies" of impact, positive or negative, intended or unintended, the programme has contributed for the beneficiaries/rights-holders in Finland and partner countries.

Effectiveness

- Synthesize and validate the outcomes (intended and unintended) and assess their value and merit.
- Assess the factors influencing the successes and challenges.
- Assess the outcomes in relation to different roles of Kepa/Kehys.

Efficiency

- Assess the costs and utilisation of financial and human resources between different activities against the achieved outputs.
- assess the management of the programme at different levels, including guidance by the Unit for Civil Society and the MFA.
- Assess the monitoring (how it supports reporting and internal learning).

Coordination, coherence and complementarity

- Assess the extent, to which the programme has been coordinated with other CSOs, umbrella organisations, development partners and donors.
- Assess the extent, to which the programme is coherent.
- Synthesise and reflect the extent to which the programme has been able to complement (increase the effect) other Finnish development policies, funding modalities (bilateral, multilateral) and programmes by other CSOs from Finland or developing countries.

Additional issues for the meta-analysis

- Aggregate the results of all three CSO evaluations using the OECD DAC criteria.
- Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the programme-based support to various types of CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

Mixed methods for the collecting and analysing data will be used (both qualitative and quantitative). The findings have to be triangulated and validated by using multiple methods.

This evaluation of the selected CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations consist of document analysis, interviews of the key informants in Helsinki, field visits to a representative sample of projects and operations by each CSO and foundation.

The main document sources of information include strategy and programme documents and reports, programme/project evaluations, minutes of annual consultations, official financial decisions, Finland's development policies and strategies, guidance documents, previously conducted CSO or thematic evaluations and similar documents. The evaluation team is also required to use statistics and different local sources of information, especially in the context analysis. It should be noted that part of the material provided by the MFA and the CSOs is only available in Finnish.

The results, incl. the results-based management systems of the five CSOs, three foundations and two umbrella organisations from the first round of CSO evaluations are available for this evaluation. The preliminary results from the second round of CSO evaluations will be available for this evaluation as soon as they are ready. The draft reports will tentatively be ready by February 2017 and the final reports by the end March 2017.

The field visit countries will tentatively include **at least** Kenya, Mozambique, Zambia, Uganda and India. The field visit countries should include projects and operations of more than one CSO/foundation. The sampling principles and their effect to reliability and validity of the evaluation must be elaborated separately. The team members for the field visits have to be selected the way that they do not have any individual restrictions to travel to the possible field visit countries. During the inception phase the evaluation team will propose the final list of field visit countries on the base of the desk study and consultations.

The approach section of the technical tender will present an initial work plan, including the methodology and methods (data collection and analysis) and the evaluation matrix. The evaluation team is expected to construct the theory of change and propose a detailed methodology in an evaluation matrix which will be elaborated and finalised in the inception report.

The Team Leader and the team have to be available until the reports have been approved by EVA- 11, even if the schedule changes.

The approach and working modality of evaluation will be participatory.

## 7. MANAGEMENT OF THE EVALUATION

EVA-11 will be responsible for the overall management of the evaluation process. EVA-11 will work closely with other units/departments of the MFA and other stakeholders in Finland and abroad.

A reference group for the evaluation will be established and chaired by EVA-11. The mandate of the reference group is to provide advisory support and inputs to the evaluation, e.g. through participating in the planning of the evaluation and commenting on the deliverables of the consultant.

The members of the reference group will include:

- representatives from the KEO-30 and possibly some other members from the MFA or embassies.
- one representative (with a substitute) from each of the ten CSOs, foundations and umbrella organisations.

The tasks of the reference group are to:

- participate in the planning of the evaluation;
- participate in the relevant meetings (e.g. start-up meeting, meeting to discuss the evaluation plan, validation/debriefing meetings after the field visits);
- comment on the deliverables of the consultant (i.e. evaluation plan, draft final report, final report) with a view to ensure that the evaluation is based on factual knowledge about the subject of the evaluation and
- support the implementation, dissemination and follow-up on the agreed evaluation recommendations.

## 8. EVALUATION PROCESS, TIMELINES AND DELIVERABLES

The evaluation will tentatively start in November 2016 and end in August 2017. The evaluation consists of the following phases and will produce the respective deliverables. It is highlighted that a new phase is initiated only when the deliverables of the previous phase have been approved by the EVA-11. All the reports have to be sent with an internal quality assurance note and the revised reports have to be accompanied by a table of received comments and responses to them.

It should be noted that internationally recognised experts may be contracted by the MFA as external peer reviewer(s) for the whole evaluation process or for some phases/deliverables of the evaluation process, e.g. final and draft reports (evaluation plan, draft final and final reports). In case of peer review, the views of the peer reviewer will be given to the Consultant.

The language of all reports and possible other documents is English. Time reserved for the commenting of different reports is 2-3 weeks. The timetables are tentative, except for the final reports.

### A. Start-up

**The administrative meeting** regarding the administration, methodology and content of the evaluation will be held with the contracted team in November 2016. The purpose of the meeting is to go through the evaluation process, related practicalities and to build common understanding on the ToR.

Participants in the administrative meeting in Helsinki: EVA-11 and the Team Leader, the CSO- evaluation coordinators and the Home-Office coordinator of the Consultant in person. Other team members may participate.

**The meeting with the reference group** will be held right after the administrative meeting and its purpose is to establish a community to enable dialogue and learning together as well as to get to know the evaluation team and the CSOs/foundations/umbrella organisations. The Team Leader/evaluation team will present its understanding of the evaluation, the initial approach of the evaluation and the evaluation questions.

**Participants in the meeting with the reference group in the MFA in Helsinki**: EVA-11 (responsible for inviting and chairing the session); reference group and the Team Leader, the CSO-evaluation coordinators and the Home-Office coordinator of the Consultant in person. Other team members may participate.

**Deliverable**: Presentation of the approach and questions by the Consultant, Agreed minutes of the meetings by the Consultant.

## B. Inception phase

The Inception phase includes **a desk analysis and preparation of the detailed evaluation plan**. It is between November 2016 and January 2017 during which the evaluation team will produce a **final inception report with a desk study** (see evaluation manual p. 56 and 96). The desk study includes a comprehensive context and document analysis, an analysis on programmes of the selected five CSOs, three foundations and two umbrella organisations. It shall also include mapping of the different parts of each programme and their different sources of funding.

The inception report consists of the evaluation desk study and evaluation plan which include the following:

- context, initial findings and conclusions of the desk study
- tentative theory of change
- elaboration of the methodology (data collection and data analysis), summarized in an evaluation matrix (incl. evaluation questions, indicators, judgement criteria, methods for data collection and analysis)
- work plan, division of work between team members
- tentative table of contents of final reports
- data gaps
- detailed implementation plan for field visits with clear division of work (participation, interview questions, lists of meetings and stakeholders etc.)

The inception report will be presented, discussed and the needed changes agreed in the inception meeting in January 2017. The inception report must be submitted to EVA-11 two weeks prior to the inception meeting.

Plans for the field work, preliminary list of people and organisations to be contacted, participative methods, interviews, workshops, group interviews, questions, quantitative data to be collected etc. should be approved by EVA-11 at least three weeks before going to the field.

**Participants to the inception meeting in the MFA**: EVA-11; reference group and the Team Leader (responsible for chairing the session), the CSO-evaluation Coordinators and the Home-Office coordinator of the Consultant in person. Other team members may participate.

**Deliverable**: Inception report including the evaluation plan, desk study, and the minutes of the inception meeting by the Consultant

## C. IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

The Implementation phase will take place in February - April 2017. It includes the field visits to a representative sample of projects and validation seminars. During the field work particular attention should be paid to human rights-based approach, and to ensure that women, children and easily marginalised groups will also participate (see UNEG guidelines). Attention has to also be paid to the adequate length of the field visits to enable the real participation as well as sufficient collection of information also from other sources outside the immediate stakeholders (e.g. statistics and comparison material). The team is encouraged to use statistical evidence whenever possible.

Therefore, the field work for each organisation should last at least 2-3 weeks but can be done in parallel. Adequate amount of time should also be allocated for the interviews conducted with the stakeholders in Finland. The purpose of the field visits is to triangulate and validate the results and assessments of

the document analysis. It should be noted that a representative of EVA-11 may participate in some of the field visits as an observer for the learning purposes.

Direct quotes from interviewees and stakeholders may be used in the reports, but only anonymously ensuring that the interviewee cannot be identified from the quote.

The consultant will organise a debriefing/validation meeting at the end of each country visit. A debriefing/validation meeting of the initial findings of both components 1 and 2 will be arranged in Helsinki in in April 2017. The purpose of the seminars is to share initial findings, but also to validate the findings.

After the field visits and workshops, it is likely that further interviews and document study in Finland will still be needed to complement the information collected during the earlier phases.

The MFA and embassies will not organise interviews or meetings with the stakeholders on behalf of the evaluation team, but will assist in identification of people and organisations to be included in the evaluation.

**Deliverables/meetings**: Debriefing/validation workshops supported by PowerPoint presentations on the preliminary results. At least one workshop in each of the countries visited and workshops in Helsinki on initial findings.

**Participants to the country workshops**: The team members of the Consultant participating in the country visit (responsible for inviting and chairing the session) and the relevant stakeholders, including the Embassy of Finland and relevant representatives of the local Government.

**Participants to the MFA workshops**: EVA-11; reference group and other relevant staff/stakeholders, and the Team Leader (responsible for chairing the session) and the CSO-evaluation Coordinators of the Consultant (can be arranged via video conference).

### D. Reporting and dissemination phase

The reporting and dissemination phase will take place in May - August 2017 and produce the final reports and organise the dissemination of the results.

The reports should be kept clear, concise and consistent. The report should contain inter alia the evaluation findings, conclusions and recommendations. The logic between them should be clear and based on evidence.

The final draft reports will be sent for a round of comments by the parties concerned. The purpose of the comments is to correct any misunderstandings or factual errors. The time needed for commenting is 2-3 weeks.

The final draft reports must include abstract and summaries (including the table on main findings, conclusions and recommendations) in Finnish, Swedish and English. They have to be of high and publishable quality. It must be ensured that the translations use commonly used terms in development cooperation. The consultant is responsible for the editing, proof-reading and quality control of the content and language.

The reports will be finalised based on the comments received and shall be ready by **August 15, 2017**.

The final reports will be delivered in Word-format (.docx) with all the tables and pictures also separately in their original formats. As part of reporting process, the Consultant will submit a methodological note explaining how the quality control has been addressed during the evaluation. The Consultant will also submit the EU Quality Assessment Grid as part of the final reporting.

In addition, the MFA requires access to the evaluation team's interim evidence documents, e.g. completed matrices, although it is not expected that these should be of publishable quality. The MFA treats these documents as confidential if needed.

**Deliverables**: Final reports (draft final reports and final reports), methodological note and EU Quality Assessment Grid.

A management meeting on the final results will be organised tentatively in June in Helsinki and the Team Leader (responsible for chairing the session) and the CSO-evaluation coordinators of the Consultant must be present in person.

**A public presentation on the results will be organised in June on the same visit as the final management meeting.** It is expected that at least the Team leader and the coordinators of the CSO- evaluations are present.

**A public Webinar** will be organised by the EVA-11. Team leader and the coordinators of the CSO evaluations will give short presentations of the findings in a public Webinar. Presentation can be delivered from distance. Only a computer with microphone and sufficient Internet connection is required.

**Optional learning and training sessions** with the CSOs (Sessions paid separately. They require a separate assignment from EVA-11).

The MFA will draw a management response to the recommendations at two levels/processes: the synthesis report will be responded in accordance with the process of centralised evaluations by a working group coordinated by EVA-11 and the other reports in accordance with the process of decentralised evaluations (responsibility of the Unit for Civil Society) as described in the evaluation norm of the MFA. The management response will be drawn up on the basis of discussions with the CSOs concerned. The follow up and implementation of the response will be integrated in the planning process of the next phase of the programme-based support.

## 9. EXPERTISE REQUIRED

There will be **one Management Team**, responsible for overall planning management and coordination of the evaluation. The Team leader, the CSO-Evaluation Coordinators and the Home Officer of the Consultant will form the Management group of the evaluation Consultant, which will be representing the team in major coordination meetings and major events presenting the evaluation results.

One Team leader level expert will be identified as the Team Leader of the whole evaluation. The Team Leader will lead the work and will be ultimately responsible for the deliverables. The evaluation team will work under the leadership of the Team Leader who carries the final responsibility of completing the evaluation.

There will be seven CSO-Evaluation teams (one for each CSO, one for the umbrella organisations and one for foundations). One senior expert of each of the CSO-Evaluation team will be identified as a CSO-Evaluation Coordinator. One expert can be a CSO-Evaluation coordinator in different CSO- Evaluation teams. The CSO-Evaluation coordinator will be contributing the overall planning and implementation of the whole evaluation from a specific CSO's/foundation's/umbrella organisations' perspective and also responsible for coordinating, managing and authoring the specific CSO- evaluation work and reports.

The consultant will propose evaluator from the selected field visit countries to include them into the evaluation team. The role of the local experts will be explained by the Consultant.

Online translators cannot be used with MFA document materials.

Detailed team requirements are included in the Instructions to the Tenderers (ITT).

## 10. BUDGET

The evaluation will not cost more than 650 000 Euros (VAT excluded).

## 11. MANDATE

The evaluation team is entitled and expected to discuss matters relevant to this evaluation with pertinent persons and organisations. However, it is not authorised to make any commitments on behalf of the Government of Finland. The evaluation team does not represent the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland in any capacity.

All intellectual property rights to the result of the Service referred to in the Contract will be exclusive property of the Ministry, including the right to make modifications and hand over material to a third party. The Ministry may publish the end result under Creative Commons license in order to promote openness and public use of evaluation results.

## 12. AUTHORISATION

Helsinki, 21.9.2016

Jyrki Pulkkinen

Director

Development Evaluation Unit Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

## REFERENCE AND RESOURCE MATERIAL

### General guidelines and policies

Government Report on Development Policy: One World, Common Future – Toward Sustainable Development (2016)
http://formin.finland.fi/Public/default.aspx?contentid=341918&nodeid=49540&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Development Policy Programme 2012
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=251855&contentlan=2&culture=en-US

Development policy programme 2007
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=107497&nodeid=49719&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Ministry for Foreign Affairs´ Democracy Support Policy (2014)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentId=311379&nodeId=15145&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Results based management (RBM) in Finland's Development Cooperation (2015)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=332393&nodeid=49273&contentlan=1&cultu re=fi-FI

Human Rights Based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation (2015)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=144034&GUID={C1EF0664-A7A4-409B-9B7E-96C4810A00C2}

Finland's Development Policy and Development Cooperation in Fragile States (2014)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=315438&nodeid=49719&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Other thematic policies and guidelines
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?nodeid=49719&contentlan=2&culture=en-US

### Evaluation guidelines and manuals

Norm for the Evaluation of Development Cooperation in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (2015)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=150815&GUID={4B7FB9F6-1587-4772-9A08- B410EFC5B309}

Evaluation Manual of the MFA (2013)
http://www.formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=288455&nodeid=34606&contentlan=2&culture=en-US

UNEG Manual: Integrating Human Rights and Gender Equality in Evaluations (2014)
http://www.uneval.org/document/detail/1616

### Guidelines and policies related to Programme-based support

Instructions concerning the Partnership Agreement Scheme (2013)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/download.aspx?ID=117710&GUID={FC6AEE7E-DB52-4F2E-9CB7-A54706CBF1CF}

Support for partnership organisations, MFA website
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=324861&nodeid=49328&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Guidelines for Civil Society in Development Cooperation (2010)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=206482&nodeid=15457&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Act on Discretionary Government Transfers (688/2001) (Valtionavustuslaki)
http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/ajantasa/2001/20010688

**Evaluations and reviews**

The Evaluation of Finnish Humanitarian Assistance 1996-2004 (2005)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=50644&nodeid=49728&contentlan=2&cultur e=en-US

Independent Review of Finnish Aid (2015)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=328296&nodeid=15145&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Evaluation: Complementarity in Finland's Development Policy and Co-operation: Complementarity in the NGO instruments (2013)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentId=299402&nodeId=15145&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Evaluation: FIDIDA: An example of Outsourced Service 2004-2008
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=153768&nodeid=49728&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Evaluation: Finnish NGO Foundations (2008)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentId=161405&nodeId=49326&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Evaluation: Finnish Partnership Agreement Scheme (2008)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentId=133140&nodeId=49326&contentlan=2&cultu re=en-US

Evaluation of the Service Centre for Development Cooperation (KEPA) in Finland (2005)
http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=71136&nodeid=49326&contentlan=2&cultur e=en-US

Strengthening the Partnership Evaluation of FINNIDA's NGO support programme (1994).
Report of Evaluation Study 1994:1, available only in printed version (MFA Library).

# ANNEX 2: PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

## FINLAND

### Ministry for Foreign Affairs

*Department for Development Policy*

Satu Santala, Director General

Riikka Laatu, Deputy Director General

*Unit for Civil Society / KEO-30*

Mirja Tonteri, Senior Officer

Katja Hirvonen, Programme Officer

Elina Iso-Markku, Programme Officer (Abilis and KIOS Desk Officer)

Sirpa Rajasärkkä, Programme Officer, (Siemenpuu Desk officer)

*Unit for Human Rights Policy / POL-40*

Åsa Wallendahl, Senior Advisor, Human Rights

### Abilis Foundation

Marjo Heinonen, Executive Director

Hisayo Katsui, Research and Development Manager

Kalle Könkkölä, Chairperson of the Abilis Board

Liisa Kauppinen, Board member

Sari Loijas, Vice Chair of the Board

Jaana Linna, Project Coordinator (Nepal and Kosovo)

Andrea Fichtmüller, Project Coordinator (Tanzania, Palestine and Syrian persons with disabilities)

Marina Kitaigorodski, Project Coordinator (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Ukraine)

Katja Vis, Communication Secretary

Tuula Heima-Tirkkonen, Project Coordinator (Ethiopia, Somalia and Somaliland)

Slade Syakango, Project Coordinator (Uganda)

Rea Konttinen, Project Coordinator (Cambodia, Bangladesh, and Mekong region)

Nina Stieren, Financial Secretary

**KIOS Foundation**

Ulla Anttila, Executive Director

Kerttuli Ratilainen, Administrative Secretary

Kristiina Vainio, Expert (Nepal, Tibet, Pakistan, Afghanistan, South Asia Regional Programs)

Maarit Roström, Communications Coordinator

Katja Ilppola, Expert (Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Kenya)

Elina Vuola, Expert (Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Ethiopia)

**KIOS Grantee – East and Horn of Africa Human Rights Defenders**

Nuruh Nakiwala, Program and Administration Manager

**Siemenpuu Foundation**

Hanna Matinpuro, Executive Director

Kari Bottas, Programme Coordinator

Toni Haapanen, Programme Coordinator

Marko Ulvila, Chairman of Board

Kirsi Chavda, Programme Coordinator

Timo Kuronen, Communications and Programme Coordinator of Mekong Programme

Tatu Matinpuro, Financial Coordinator,

Ruby van der Wekken, Programme Coordinator

Mira Käkönen, Vice-member of Board (former Chairperson of Board 2009/2010-2013)

Otto Miettinen, Member of Board

## INDIA

**Embassy of Finland**

Suvi Tuominen, Second Secretary, Embassy of Finland, New Delhi, India

## NEPAL

**Embassy of Finland**

Jukka Ilomäki, Counsellor, Development

**Abilis Local Office Nepal**

Mr. Birendra Raj Pokharel, Abilis Facilitator

Ms. Tilottama Gyanwali, Abilis Local Office Accountant

**Blind Women Association of Nepal (BWAN)**

Neera Adhikari, Senior Advisor

Gauri Thapa, Treasurer

Deepika Sharma, General Secretary

Isha K.C., Project Coordinator

Laxmi Nepal, Executive Member

Amidaya Dahala, Project Officer

Sharda Aryal, Accountant

Laxmi Adhikar, Member Board

**Centre for Victims of Torture, Nepal (CVICT)**

Mr. Bhushan Guragain, Executive Director

Ms. Jamuna Poudyal, Programme Director

**Childspace Foundation, Nepal**

Lasi Tamang, Chairperson

**Deafblind Association (DAN) of Nepal**

Pushpa Raj Rimal, President

Shakti Prasad Lamichane, General Secretary

Asha Gurung, Vice President / secretary

Sunita Rana, Interpreter

Lak Bahadur Gurung, Programme Officer

**District Agriculture Development Office (DADO) of Kaski**

Lokendra Bohara, Senior Agriculture Development Officer

**District Education Office (DEO) of Kaski**

Damodar Subedi, Assistant DEO

**District Court, Kavre**

Som Tamang, Clerk

**District Court, Kathmandu**

Purshotam Dahal, Chief Judge

Hemanta Rawal, Judge

Surya Parajuli , Judge

Dhurba Kumar Upreti, Registrar

**District Human Rights Watch Group (DHRWG), Kaski**

Dhakaram Paudel, DHRWG member, Civil Society Network

Khaga Raj Acharya, DHRWG member, Civil Society Network

Tek Nath Baral, DHRWG member, Civil Society Network

Keshu Bhujel, DHRWG member, Civil Society Network

Sumitra Bhattarai, DHRWG member, INSEC

Shiva Khakurel, DHRWG member, INSEC

Sarala Kumari Pandey, DHRWG member, Advocacy Forum

Kalpana Bhandari, DHRWG member, LACC, Kaski

Janaki Sharma , DHRWG member, WHRD

**District Police Office (DPO), Dhulikihel, Kavre**

Ms. Bimala Basnet, Constable, Women and Children Cell, Dhulikhel

Ms. Raj Kumari Shrestha, Assistant Sub- Inspector, Women and Children Cell, Dhulikhel

**Entire Power in Social Action Office (EPSA)**

Sarowati Timilsina, Vice-President

Sangita Pant, Chairperson

Gyatri Magrati, Senior Office Assistant

**Federation of Community Forest Users, Nepal (FECOFUN)**

Dil Raj Khanal, National Policy Facilitator

**Himalayan Women's Natural Resource Management Association, Nepal (HIMAWANTI)**

Rama Ale Magar, Chairperson

**HimRights**

Anjana Shakya, Chairperson

Sushil Shrestha, Project Coordinator

**Informal Sector Service Centre (INSEC)**

Subodh Raj Pyakurel, Chairperson

Gita Gautam, Human Rights Education Officer

Salina Bhattarai, PME Officer

**Independent Living Centre for People with Disabilities (CIL)**

Mr. Ganesh K.C., President

Mr. Krishna Gautam, Secretary General

**INSEC office in Kaski**

Shiva Khakurel, Regional Co-ordinator

Sapnam Sharma, Programme Coordinator

**LACC Kaski office and stakeholders**

Shova Paudel, LACC, Kaski

Janaki Sharma, WHRD

Keshu Bhujel, Civil Society Network

Shiva Khakurel, INSEC

Sarala Kumari Pandey, Advocacy Forum

Kalpana Bhandari, LACC, Kaski

Bima Silwal, Kopila, Nepal

**Legal Aid and Consultancy Centre (LACC)**

Sadhana Shrestha, Chairperson Nita Dhungana, Deputy Director

Chandeshwori Tandukar, Programme Coordinator

**Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare (MoWCSW)**

Bishnu Prasad Lamsal, Secretary

**Ministry of Education (MoE)**

Dr. Hari Prasad Lamsal, Joint Secretary - Spokesperson

Govinda Prasad Sharma, Under Secretary

Shiva Prasad Syame, Section Officer

**Ministry of Health (MoH)**

Rajeev Pokhrel, Under Secretary

**National Rehabilitation Centre of the Disabled**

Ram Prasad Dhungana, Chairperson

**Nepal Hemophilia Society (NHS)**

Bed Raj Dhungana, President

Laxmi Karki, Project Officer

Keshab Budhathoki, Member

Ashok Pratiyogi, Member

**Nepal Reconstruction Authority (NRA)**

Ram Thapaliya, Senior Joint Secretary

**Roshi Secondary School, Kavre**

Sudarsan Prasad Badal, Kanpur Secondary School Head Teacher

Man Bahadur Lama, Mahankal Lower Secondary School, School Management Committee Member

Gyalchhang Lama, Indrodaya Basic School Head Teacher

Lal Kumar Lama, Indrodaya Basic Bchool School Management Committee

Chet Bahadur Bhadel, Harisiddhi Secondary School, Sipalichilaune, 2 Head Master

Bauda Sing Lama, Shree Buddha P. School, Katunje

Anjali Lama, Indrodaya Basic School Teacher

Sushma Tamang, Kanpur Secondary School Teacher

Malati Tamang, Roshi Secondary School Teacher

Bhagawan Nyaupane, Roshi Secondary School Accountant

Hari Prasad Gautam, Roshi Secondary School Teacher

Ramesh Prasad Ahikari, Roshi Secondary School, Teacher

Pratima Lama, Mahankal Basic School Head Teacher

Rohit P. Nainali, Mahankal Basic School Teacher

Khadga Bahadur Lama, Narayansthan Lower Secondary School Head Teacher

Bindu Prasad Dhungana, Roshi Secondary School Head Teacher

Kul Bahadur Lama, Shree Bidhay B. P. School Head Teacher

Mek Maya Lama, Roshi Secondary School, Roshi Facilitator

Indra Maya Lama, Roshi Secondary School, School Management Committee Member

Rita Neupane, Roshi Secondary School Librarian

Gyan Bahadur Lama, Shree Buddha P. School, School Management Committee Member

Dipak Sharma, Roshi Secondary School Teacher

**SADED Nepal**

Uddhab Prasad Pyakurel, Research/ Assistant Professor, Honorary Convenor

Dev Kumari Gurung, Chairperson

Dr. Indra Adhikari, Formal Chairperson

Ram Sharan Sapkota, Convenor

Yogendra Bijay Aryal, Vice-president

Pralad Pant, Secretary

**Sandala Neraula, TreasurerEuropean Commission Office, Kathmandu**

Shiva Bhandari, Human Right Officer

**Social Welfare Counsel (SWC)**

Ram Raj Bhattarai, Deputy Director M&E Section

**Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre (SIRC), Bhaisepati, Sanga, Kavre**

Dipesh Pradhan, Administrative Director

Chandra Rana, Therapist

Esha Thapa, Executive Director

**Syangja Disabled Society**

Yuvraj Parajuli, Chairman

Lakshmi Parajuli, Member

**Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) Nepal office**

Abhiram Roy, Program Director

**Independent**

Dinesh Tripathi, Senior Advocate

**Local stakeholders in the Lahachok VDC in relation to INSEC project funded by KIOS**

Narayan Prasad Poudel, Coordinator, Nigrani Samuha

Govinda Prasad Adhikari, Member, Nigrani Samuha

Ganga Bahadur Sunar, Member, Nigrani Samuha

Kharika Poudel, Member, Nigrani Samuha

Arjun Adhikari, Member, Nigrani Samuha

Kamala Poudel, Member, Nigrani Samuha

Ganesh Prasad Adhikari, Social Worker, Nigrani Samuha

Bal Ram Adhikari, Social Worker, Nigrani Samuha

Keshab Raj Adhikari, Health Post In-charge

Khem Raj Tiwari, Farmer, Nigrani Samuha

Bhuvadev Adhikari, Office Assistance, Nigrani Samuha

Laxmi Shahi, Member, Nigrani Samuha

Shiva Prasad Khakurel, INSEC District In-charge, Kaski

Sangita Ranavhat, INSEC District Staff, Kaski

Shreekanta Poudel

Kedarnath Poudel, Social Worker

# ANNEX 3: DOCUMENTS CONSULTED


Abilis. (2009). Tuenkäyttösuunnitelma 2010-2012. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2010). Abilis Foundation Bylaws. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2010). Abilis -säätiön viestintä- ja tiedotusstrategia vuosille 2010-2015. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2011). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2012). Tuenkäyttösuunnitelma 2013-2015. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2013). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2014). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2015). Tuenkäyttösuunnitelma 2016-2018. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2016). Constitution of the Abilis Foundation. Approved by the National Board of Patents and Registration 1st March, 2016. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

Abilis. (2016). Logframe of the Abilis Foundation. Draft as of 3.10.2016. (n.p.): Abilis Foundation.

KIOS. (2011). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2012). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2012). Kansalaisjärjestöjen Ihmisoikeussäätiö KIOSin tuenkäyttösuunnitelma vuosille 2013-2015 (2016) (Programme plan for 2013-2015). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2013). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS. (2014). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

MFA. (2012). latest update 10/2016). Manual for Bilateral Programmes. (n.p.): Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

MFA. (2014). Complementarity in Finland's Development Cooperation and Policy: a Synthesis. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

KIOS and MFA. (2010). Säätiön sitoumus (Foundation Commitment). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

KIOS and MFA. (2013). Säätiön sitoumus (Foundation Commitment). (n.p.): KIOS Foundation.

SIDA. (2008). Guidance on Programme-Based Approaches. Department for methodologies and effectiveness. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.

Siemenpuu. (2009). Tuenkäyttösuunnitelma 2010-2012. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2011). Toimintakertomus. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2011). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2012). Tuenkäyttösuunnitelma 2013-2015. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2012). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2013). Toimintakertomus. Helsinki: Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2013). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report) (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2014). Toimintakertomus. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2014). Vuosiraportti (Annual Report). (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2015). Tuenkäyttösuunnitelma 2016-2018. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2016). Siemenpuu-säätiön rahoitustoiminnan valintakriteerit. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2016). Siemenpuu-säätiön rahoitustoiminnan valintakriteerit. (The funding criteria of the Siemenpuu Foundation). Approved by the Board on 16 March 2016. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Siemenpuu. (2016). Hankeseurannan yleisohjeet ja seurantamatkojen ohjeistus. (n.p.): Siemenpuu Foundation.

Virtanen, P., K. Mikkola & M. Siltanen. (2008). Evaluation: Finnish Partnership Agreement Scheme, Evaluation report 2008:1. Helsinki: Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland.

# ANNEX 4: MFA'S PROGRAMME-BASED APPROACH

The current MFA instructions concerning the Partnership Agreement Scheme (MFA, 2013a) outline the following key goals for PBS:

- Poverty reduction
- Changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption
- Protecting and managing the natural resources base vital for economic and social development

In addition, HRBA and Paris Declaration principles are highlighted, as well as Millennium Development Goals as strategic backbones. Climate sustainability has also been a key cross-cutting objective since 2012.

Operationally, the PBS focuses on results and RBM with funding provided annually. The principles of the 2015 RBM guidelines (MFA, 2015c) are expected to be applied also in MFA's programmatic support for CSOs (Box 5). This refers both to the MFA itself - management of the entire programme in the CSO Unit - and to the CSOs and their individual programmes. Although the MFA CSO Unit's own reporting has so far focused on disbursements, a process has been initiated to develop a relevant way for inclusion of the PBS results into the 2018 results reporting concept. The MFA is currently developing a concept for reporting on the results of Finland's development cooperation on the basis of the new 2016 development policy and a report on the achievement of the policy is expected in 2018, following a pilot in 2017. Towards this end, the MFA is now also investigating methods on how the results of CSOs' development cooperation could be presented in the report. While the solutions are yet to be defined, there is a strong push for stronger RBM also from this process.

### Box 5. Framework of Results-Based Management at the MFA

The MFA has been applying RBM-related methods in its bilateral projects already since early 1990's. The Guidelines for Project Preparation and Design from 1991 applied the results-chain method, and after Finland joined EU, the LFA approach with EU terminology was adapted in the Guidelines for Programme Design, Monitoring and Evaluation of 1996 (updated in 2000). The Manual for Bilateral Programmes from 2012 was also based on the LFA methodology, while the most recent manual (Manual for Bilateral Programmes, 2016) gives improved guidance on RBM and uses the latest results chain terminology (Impact, Outcome, Outputs), in accordance with the 2015 RBM Guidelines.

After various evaluations had indicated weaknesses in the application of RBM, MFA put more emphasis on strengthening of RBM at all levels of Finnish development cooperation, from individual projects and programmes to country programmes and MFA's aid instruments – CSO Partnership Programme included. The generic MFA guidelines for RBM were published in 2015 and they defined the RBM key principles along the following lines:

- Ownership – This includes basing targets on national priorities and ownership with partner country's development policies and beneficiary needs as the basis for Finland's support. Mutual ownership is emphasized.
- Results-focus – This refers to setting clear results targets at all levels. Specific results targets with indicators should be set at all levels of cooperation – organizational priorities, country strategies, interventions.
- Evidence – This means collecting credible results information. Systematic M&E with functioning data management systems should be applied for gathering credible information on results.

- Learning – This refer to using findings of M&E systematically for learning and improving performance as well as for accountability.
- Results-culture – This implies promoting and supporting a mature results-oriented culture with effective leadership and capacity to learn as essential for RBM.
- Balanced results – This means balance between short-term and long-term results. The long-term improvements in the lives of poor and vulnerable should form the base for operations, whereby there should be a clear link between short-term implementation and long-term outcomes and impacts.

Source: MFA, 2015c, 2015d and 2016b.

As well as the RBM, risk management and financial management systems, the CSOs are expected to have sufficient financial capacity and human resources to manage and operate their programmes. In terms of financial capacity, minimum of 15% of self-financing is required from the CSOs in general - and 7.5% in the particular case of disability organizations. Although sufficient staff resources are required to monitor and assess operations, evaluate results and impacts and ensure reliable financial management, the MFA has not defined the minimum requirements in this regard.

Along these lines, the key MFA eligibility criteria for the CSOs (Box 6) stress the consistency and complementarity with the Finnish development policy and co-operation, development education and communication activities, capacity and networks of the CSOs as well as good governance.

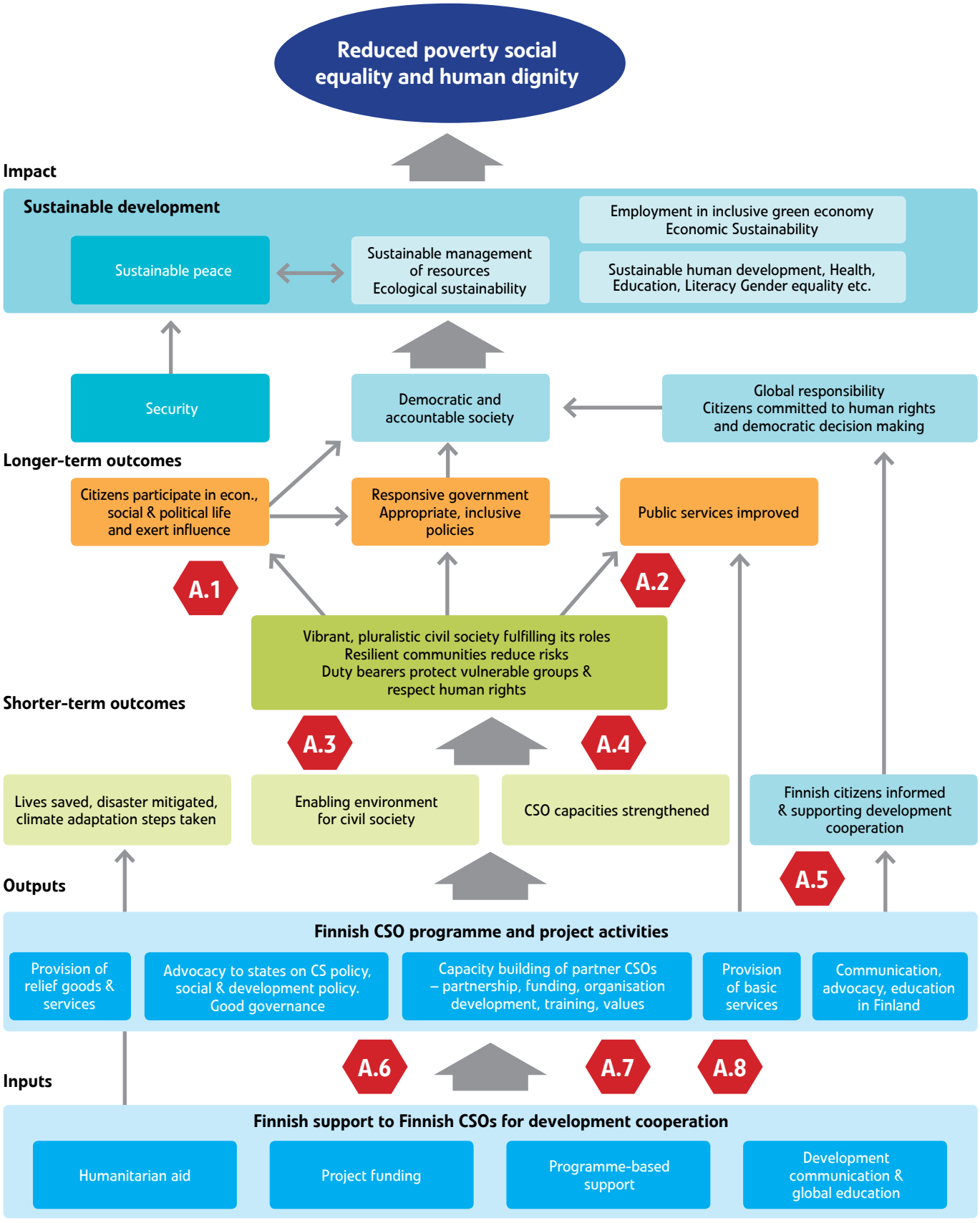
### Box 6. MFA Eligibility criteria for CSOs under the Programme-Based Approach

Key MFA eligibility criteria for CSOs include the following:

- Consistency with Finland's development policy.
- Complementarity to Finland's official development cooperation.
- The CSO must have required qualifications, competence and experience, including capacity to monitor and evaluate its activities as well as results and impacts of its programme.
- The CSO must have systematic development communications and development education
- Good governance, including professional financial management.
- Extensive networks both in Finland and internationally, including reliable and competent partners.

Source: MFA, 2013a.

# ANNEX 5: CSO GENERIC THEORY OF CHANGE



# ANNEX 6: EVALUATION MATRIX

| Key evaluation criteria and questions | Examples of indicators / Types of evidence | Method of data collection | Sources of verification |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EQ1. Relevance: Has the work of the organisations been relevant to the beneficiary rights and needs, partner country contexts and the Finnish priorities?** | | | |
| **1.1** Has the CSO programme been in line with its own overall strategy and comparative advantage? | Consistency between CSO mission goals and goals of its development cooperation programme (2010-16) | Document review<br>Interviews with CSO management<br>Interviews with CSO and various stakeholders including women and marginalised<br>Interviews with MFA Civil Society Unit<br>Spider web analysis | CSO strategy documents and plans<br>Previous evaluations, reviews<br>National policy documents in partner countries<br>Finnish government development policy documents<br>Gender/climate/ rights assessments |
| **1.2** Is its programme aligned with the rights and needs of stakeholders and beneficiaries, particularly women and girls and the marginalised? | Qualitative assessment of the extent to which the situation and needs analysis, objectives and implementation processes address relevant rights and priorities | | |
| **1.3** Is its programme aligned with national policies and strategies in partner countries? | Qualitative assessment of the level of association with partner countries' national policies and strategies<br>Assessment of role of MFA in supporting alignment | | |
| **1.4** Is its programme aligned with Finnish development priorities including HRBA and the CCOs? | Correspondence with Finnish development policy priorities.<br>The extent that a range of CSOs are supported in terms of geography, theme, target group, approach (pluralism)<br>The extent that the support promotes active citizenship, debate and local ownership (vibrancy)<br>The extent of alignment between the ToC of the CSO's programme and the overarching ToC | | |

| Key evaluation criteria and questions | Examples of indicators / Types of evidence | Method of data collection | Sources of verification |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EQ2. Complementarity, coordination and coherence: Has the work of the CSOs been complementary, coordinated and coherent with other interventions?** | | | |
| **2.1** How well has the programme been coordinated with other CSOs, donors and development partners? | Qualitative assessment of the level of exchange between CSO and partners<br>No. of cases / examples of coordination<br>No. of periodic coordination meetings attended<br>Existence & performance of coordination structures<br>Role of MFA in supporting coordination | Interviews<br>Document review<br>Interviews<br>Document review<br>Spider web analysis | Local partner organisation, organisations they collaborate with,<br>Finnish Embassy and relevant donor programmes<br>Progress Reports and Minutes of meetings, Media reports / bulletins |
| **2.2** To what extent has the CSO been able to complement (increase the effect) of other Finnish development policies and funding modalities (bilateral, multilateral) or for other CSOs? | No. of examples where there are synergies with other Finnish interventions<br>No. of references to other actors' policies<br>No. of examples of co-funding or budget alignment<br>**Assumption A8 tested** | | Donor reports, other CSOs<br>Finnish embassy and MFA<br>Previous evaluations |
| **2.3** To which extent are CSO development co-operation interventions coherent with other MFA support or interventions such as bilateral, multilateral or budget support or trade and humanitarian policy? | Examples where coherence is strong or weak | | |
| **2.4** How well has programme-based support aligned with the strategy, work and comparative advantage of the CSO? | Qualitative comparison between programme-based support and non-programme based activities<br>Level of adherence to MFA's PBS principles | Review of strategy and reporting documents<br>Interviews with CSO, MFA | PBS manual/guidance<br>Reporting before and after introduction of PBS<br>RBM processes and reports<br>MFA partnership policies & guidelines<br>Partnership meeting minutes |

| Key evaluation criteria and questions | Examples of indicators / Types of evidence | Method of data collection | Sources of verification |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EQ3. Efficiency: Have the available resources – financial, human and material – been used optimally for achieving results?** | | | |
| **3.1** How efficiently does the CSO coordinate PBS to influence effectiveness? (in terms of problem-solving, guidance, coordination, communication, monitoring and reporting to MFA) | Adherence to PBS rules (self-contribution, reporting, other agreed MFA criteria)<br>Comparison of outputs using PBS funding with other funding channels<br>Efficiency of how well funding is channelled to partner CSO (% of total funds reaching local CSO)<br>**Assumption A6 tested** | Document review<br>Interviews with CSO management and MFA<br>Spider web analysis | MFA partnership documents<br>PBS rules/procedures<br>Budget and expenditure reports |
| **3.2** Can the costs of the programme be justified by the achieved or likely to be achieved outputs and outcomes? Is the share of overhead costs justified in relation to the implementation costs and against accepted norms? | The CSO's instruments represent the most cost effective choice given objectives and resources<br>Cases where similar results could have been achieved with fewer costs<br>Comparison of overhead costs with other channels of delivery for same objective<br>Capacity of CSO to track its own efficiency<br>Evidence of delays between the requests for funding within the Finnish financing mechanisms, the delays in implementation, and the delays in reporting, in comparison with other funding mechanisms | Budget/output analysis<br>Interviews with CSO and partner CSOs<br>Email survey | Budget and results reporting in Finland and in-country<br>In country and international unit costs and overhead norms by type of activity<br>RBM analysis |
| **3.3** How well are M&E systems designed and used to track results | Availability of baseline information, quality of indicators, quality reports; compliance with MFA requirements | Interviews with CSO management and MFA<br>Document review | |
| **3.4** To what extent have risks been identified and managed by the CSO? | Availability of risk assessment tools; Identification of major risks and possible measures taken for handling them. | Document review<br>Interviews with CSO and partner CSOs | Audit reports, Progress Reports<br>Past evaluations<br>Risk management strategies |
| **3.5** Have sufficient resources been allocated to integrating CCOs and human rights into the programmes? | Presence of CCOs and HR aspects in budget and expenditure statements, staffing or activities | Interview<br>Document review | Planning and reporting documents |
| **3.6** How efficiently has the MFA managed the PBS? | Staffing levels over time<br>Allocations v Expenditure<br>Effectiveness of supervision procedures | Interview with MFA, especially CS Unit<br>Document review | Previous evaluations<br>Partnership meeting minutes |

| Key evaluation criteria and questions | Examples of indicators / Types of evidence | Method of data collection | Sources of verification |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EQ4. Effectiveness: What are the achieved or likely results of the organisations especially in relation to the beneficiaries and how are they supporting the wider objectives of partner countries and Finland?** | | | |
| **4.1** Have actual outputs and outcomes matched intended targets? Are there unintended results? If targets are not yet reached, are they likely to reach them? How well can the CSO's outputs be linked to the outcomes? | Comparison b/n planned interventions and targets, % achievement of targets<br>Details of unintended results<br>Assessment of linkage / attribution | Past Evaluations, Progress Reports<br>Direct observation (using purposive or random sampling)<br>Interviews with beneficiaries | Annual/ quarterly results reports, synthesis reports, evaluations<br>RBM analysis |
| **4.2** To what extent has the CSO built the capacity of partner CSOs (overseas or in Finland) for delivering services or for advocacy? | Quantity and quality of delivered services by each partner across the evaluation period<br>Quality of advocacy by partner CSOs<br>% of funding devoted to capacity building activities<br>**Assumption A5 tested** | Document review<br>Direct observation of partner CSO<br>Interviews with beneficiaries, opinion makers, duty bearers<br>Press and media<br>Email survey<br>Spider web analysis | Capacity assessments<br>Progress reports and evaluations<br>Fieldwork with partner CSOs<br>Media coverage |
| **4.3** How well has the CSO succeeded in making a contribution towards Finnish development policy objectives, including the HRBA? | Comparison between Finnish policy priorities including HRBA and CSO reported outcomes | Document review<br>Interviews with CSO and MFA | Policy reviews and evaluations<br>Link between reports and CSO's theory of change |
| **4.4** To what extent can the outputs and outcomes be attributed to PBS? | Comparison between programme and non-PBS results (before and after, with and without) | Document review<br>CSO and partner CSO interviews<br>Email survey | PBS agreements and minutes<br>Progress reports<br>Evaluations<br>RBM analysis |
| **4.5** Has the programme contributed to the achievement of CCOs (including gender equality, reduction of inequalities and promotion of climate sustainability)? | Evidence of improvement in the benefits accruing to women and girls, and to people with disabilities. Evidence of their increased empowerment as a result of the activities.<br>Evidence of changing attitudes to marginal groups, climate change and inequality amongst decision makers or duty bearers<br>**Assumption A7 tested** | Document review<br>Direct observation of partner CSO<br>Interviews with marginalised / vulnerable groups | Gender reports<br>Climate reports<br>Human rights reports |

| Key evaluation criteria and questions | Examples of indicators / Types of evidence | Method of data collection | Sources of verification |
|---|---|---|---|
| **EQ5. Impact. Is there evidence of impact of the CSO programmes in partner countries or Finland?** | | | |
| **5.1** To what extent have the outputs and outcomes impacted communities and civil societies, rights holders and beneficiaries of the partner countries or – in the case of UOs in particular – in Finland? | Evidence of wider impact based on direct or proxy indicators, contribution analysis<br>Evidence of wider impact on CCOs<br>Level of CSO's contribution to impact observed<br>**Assumption A1 tested** | Document review<br>Field interviews with ultimate stakeholder groups<br>Media analysis | Evaluation reports<br>Statistical data<br>Other government or donor reports, media |
| **EQ6. Sustainability: Will the achievements of the organisations likely continue and spread after withdrawal of external support and what are the factors affecting that likelihood?** | | | |
| **6.1** Will any identified achievements of the CSO (Including for CCOs) be sustainable in terms of economic, financial, institutional, socio-cultural and environmental aspects? | Extent to which results achieved persist after funding ends<br>Extent (%) of complementary funding from other sources supporting results or objectives of the CSO<br>Extent to which CSO guidance and implementation prioritise sustainability and handover<br>Compliance of the CSO operations with the guidance concerning environmental and financial sustainability, and cross-cutting issues. Evidence that such compliance is monitored<br>**Assumption A2 tested** | Document review<br>Interviews with CSO and CSO partners, and other donors | Existing evaluations (and other relevant), reviews and reports on CSO related activities |
| **6.2** Is there adequate ownership by partner organisations and at community level of the programme (in Finland and abroad)? | The extent that partner organisations lead or at least participate in decision processes<br>The extent that beneficiary groups have participated in decisions during implementation<br>The extent that partners take own initiatives to address problems; the extent that the Finnish CSO funding to partner organisations constitutes core support<br>The extent that partners describe programme as theirs<br>**Assumption A4 tested** | Document review<br>Interviews with partner CSOs and beneficiaries | CSO plans and strategies<br>Meeting minutes<br>Budget/funding reports |
| **6.3** Has an exit strategy been developed and if so, how well is it being implemented? | Documentation of the implementation of an exit/sustainability strategy.<br>Level of own fund raising | Document review<br>Interviews with partner CSOs | CSO plans and strategies<br>Budget/funding reports |
| **6.4** Have partners established sound operational and financial practices likely to be able to attract other external support? | Level of adherence to norms for CSO operational / financial sustainability (permanent staffing, financial reserves, legal status, long term plans etc.)<br>**Assumption A3 tested** | Document review<br>Interviews with partner CSOs | CSO plans and strategies<br>Budget/funding reports<br>Audit reports |

# ANNEX 7: META-ANALYSIS OF 27 FOUNDATION EVALUATIONS AND STUDIES

27 evaluations and studies were reviewed across the three Foundations.

Key messages:

- Very mixed quality
- Generally qualitative assessments with limited evidence at outcome level
- Sustainability either poor or little evidence
- Some best practice examples:
- ACADHOSHA DRC 2013-14;
- Fiant 2015;
- Inclusive Education in Finland's Development Cooperation in 2004-2013;
- Reducing Inequalities A Human Rights-based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation with Special Focus on Gender and Disability A Case Study on Ethiopia and Kenya

**Table 6:** KIOS Evaluations and Studies (14 reports)[1]

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Partnership Project (P.P) for Community Based Organizations on Sub-granting in Uganda<br>Action for Community Development (ACODEV)<br>Uganda (2012-16) | 2016<br>End-term evaluation<br>47pp | Advocate for Human Rights at District and National level in areas of Right to Food, Right to Protection and Right to Health in four districts | 16 CBOs strengthened<br>At the organizational level, the CBOs' capacity has been built. On the side of the beneficiaries, there has been positive impact with reports like reduction of domestic violence, reduction of preventable diseases, reduction of girl child school drop-out and economic empowerment. | Largely qualitative study (KIIs and FGDs) |

1 Note that KIOS has done their own analysis of all of these evaluations: see summary of evaluations funded by KIOS_MA.doc. This provides a good assessment of quality as well.

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| "Enhancing Women Understanding Of Their Women Human Rights"<br>By Coalition for Peace in Africa (COPA) Kenya<br>2012-14 | 2014<br>Final evaluation<br>28pp | To build the capacity of the participants with regard to the understanding of<br>Women Human Rights so that they are empowered to advocate for and defend these rights | A range of testimonies on individual behaviour change though less on collective action.<br>Sustainability uncertain without continued funding by COPA it is one thing to encourage women advocate and defend their rights but they need enough support, legal or otherwise to address resistance in the form of cultures and traditions that prevent women from accessing their rights | Qualitative<br>22 interviews |
| Promoting the Implementation of the Constitution<br>through Policy and Legislative Advocacy Economic and Social Rights Centre (Hakijamii)<br>Kenya<br>January 2013 to<br>December 2014 | End-term evaluation<br>December 2014 and January 2015 in 7 locations: Nairobi, Mombasa, Garissa, Kakamega, Turkana, Lamu and Kisumu<br>63pp | 1. Develop policies and legislation for the protection right of economic and social rights.<br>2. Strengthen the role of the judiciary in the enforcement of economic and social rights through public interest litigation.<br>3. Provide institutional support to Hakijamii to implement existing & to be adopted legislation. | All the planned results were achieved with exceptions in cases whereby the outcomes were better than was planned especially during the learning sessions<br>Beyond the life of the project the community organizations have initiated learning and business alliances.<br>Narrowing CS space | Thorough evaluation analysis, though qualitative evidence through KIIs and FGDs. In two years main results are at output level. KIOS requested to continue support |
| FOHRID Human Rights & Democratic Forum Nepal Protection of economics, social and cultural rights 2012-13 | 2013<br>42pp | Capacity building and advocacy: ratification of OP-ICESCR in 15 districts, improve complaints mechanism, raise awareness of key govt offices and HRDs | Built understanding/ awareness though toolkit, filing of complaints, sensitized duty bearers, discussion started, but no ratification yet of OP-ICESCR | |

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| "Break to the violence against women:<br>Community empowerment"<br>July 2014- June 2016<br>Center for Victims of Torture, Nepal (CVICT)<br>Nepal | Final Evaluation<br>25pp | 5 villages Kavre District<br>Targets of providing legal, social, referral, medical services to least 100 victims, five new prosecutions against perpetrators; orient at least 150 girls to manage self-defence in the event of potential violence; sensitize more than 450 community people on subject matter; prepare at least 60 actors for combating violence as professional service providers; empower 100 community workers through training on 'human rights & gender justice', and 'gender sensitivity' to combat violence against women; and to make aware at least 10,000 community people on issues of violence against women. | all the set targets were accomplished<br>Built on previous 1 yr project by KIOS<br>Small-scale but deep impact<br>But weak sustainability | KIIs and FGDs<br>Grassroots engagement<br>FM radio effective outreach. |
| Enhancing human rights of Indigenous Girls and Women in Samburu Community<br>June 2014-May 2015<br>Kenya | End Evaluation May 2015<br>18pp | Securing human rights particularly of disadvantaged women and the girl child in Samburu and Isiolo counties in Kenya by engaging in community-based research, disseminating findings to the community, and facilitating structured dialogues and rights-based assessment on the child-beading practice amongst stakeholders including women and girl child, target community, government officials/ departments, media, and the public | A preparatory study to understand Samburu practices, not to start tackling the reduction of the practices, but 15 paralegals were trained, advocacy, training law officers | |
| Assessment of Women federations in Karnataka India<br>Hengasara Hakkina Sangha Bangalor | Assessment 2014 Retrospective study on preventing violence against women since 2000<br>24pp | Study of support to federations at panchayat level, 15 feds representing 400-78000 Sangha women, training resource kits legal advice drama radio, HRBA | Capacity building of women groups at grassroots level to have skills and confidence to defend rights | Case studies |

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Demystifying social and economic rights in Uganda" 12 months project by the Initiative for Social and Economic Rights (ISER) from 1st January – 31st<br>December 2014. | Evaluation 2014<br>5pp only | build capacity among CSOs in issues regarding economic, social and cultural rights; advocacy for rights. ISER has strategically positioned itself within networks and is viewed as a reference point on issues regarding social, cultural and economic rights. several CSOs eg PILAC, FIDA and CEHURD, and networks like LASPNET and CSBAG have sought for collaboration with ISER in various the advocacy drives during the grant period. | Rather cursory assessment of results<br>"To a greater extent, ISER has achieved the project objectives in the short term and what is left to see are the long term benefits of some of the activities like the advocacy being done on the social and economic rights" | No info |
| 'Provision of free legal aid through a strengthened legal aid system' LACC Nepal 2014-2015 | Final evaluation 2016<br>28pp | Providing legal aid to victims of violence against women, counselling, paralegal, mediation, court representation, mobile clinics, help line | Targets met in these activities 1261 cases to court, sensitizing justice committees, formed high level task force. No visible impact shown though. Weak performance monitoring, only on activities. Limited policy influence | KIIS of range of stakeholders nd 2 FGDs in Kaski & Banke District |
| Ensuring right to access & management of land especially for women, Karongi District Rwanda 2014-15 1 year | End evaluation<br>16 pp report | Campaigns and workshops with community and local authority, to improve knowledge of land rights and help reclaim rights | Activities completed, reduction in conflict over land, but unable to measure long term impact. 11 women recovered property, reduced conflicts, higher satisfaction | Field survey, questionnaires. But no details given |
| Asian Forum for Human Rights & Development 2008-10 | Out of our time frame (completed 2010)<br>58pp | Regional body monitoring human rights institutions and HR Defenders in ASEAN, capacity development, advocacy, key body with international links to UN etc. 100s of reviews and events supported | | Major evaluation,<br>Survey of members |
| Regional Training to Promote Women's Human Rights for Dignity and Equality in the<br>Context of the ICESCR ( South Asia Region) | 2014<br>59pp | ?? | 'All results achieved' | Very muddled report |

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Improving access to justice of Dalit community, Sharee, Bangladesh 2011-14 | Internal evaluation<br>29pp | Raise awareness of rights of Dalit community/ Training and advocacy, newspaper 30 panchayats in Jamalpur and Sherpur | Knowledge and attitudes changed, shadow panchayat effective. Total period is only 3 years, but dalits more aware. Women on panchayat, some other changes such as better school attendance, less early marriage (but no data), Benefits now in take off stage but project ending. | 5 FGDs, Questionnaire survey of 151 resp |
| Rapport d'évaluation interne du Programme communautaire lutte<br>contre les violences sexuelles et de plaidoyer pour l'exécution des<br>décisions judiciaires rendues en cette matière, ACADHOSHA<br>DRC 2013-14 | Internal evaluation 2014<br>10pp<br>Final external evaluation 2015<br>12pp | Improving legal process for handling cases of sexual violence in South Kivu, monitoring judicial sentences<br>Training and litigation support, paralegals | Rating system used for each DAC criteria<br>425 cases of sexual violence documented, 26 judgements obtained. Thorough detailing of results including outcomes | 433 interviews sampling approach |

**Table 7:** Abilis Evaluation and Studies (7 reports)

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluation of Abilis Foundation<br>between 2012-2015<br>Fiant evaluation | April 2015<br>Final evaluation<br>91pp | Examined RBM, integration of HRBA and results in 3 countries: Ethiopia (17 projects), Cambodia (11) and Vietnam (5) | RBM still in early phase, and results are not planned at higher level because of bottom up approach. A solid monitoring database system is in place to track all the projects structures. The partnership programme has increased the quality of grant making mechanisms, and supported DPOs to fund and strengthen their capacity in project management.<br>Abilis has also produced a comprehensive set of manuals and guidelines for guiding its own work as well as for the partner organisations and local DPOs. The facilitators, ARB members and regional and country coordinators in the focus countries have also been trained on their roles and standards and criteria of Abilis as well as project guidelines and formats.<br>Effectiveness and impact: results are positive in the case study countries though analysis was limited | KIIs, FGDs, field observation<br>A well-structured and detailed evaluation |
| Inclusive Education in Finland's<br>Development Cooperation in 2004–2013 | H. Dean Nielsen<br>Development Portfolio Management Group<br>2015<br>92pp | Finland's Cooperation to Enhance Rights and Equal Opportunities of Participation of People with Disabilities. Compares MFA support via NGOs, bilateral and multilateral channels for disability. Also Triple track: Track 1,2,3 (mainstreaming, services, policy dialogue).<br>NGO support accounts for 90% of MFA disability funding. MFA has ltd expertise. | LUA found in 2003 a substantial imbalance towards short-term, NGO-mediated projects mainly focused on single disabilities, and an under-emphasis on strategic support, both at the national and global levels. The 2014 evaluation found better mainstreaming. But still uneven balance b/n channels, with heavy NGO support | Desk study |

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Report of the Survey Questions to Board Members, Staff Members and Country Facilitators of Abilis Foundation | Romola Adeola (Intern)<br>Nov 2012<br>17pp | The study attempts to find and define better indicators for outcomes and impact through asking Abilis staff. | Impacts of HR and disability poorly measured, lack of clear indicators. Use changes in lives, access to and use of services, knowledge of rights, integration in society, People With Disabilities in positions of authority, changes in laws/ policy | Survey of 29 Abilis staff, board and country staff |
| Survey of Partner Programmes in 11 countries | 2014<br>(by an Intern)<br>59pp | Uganda, Tanzania, Nepal, Ethiopia, India, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Zambia, Somaliland, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan | No summary or conclusions presented | Survey exercise |
| Reducing Inequalities<br>A Human Rights-based Approach in Finland's Development Cooperation<br>with Special Focus on Gender and Disability<br>A Case Study on Ethiopia and Kenya | H.Katsui et al 2014<br>Six independent researchers from Ethiopia, Kenya and Finland<br>155pp | Study on how to operationalize HRBA esp. for women and People With Disabilities.<br>Study on how to operationalize HRBA esp. for women and People With Disabilities.<br>Examines approach and capacity of MFA in this field ( the questions that need to be asked include: does the Ministry lead by example by employing staff from disadvantaged groups, for instance persons with disabilities? Is the MFA making choices, e.g. in terms of terminologies, targets and processes that are empowering and non-discriminatory for the rights-holders in the South? Are rights-holders fully involved in the implementation, as well as in the M&E of dev. cooperation, to take ownership of the programmes/ projects? Staff both at the MFA and Embassies, in particular, need to commit themselves to facilitating the necessary institutional changes for the implementation of HRBA | The absence of binding and systematic mechanisms, the shortage of expertise and experts, and the emphasis on cost-effectiveness in measuring results of initiatives are the main problems. Negotiation, implementation as well as M&E of Finnish development cooperation should ensure the full and effective participation of rights-holders and their representative organizations.<br>Makes some suggestion on impact indicators but does not really develop these (p.120). Twin track approach discussed (but not triple track. | Case study in two countries |

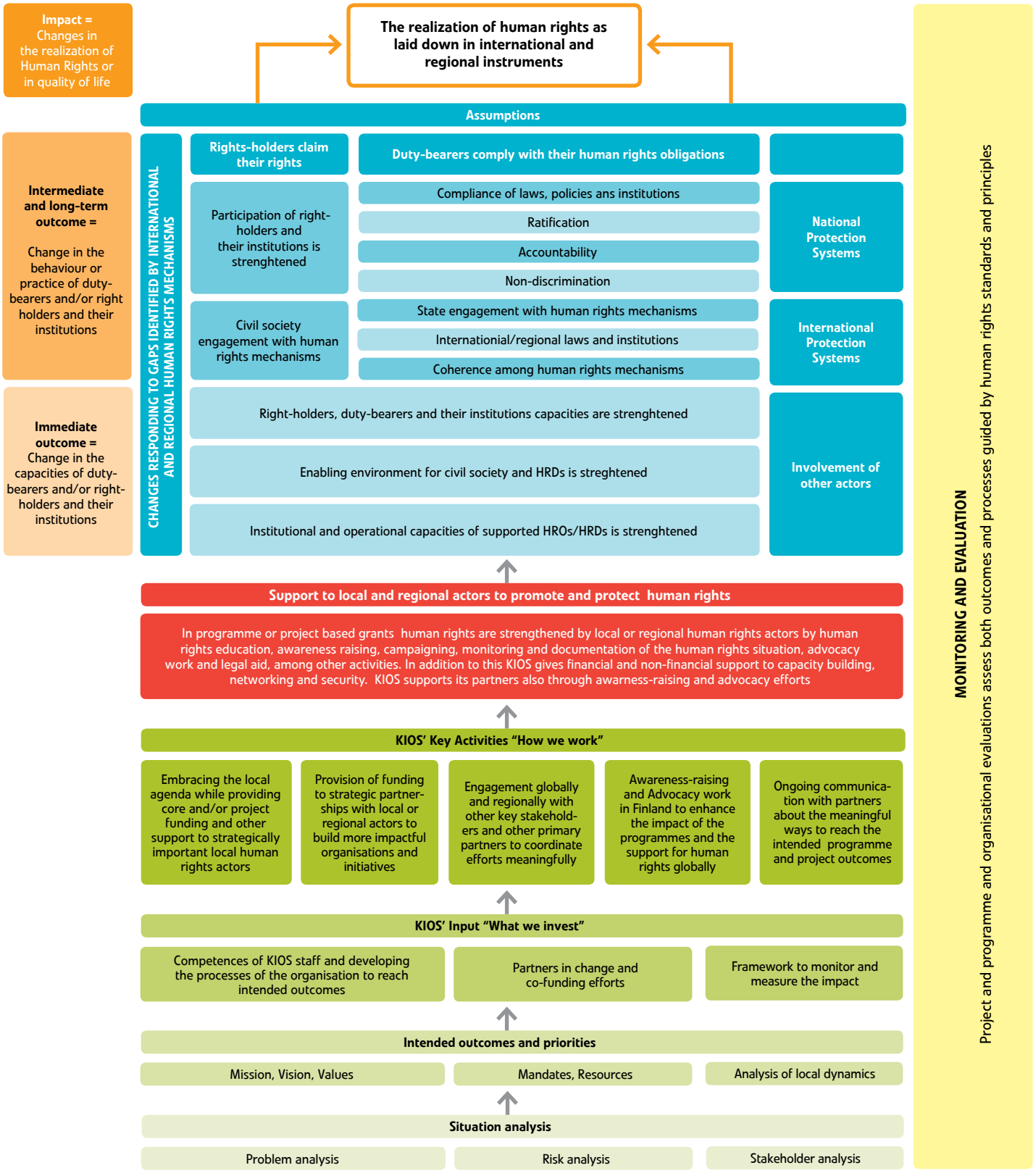
| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Evaluointi täydentävyydestä Suomen kehityspolitiikassa ja kehitysyhteistyössä | Evaluation on complementarity in Finnish development cooperation<br>G.Olesen & Y Endeshaw 2013 | Foundations expertise is little used by MFA and Embassies in relation to bilateral cooperation and LCF grants, and by NGOs on CCOs and HRBA | The Foundations should provide more advice to MFA on their areas of expertise as well as to other Finnish funded NGOs, increase complementarity. Foundations have independent status & can offer impartial advice. NGOs could cover SF costs for their advice | |
| Complementarity in Finland's Dev Coop | 2014<br>170pp | The NGO instrument was by far the largest of the three instruments in financial terms, corresponding approx.. to 75% of total NGO support, while the INGO and LCF instruments represented approximately 15% and 10%, respectively. In addition, 3 Foundations provided small grants to local NGOs within the human rights, disability, and environment sectors, respectively. Their budgets of € 2 million annually were provided by the Finnish Parliament. | Divergences b/n govts. in partner countries and Finnish NGO emphasis. Finnish NGO support rested on a HRBA, which was not usually prioritised in national development plans. Also, the role and engagement of NGOs in advocacy and strengthening of civil society were not expressly recognised in the national development plans.<br>Complementarity was also under-utilised with the three Foundations | Not an evaluation of results but the focus was on aid complementarity |

**Table 8:** Siemenpuu Evaluation and Studies (6 Reports)

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Review of the Siemenpuu Foundation<br>Assessing the Working Context and the Outcomes of Strengthening the Environmental Social Movement in the Global South 2010-2016 | Dr Solomon et al March 2017<br>58pp | Essentially an appreciative assessment rather than an evaluation. A collaborative rather than an independent evaluation, identifying with the aspirations of Siemenpuu and its partners<br>Examined Relevance, Effectiveness and Impacts, Coherence and Complementarity, Sustainability but these were not properly assessed | Evidence is hard to pin down – full of value judgements drawn from the author's personal views. Language is very biased and informal, and hard evidence is missing e.g. views on Mekong and Adivasi p.20-21. A lack of any data or statistics to support claimed results. | KIIs, field visits to CORD India<br>SWOT analysis |
| SADED self-assessment | 2012 S.Garg et al<br>44pp | Focusing on the SADED approach and method of working and its conceptualisation of the problem: dialogue as method leading to shared understanding | 'Because SADED does a lot of (political) work and it is not so organised and planned beforehand, it has been a challenge to identify what has been achieved and what is the focus'… 'it is difficult to get a clear picture as to what really happens in SADED due to many detailed event descriptions'<br>Involvement in WSF is clear, but the results achieved are less clear.<br>Really no evaluation judgements or evidence of results are given | A series of interviews and workshops in India and Nepal |
| Evaluation Report of Siemenpuu Partners in Riau<br>Grants period of 2012-2017 | Dr. Rikardo Simarmata July 2016<br>43pp | Campaign and advocacy to protect forest rights, mapping, preventing corrupt forest licencing, Funding of local partners (Jikalahari, YMI, Hakiki, JMGR and RCT) | A range of outcomes documented : public participation, slowing of deforestation from 162,000 ha per year to 40,000-50,000 ha, moratorium on forest permits, investigate illegal logging, court verdicts, community access and rights | Field visits |

| Title | Year | Focus / Scope | Results | Comments and methods |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| National Adivasi Alliance programmes 2013-2015 | S.Singh et al lesson learning evaluation<br>70pp | Forest Rights Act (FRA) in nine states of India (from 2006), assess claims, use of forest products, 20 partners € 27,500 each | Rather a monitoring report than an evaluation, no formal assessment of DAC criteria, but solid results are documented by partner. Noted that self-evaluation approach has not worked, to improve consistency of reporting, improve coherence, over- dependent on Siemenpuu funding | Field visits to 7 locations, PRA |
| Latin America Programme | Evaluation Report by A. Cordeiro and C, Marchesino<br>May 2015<br>32pp | The Latin America Programme was launched in 2009, therefore an external evaluation focusing on programme level took place between December 2014 and May 2015. € 1 million invested over the period in 7 partners | High relevance based on Siemenpuu approach: process not results led, networks, flexible, political solidarity. Results include Influential policy advocacy esp. in Amazon region, resistance, campaigns, land and biodiversity. Institutional support for CB has been key | Field visits to several countries |
| Mekong Energy And Ecology Network 2008-2013 | Final Evaluation By A. Sunchindah and P. Theeratham,<br>Bangkok, 28 May 2014<br>39pp | Supported since 2008: € 780,000<br>MEE Net's overall goal is to ensure that the energy sector development in the Mekong Region is democratic, sustainable, economically rational, environmentally sound and socially just. 6 countries in the Mekong region, Cambodia, China (Yunnan Province), Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam | Functioning satisfactorily as a technical support/ knowledge resource facility but networking challenges. CS emerging slowly. DAC criteria: CB of local partners, but lack of results evidence, networking still early days, lack of country level strategy limits policy influence, lack of comms. and media, limited impact documented, weak sustainability | Interviews and regional visits to partners |

# ANNEX 8: KIOS THEORY OF CHANGE




NOTE: Graphic is partly based on OHCHR's theory of change which is grounded in the United Nations human rights-based approach and definitions of immediate and intermediate and long-term outcome definitions.

# EVALUATION

## PROGRAMME-BASED SUPPORT THROUGH FINNISH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS III:

## ABILIS FOUNDATION, KIOS FOUNDATION AND SIEMENPUU FOUNDATION 2017

FORMIN.FINLAND.FI

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF FINLAND