

Report on Effectiveness 2010

HEKS International Division



Zurich/ Lausanne, 18th of March 2011

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Acronyms

ACT	Action of Churches Together
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CMS	Change Monitoring System
DNH	Do No Harm
ESCR	Economic Social and Cultural Rights
FFPG	Field Financial and Programmatic Guidelines
HHQ	HEKS Headquarters
HIV-AIDS	Human immunodeficiency virus - Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
HRBA	Human rights-based approach
ID	International Division
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NREGS	National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations

1 Preface

This year, for the first time, HEKS is carrying out a pilot experiment by writing a report on effectiveness. There is a risk involved in establishing such a report as there are many options as to how this endeavour can be developed.

Effectiveness is indeed a multifaceted topic. Effectiveness can be measured in figures. Output-oriented figures can easily be measured by counting the number of people who have attended training or who have planted using newly acquired techniques, etc. Measuring at outcome level is more challenging. A baseline needs to be established so that performance can be measured, for example, the change in income of beneficiaries, the number of children attending school, or the increase in the number of years children attend school. Such figures can be studied in programme evaluations, some of which are summarised in this report. One has to be aware, however, that these results do not just depend on our own efforts in collaboration with partners and beneficiaries, but are also influenced by external factors, such as government performance, conflicting power relations, climate evolution etc.

The upcoming shift in the role of development organisations is adding a new layer of complexity to the issue of effectiveness measurement. As development agencies start to play a mere facilitation role in development, the effects they help achieve are becoming much more difficult to measure. Such effects nevertheless have tremendous potential in the longer term. It is difficult to measure them, and almost no funder shows any interest in financing post-evaluations while there are greater urgent needs to be covered. The effectiveness of facilitation should definitely not be neglected, even though it is difficult to measure as it strongly depends on various factors that can make the pieces of the puzzle fall into place or prevent them from doing so. The question here is how such results can be measured or at least demonstrated. HEKS' answer is reflected in this report in a daring attempt to describe such results in the form of emerging patterns.

This report reflects where HEKS stands today. It therefore remains modest in its scope and needs to be interpreted as a work in progress or the first step of a still long journey. Further debate on complexity may well bring HEKS to some deeper consolidated findings and improved ways to demonstrate its results.

2 HEKS' programme - action

2.1 HEKS' fields of work

HEKS intervenes in 21 focal countries in close collaboration with local partner organisations. HEKS aims to contribute toward establishing just and peaceful structures leading to improved and sustainable livelihoods. In accordance with its corporate strategy, HEKS works first and foremost in rural contexts, focusing on two defined focal themes: development of rural communities, and peace promotion and conflict transformation. HEKS considers that these two themes – especially when combined - contribute decisively to livelihood sustainability. Peace and improved sustainable livelihoods manifest themselves in positive changes in the behaviour and organisation of communities and in the lives of the people that concern us. HEKS considers such changes as impact.

Social and structural changes can be seen in the following fields of observation:

- The standard of living in rural communities
- The role of marginalised groups within social power structures
- The degree of fulfilment of rights and protection against human rights violations

- Participation of marginalised groups in decision making

These fields serve HEKS and its partner organisations as fields of observation for the collection of key data (see chapter 5).

2.2 HEKS' intervention strategy

In order to reach its overarching goal, HEKS' first step is to analyse the specific context of its focal countries. Within this process, HEKS seeks to identify and address the root causes of problems and not to work on symptoms alone.

The context analysis leads to a theory on how change towards justice and improved sustainable livelihoods might be achieved. Objectives are derived from this theory. Each of HEKS' projects accordingly develops a combination of activities dealing with different situations and different players.

External influencing factors (changing external environment) are important. The influence of HEKS' projects has its limitations. Although HEKS aims to address systems in a holistic way, its scope of influence in a globalised world is limited. The desired changes are therefore beyond HEKS' direct influence. HEKS can only demonstrate its initiatives by facilitating progress towards change and continuously improving its own effectiveness in a learning process.

3 HEKS' contribution to change – targeted results

3.1 Increasing complexity

The world today is becoming increasingly complex. In an era of globalisation, boundaries have been lifted as never before. We are confronted with an unprecedented flow of information. The Internet and mobile phones offer never-before-seen options and opportunities for accessing information and connecting and collaborating in a networked way. The Internet might have played a supporting role in the mass demonstrations that led, in early 2011, to the fall of the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt and that are still rocking the Arab world at the time of this report. The world is increasingly interconnected and so are social movements and networks in building new alliances for change and democracy. The economic policies of a few countries can have devastating effects on the whole world. Terrorist networks are threatening everyone's security in unconventional ways.

As a result, cooperation and development work is faced with increasing external influencing factors that have profound effects on its results. As an example, climate change is obvious and disaster risk reduction measures are now mainstream in all development programmes. The causes and evolution of climate change at global level, and its effects at local level, however, remain disputed and unpredictable. In today's world, it is increasingly difficult to anticipate chains of events as the geographical and temporal distance between cause and effect is widening. The attribution gap keeps growing in impact assessments. This is all the more true in development and cooperation work where programmes are implemented in areas exposed to conflict, natural disasters and poverty.

3.2 Embracing complexity

By observing nature, modern science (such as biology or quantum physics) has witnessed that living systems (such as groups of electrons, clouds or fish swarms) are continuously adapting to their environment in such a way that their behaviour remains largely unpredictable. When confronted with new information, they may go through a chaotic stage before reorganising themselves in a different and new way. They maintain, however, a high level of order through a strong sense of purpose, identity and self-organisation based on a few simple rules. Such processes can only be observed by focusing on the relationships between the elements of the system and not on isolated elements. The challenge, therefore, is to get a glimpse of the whole rather than of single elements. Being in a continuous exchange flow with their environment, complex systems may not be grasped through isolated incidents or exhaustive data. They reveal themselves in shapes and patterns better than in facts and figures¹.

This challenging perspective implies a different understanding of cause and effect. Connected to their environment, living systems do not react to a single chain of command, but to a web of influences. Information or disturbances may be amplified and fed back into the system creating a reaction exceeding the scope of the initial input. Activities in one part of the whole create effects that appear at distant places. Life does not follow a linear path. We are, instead, living in a spiralling world.

Inspired by this holistic perspective, HEKS accordingly acknowledges that:

- By working with communities and partner organisations, HEKS is intervening through its development projects in complex living systems.
- Through its involvement, HEKS becomes part of the living system in which its projects are implemented. HEKS and its partner organisations influence the system and in return are shaped by it and its environment.
- HEKS' projects do not trigger mechanical consequences in the living systems with which they interact. In such systems, all is connected and interrelated. Some project components can of course be steered as they address problems with straightforward roots and consequences (e.g. irrigation or settlement health issues). As a whole, however, projects cause living systems to move and react – in most cases in unpredictable ways. Projects must go through chaotic phases before order appears. As a consequence, HEKS cannot always objectively trace the effects of its actions, but can make its intentions, input and observations transparent.

4 HEKS' change monitoring system - measurement

The above mentioned insights about complexity and the relation between cause and effect therefore need to be taken into account in the assessment of the results achieved by HEKS. To that end, HEKS is currently developing a system for compiling and interpreting data collected on different levels in its projects. HEKS' particular approach focuses on the changes observed and experienced by different stakeholders involved at several levels in projects. The focus is more on the significance than on the quantification of such changes for the people who experience

¹ Reference literature is listed in annex

them. HEKS herewith takes a path different from strict measurement and hard data collection. Its aim is to grasp and understand the changes in the purpose, identity and dynamics that hold and drive the systems it gets involved in - rather than to measure their ever changing dimensions. This specific angle reflects HEKS' slogan in public campaigns, "small changes with big effects"; the way people involved in the projects see these is relevant for HEKS. HEKS consequently consciously adopts a **self-evaluation** approach to assess the changes happening in the systems it becomes part of through its projects.

HEKS' method is to adopt a bird's eye view, to observe and reflect on the different projects and contexts from a distance through different lenses – as opposed to looking at just some parts and getting into the details. Such an overview is achieved by comparing diverse kinds of data (detailed below) and looking for recurring patterns. Which changes can be interpreted in the different living systems in which HEKS intervenes? What is their significance for the involved stakeholders? Do such systems have recurring features? What is their meaning? Such patterns and interpretations do not emerge out of exact research. They can be made visible by crossing different perspectives, which may very well be partial.

The CMS' aim, therefore, is primarily to improve the awareness and intelligence of HEKS as an organisation in order to optimise its working methods and approaches, rather than to prove its results in a rigorous or linear way.

The CMS crosses three different perspectives:

Level of observation	Type of change observed and reflected	Data collection
Individual level	The changes observed by beneficiaries in their daily lives and commented by partner organisations	Collected in: Individual and panel interviews by HEKS staff during field visits. Interviews are based on the Most Significant Change method asking people after changes experienced in their lives. 30 interviews were conducted in 7 pilot countries in 2010.
Project level	The successes, challenges and lessons learned in the project portfolios as observed by HEKS staff and partners	Collected in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 21 annual reports from HEKS offices - 12 monthly newsletters with stories from HEKS offices and headquarters - 10 key indicators collected in 20 countries - Stories and examples from programme evaluation reports: 7 were conducted in 2010 - 2 days compilation/analysis workshop conducted with staff working at headquarters
Programme level	Trends and patterns observed in different intervention countries of HEKS	Collected in : 2 days compilation/analysis workshop conducted with staff working at headquarters

In an attempt to learn from experience and develop its approach in practice, HEKS introduced its CMS in a test phase in 4 countries in Latin America and 3 countries in Asia during the year 2010. The collected data was compiled and interpreted in a two-day workshop which led to the observation of the patterns detailed in the following chapters.

5 Report on effectiveness

5.1 Key data

As part of its CMS, HEKS is collecting key data across all its programmes in the fields of observation identified in relation to its intervention strategy and fields of work (see chapter 1). The collected data in this chapter gives indications on the scope of HEKS' output; the observations compiled in chapter 5.3 provide an overview on outcome level.

Fields of observation		Key data	Explanation
	1	651,900 direct beneficiaries 18,760 groups; associations, communities	Distinction to be made between individuals/groups or associations/villages
Standards of living in rural communities	2	76,450 people whose incomes have increased	Increase through project activities (production, job creation, etc.) Amount of increase not taken into account
	3	29,200 people whose yields have increased	Increase through project activities (for selling or own consumption)
	4	49,830 people who benefited from new job opportunities	Employment or self-employment through project activities
	5	199,750 beneficiaries whose quality of life in a conflict situation has improved through better security, stronger resilience or a deeper understanding of root causes	Distinction to be made between individuals and communities Projects such as: protection, dealing with the past, peace camps, awareness campaigns, etc.
Social inclusion of marginalised groups	6	111,140 people whose access to public services was facilitated through project	This indicator is only for Roma, tribal people, Dalits, Adivasis, IDPs, disabled and elderly people. Services, such as: school, health, old age pensions, public schemes, etc.
Degree of fulfilment of rights	7	52,820 people whose access to land was facilitated through the project	
	8	178,360 people whose access to water was facilitated through the project	Beneficiaries of wells, fountains, irrigation systems constructed or rehabilitated by the project
	9	217,330 people whose access to public services was facilitated through project	Same indicator as 5, but including mainstream population
Participation of communities in decision making	10	2,090 CBOs supported through the project	Building-up, coaching and capacity building of CBOs Small groups to cooperatives. Groups must be structured and defend their interests in decision making processes – on political level or on business issues

Remark: The figures may be higher because family members are included as they benefit indirectly from the project.

5.2 Lessons learned from evaluations

In 2010, seven country programme evaluations were undertaken. All evaluations were conducted at programme end (summative evaluation/performance review) with the aim of providing relevant information for programme management decisions and informing the design of the follow-up programme. This chapter provides an overview of the evaluations; specific changes observed by the evaluations are integrated in chapter 4.3.

Zimbabwe country programme

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* External evaluation conducted by two local external evaluation specialists. Participatory data generation methods from 126 people: 61 men and 65 women. The methods used: document analysis, semi-structured individual and group interviews, focus group discussions, observation and stories of change.
- *Key purpose:* Assessment of programme approach as well as the three programme components and their effectiveness in informing the definition of the follow-up programme
- *Key evaluation findings:* The programme approach was largely successful; the rigorous partner selection has enabled more effective partnerships. Improved food production, income and self-worth for over 500 households. Food security and development education have been tackled together as two sides of the same coin. This improved relations and conflict transformation and also skills, food and income generation and social justice.
- *Next steps:* The programme can be strengthened by the introduction of new approaches, issues and players (introduction of Do No Harm principles; income-generating projects for all young people; deliberate involvement of relevant government agencies for sustainability; and incorporation of preparedness, mitigation and adaptation). The evaluation recommended the establishment of a fully fledged HEKS office in order to strengthen partner collaboration. Partners' capacities need to be strengthened for better support of beneficiaries in income-generation and marketing activities.

South Africa country programme

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* External evaluation conducted by local external evaluation specialists. The approach was qualitative and the process iterative, formative, reflective and participatory. The key methodological tools used: desk-top review; further gathering of data through field work in the form of interviews; and a process of critical reflection, analysis and the development of various drafts of the report.
- *Key purpose:* HEKS decided to consolidate its country focus and to phase out the South Africa programme after 2012. The evaluation's purpose was to develop an effective exit strategy and facilitate dialogue with partners in order to identify a way forward to sustain the work beyond HEKS' support.
- *Key evaluation findings:* Important work on livelihoods and food security has made a positive difference in the lives of rural women; they produce a wide range of fresh products; marketing of surplus allows for small income. Women have organised into groups through which they can then negotiate access to land & water; and cooperatives/farmers groups accessed government funding to acquire water (drilling) and/or buy farming equipment.
- *Next steps:* HEKS should help partners navigate the challenging funding environment. The exit period should be used to strengthen partners' work in the fields of peace promotion and conflict transformation, and on alternative thinking and catalytic action in agrarian

reform. Special attention should be paid to cooperatives and on the link between food security and livelihoods work with wider rural development and agrarian reform. Capacity building in participatory approaches, monitoring and evaluation are to be organised.

Honduras country programme

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* External evaluation conducted by local external evaluation specialist. Participatory data generation methods. The methods used: survey of 54 farmers in 11 selected communities; group interviews with CBOs and partner organisations; participation at events and meetings, informal discussions with staff members of the partner organisations; and document analysis.
- *Key purpose:* Assessment of the three thematic programmes in order to prepare the follow-up programme 2011 - 2014.
- *Key evaluation findings:* Improved livelihood of smallholder farmers; the focus on women strengthened their role in the villages which contributed to greater participation by women in village decision taking; women gained access to education and were relieved of some of their responsibilities (fetching water, chopping wood) allowing them to invest more time in their children and the community. Strengthened competencies in advocacy will have a long-term impact. It raised the awareness of local governments to communities' visions; they take more responsibility and make funding from outside superfluous (education, agricultural advisory service). The union with other organisations to form alliances is paying off, for example, the Alianza Sara, a network of 30 organisations, is working for land reform; this is an important initiative in a long struggle to give landless farmers access to land.
- *Next steps:* The evaluation advised pursuing the set geographic and thematic focus and stepping up the networked approach within the partner network in order to improve the programme's impact. Organic farming should be further developed and expanded to new regions and experiences with the local marketing of surpluses should be carried out systematically.

Guatemala country programme

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* An internal assessment (various workshops, interviews and visits by partner organisations) was organised by the responsible persons for the country programme to prepare the definition of the new country programme.
- *Key purpose:* Assessment of thematic and regional focus in view of the country programme 2011 – 2014.
- *Key evaluation findings:* The partners valued the organised training courses. The combination of local, regional and national partners allows for synergies. However, the vast geographic distance makes partner support resource intensive, and there is a lack of knowledge and of technical support for activities linked to food security. The evaluation recognised that dealing with the past is highly relevant, but not recognised by development actors; and identified unused potential for cooperation with ACT.
- *Next steps:* The evaluation supports concentrating on a maximum of three focal regions: San Marcos, Jalapa und Ixcán. The new programme has to place stronger focus on local, national and international advocacy work. For the working field of agro-ecology, specific know-how has to be acquired. For peace promotion and conflict transformation, new challenges and

risks have to be taken into account; priority has to be given to mining and access to land and water.

Israel/Palestine: sectoral evaluation

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* External evaluation conducted by two external evaluation specialists. Methods used: Document analysis; interview of partner organisations; participatory partner workshop; reflection on evaluation findings with responsible persons of country programme; ID's management and external evaluators in Switzerland.
- *Key purpose:* The primary aim of the evaluation was to analyse the lessons to be learned from the 2008-10 programme in order to inform the design of a follow-up programme. Within this broad scope, a specific set of questions were of interest.
- *Key evaluation findings:* The Open Forum (a network of organisations) is an important medium as it has facilitated networking, the creation of new working relationships, learning and new ways of thinking. Partners seem clear about the aims of their organisations, but less clear on how their joint activities as part of the Open Forum programme related to the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The partners still have to build their shared vision of how their different programmes fit together.
- *Next steps:* The programme as well as the partners should continue along the path taken to act as change agents. The evaluation advises the partners of the Open Forum to develop a clearer identity over the next phase, to address the challenging cultural differences and to consider extending the network's participation to project field staff. The issue of 'normalisation' represents a significant challenge to the future development of the programme and needs to be reflected in a more pro-active advocacy stance.

Ethiopia country programme

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* Participatory programme evaluation conducted by two external evaluation specialists. The methods used: Document review; interviews and focus group discussions with staff of HEKS Ethiopia, programme implementing partners, district-level government stakeholders and the beneficiary communities; observations and case studies; partners' programme evaluation workshop.
- *Key purpose:* Assessment of programme approach and performance in order to define the country programme 2011 – 2014.
- *Key evaluation findings:* Food security: The target area is appropriate, but the programme has limited impact at community level with only a few groups benefiting from interventions. Peace building is only addressed indirectly; a good environment for social co-existence of different ethnic groups has been created; however, government restrictions on working in civil society training hamper the project work. Emergency relief: Pastoralists are effectively supported, but the planned activities for early warning fall short.
- *Next steps:* The programme should be structured into three focus areas: livelihood security, water and sanitation and emergency preparedness. The conceptual frameworks of livelihood security offer a broader perspective for analysis and planning than food security. Interventions, such as natural resource management, value chain management, disaster risk reduction, etc., should be considered. Water and sanitation projects are too large and pivotal to be addressed as a mere aspect in a livelihood component. Therefore, a separate focus area with distinct objectives and M&E should be developed. Emergency preparedness

should focus on monitoring existing government and UN early warning systems. Assessment, reporting and communication strategies need to be established to promptly alert and inform the HEKS Humanitarian Aid Department in Switzerland.

DR of Congo evaluation of thematic programmes

- *Type of evaluation and approach:* Two external evaluations conducted by two external evaluation specialists. Methods used: Documentation analysis, survey, interviews, stakeholder meetings, vulnerability analysis, and gender analysis.
- *Key purpose:* Assessment of performance and effectiveness of two thematic programmes (local and regional development; and community development/education) to inform the partnership and future focus.
- *Key evaluation findings:* Most project activities are pertinent. Some project activities, however, are difficult to implement due to: the difficult security situation in the North Kivu region; the geographic working fields of some partner organisations are too large and too complex; and they lack competencies. The results achieved: children and young deaf people have been successfully integrated into the school and professional education system.
- *Next steps:* The new programme focus needs to be clear and concentrated; the issues of land titles, gender, HIV-AIDS, conflict and the environment, and sustainable agriculture need to be addressed. Partners have to be selected accordingly. The HEKS office plays an important role in the programme set-up and partner collaboration (programme management; organisation development) and needs to be supported during the first phase by HHQ.

Analysis of common points from all evaluations

The following lessons learned can be summarised:

- Projects' effectiveness can be improved by: a) Including new activities (such as advocacy work, monitoring early warning systems and incorporating climate change and mitigation) b) involving new stakeholder groups; and c) strengthening and extending activities (organic agriculture in additional areas, young people and income generation)
- New risks and issues (such as mining and access to land and water) have to be taken into account and dealt with.
- Geographical concentration is an important factor for an effective programme approach as well as the selection of the partner organisations.
- HEKS offices play an important facilitating role by assisting the organisational development of the partners, strengthening their monitoring and evaluation practice and playing a key role in knowledge sharing and networking.
- The context needs to be continuously monitored in order to respond flexibly to changing situations.

5.3 Emerging patterns

Beyond key data and evaluation reports, HEKS aims with its CMS to interpret the changes brought about by its output. Such changes are interpreted below in the form of recurring patterns. The following four patterns are by no way exhaustive, they emerged out of the compilation of and reflection on the data HEKS collected in 2010 with the procedure described above in chapter 3.

Pattern 1:

Sustainable development starts with the new ways in which people look at themselves. Women especially become a driving force in the development of their communities.

This pattern relates to HEKS's second field of observation (see 1.1): *the role of marginalised groups within social power structures.*

Empowerment

Empowerment is at the basis of every project supported by HEKS. *"Development cooperation empowers underprivileged groups to articulate their interests, to engage in political debates and to engage for their rights. At the same time it makes people aware of their responsibilities towards the community."* This statement from HEKS' corporate strategy 2008-2012 is realised in many projects across the continents. Confidence and self-confidence building is the first step in any project with marginalised groups, such as Dalit communities. Together with its partners, HEKS accordingly informs communities about their rights and supports their capacity to self-organise. This leads to an essential change of mindset in the communities, as observed, for example, in India:

I no longer feel that I - or my community - are untouchable. Now, we, the Dalits, regularly participate in local village administration meetings. Prior to the arrival of the NGO ARISE in our village, this was not heard of.

Interview with Mr. Gunasekaran, India, 13.10.2010

People are starting to approach government officials to meet their basic needs. They are trying to seek information through the Right to Information Act and are starting to cooperate among themselves when ARISE proposes any programmes. Confidence levels have gone up within a number of Dalit families, especially among the women.

Interview with HEKS partner ARISE, India, 13.10.2010

The training of local leaders by HEKS' partner organisations plays a key role in community development. Community leaders organise people around them, give practical knowledge and formulate visions with the villagers. Through them, farmers share new agricultural methods or villages address local authorities to ask for their support, as is the case in Brazil (Cerrado region) in a regional development project based on the ecological and sustainable use of natural resources:

The monitoring training courses provided by CEDAC (HEKS partner organisation) were important to me. I learned a lot and I saw that others have similar problems. Earlier, I didn't dare talk to the mayor. Nowadays, I go to him and tell him what I think.

Interview with Adalberto, Munizip Lassance, Minos Gerais Brazil, 8.9.2010

The most important thing is that we learn from each other. As a monitor, I feel responsible for passing on what I learned to the group.

Interview of Walmir, Munizp Lassance, Minos Gerais, Brazil, 8.9.2010

The greatest change can be seen in the behaviour of the people. In the past, they hardly opened their mouths in a meeting; they didn't say word. Nowadays, they call themselves "extrativistas"² and talk proudly about what they do and what they expect from the future.

Interview with Marcelo and Alessandra Karla, HEKS partner CEDAC, Minos Gerais, Brazil, 8.9.2010

Women as agents of change

In many regions of the world, men traditionally work in the fields or migrate temporarily looking for employment. Women are thus left with onerous daily tasks: they look after the families, fetch water or wood and work in the fields. At the same time, they are drivers in the development of their own communities. The training they receive from HEKS' partners not only strengthens their leadership, but also leads to a new power balance within households, as described by HEKS' partner in Para, Brazil, in a project fostering the economic and social power of women:

There is a whole string of examples of how gender roles have changed in families where men respect women's work more as well as in political work. Our women have started to take up positions within the Secretaries of the Prefecture and farm labourer trade unions.

Interview with HEKS partner MNEPA, Belem, Brazil, 14.11.2010

The evaluation of the Zimbabwe programme – where around 70% of the beneficiaries are women - demonstrates how transformation has been brought about in the life of one woman. It further shows how new dynamics develop in the community.

This programme has improved living conditions in our homes as our men know that women too have rights to do 'manly' chores, while men are now helpful with chores in the home.

Conservation Farming was an alien practice in our community, but which we have now learned and adopted. Last year we had a bumper harvest after using the 50 by 50 holes. This has transformed our lives as it has wiped out hunger from our families. Christian Care (HEKS partner organisation in Zimbabwe) gives us the seeds and continues to impart the knowledge on this process, while those of us that have learned also bear the responsibility of teaching others.

We now get our vegetables in the community garden. This has changed people, as they now spend their entire time developing their neighbourhood; others are into selling to help the orphans in our community. We want this project to continue and hope all men and women remain steadfast in this cause.

Interview with Portia Moyo during the Country Programme Evaluation Zimbabwe, Marinoha Village, Makhasa Ward, Matopo District; Zimbabwe, 21 April 2010

The external evaluation of HEKS' country programme in Guatemala - conducted in 2010 - observes that women's participation in decision making in the target villages increased. The project activities allowed women to take time from traditional activities (water or wood collection) which they could then invest in their families and community. Access to formal and informal education was also increased.

Similar observations about women's key role in community development and its consequences on households could be made in the Philippines and in Southern Africa, where women are involved with their community in the land struggle:

² Extrativistas are traditional communities living from subsistence agriculture, fishing, hunting and harvesting forest products.

It was the women who became very active in our struggle for access to land. We believed that we have cooler temperaments during negotiations and that the authorities would not physically hurt us. Apart from that our husbands have to stay and find a living for our family.

Decision-making has also reached the family level. Husband and wife have to discuss the pros and cons and also the potential risks involved. But this process has helped couples to bond and plan for their respective families. As women and wives, we can discuss all matters with our husbands.

Interview with Merlina, Narciso and Procesa, Mindanao, Baclig Farmers' Association members; Mindanao, Philippines, 4.12.2010

HEKS' partner, FSG, enabled women to organise into groups through which they could then negotiate for access to land & water. FSG also facilitated access to basic and low-cost inputs & sustainable farming methods. Participation in FSG supported groups has mainly been women. The Limpopo farmer & cooperative groups include both women & men and women have challenged male domination & are beginning to claim their place. Limpopo women are not organised separately.

Country Programme Evaluation South Africa, 2010

Pattern 2:

People who are aware of their rights become players in their own development. They launch their own initiatives beyond the scope of HEKS' projects.

This pattern relates to HEKS' third field of observation (see 1.1): *the degree of fulfilment of rights and protection against human rights violations.*

Increased sustainability through inclusion of rights - perspective and advocacy

With the HRBA approach, HEKS' partners and the community organisations they are working with are adopting a multi-stakeholder approach and actively involving state authorities in the planning and implementation of their development projects. This approach has had lasting repercussions in the Philippines as HEKS observes communities taking steps beyond the project boundaries to assert their rights to health services or as victims of natural hazards:

The CBO, Maguindanaoan Highlanders People's Organization (MHPO), has engaged in community projects such as the potable water system. They have re-built their community hall, which is also being used as a school for children; the community is planning to ask the Department of Education to provide a satellite primary school as children aged 7-9 years old cannot walk to the school which is 5 kilometres away and involves crossing the same river twice.

The MHPO also runs a community "cart-for-rent" project. The cart is rented by members to haul their farm produce to the market. A portion of the income is kept as part of the organisation fund.

Barbara E. Salazar, HEKS Office Philippines, Annual Report 2010

The potential displayed by the HRBA approach may vary depending on the culture and the legal framework of each country. The approach, however, fosters a new mindset among NGOs and community organisation in the contexts in which it is applied. For example, HEKS' Cambodian partners managed, within a few months, to involve local authorities in the maintenance of irrigation canals after being introduced in the right-based approach.

In Colombia, the HRBA approach triggered a new understanding of roles and potential within communities and families. Critical reflection on the right to food has led, not only to improved nutrition through additional income with soya product processing, but also to the insight that the challenge has to be approached differently, that debate is necessary on all levels, among women and the community and also in the public and in politics.

Moving from a development program to a political strategy, when food becomes a right... this means is still lacking. It's a breakthrough we will reach through the Observatory on the Right to Food, and that way we will achieve this vision and transfer it to women and to political reality.

There are several levels: first women, as political players, then the community itself. It is improving conditions in the north-east sector of the city (of Barrancabermeja), it would even have an impact on the municipality, in the sense that we are moving a fundamental theme into a public policy, as a right and not as a necessity. It would also have an impact in the discussion of citizen participation, and of the place which must be given to the framework of social organisations, which reflect the discussion of the ESCR.

Interview with the HEKS partner OFP, Colombia, 2.12.2010

Similarly, the 2010 external evaluation of the HEKS Guatemala country programme underlines that advocacy endeavours by partners and communities have long-lasting effects. For example, local authorities take increased financial responsibility in local development plans so that external financing is not needed anymore. The evaluation also states that local governments could be convinced to support communities in getting access to education or agricultural extension schemes.

Pattern 3:

NGOs are more effective in a facilitating role: capacity building, networking and knowledge sharing are catalysts for change.

Capacity building

HEKS is a relatively small scale actor on the international NGO stage. Its contribution, however, is not only monetary as HEKS' country offices play a key role in improving partners' skills and networking, as illustrated in the context of the Philippines:

HEKS' main role, first and foremost, is building the capacity of small farmers in terms of knowledge (rights, information, etc.) and skills (technology, management, basic financial systems, etc.). The farmers of Fukol learned and asserted their rights as war refugees. Farmers learned the agronomic management of new crops through their own field trials. Solutions to farming problems are studied and tested by themselves. These are applications of empowerment learning approaches, such as the farmers' field school. At the same time, HEKS also supports the capacity building of its partner organisations through training programmes, workshops and exchange visits, etc. Efforts to level off and have a common understanding and commitment to a "rights-based" approach, 'management' of complex and changing systems, etc. are needed and conducted.

Barbara E. Salazar, HEKS Office Philippines, Annual Report 2010

The focus set by HEKS in 2009 to improve the financial and programme management of its offices and partners bore first fruits in 2010. The Mango financial check was introduced in the auditing of HEKS' Indian partners. Many partners (e.g. in Niger and Senegal) adopted the Banana accounting software. The Field Financial and Programmatic Guidelines were

implemented in all HEKS offices, thus harmonising the management requirements for HEKS' partners. As a result, HEKS and its partners gained a clearer profile as stated by, for example, HEKS' Indian partners.

PARD has worked with other donors, but HEKS is the only organisation that insists on transparency.
Interview with HEKS partner PARD, Tamil Nadu, India, 2.11.2010

At any point of time, WORD can show its records to the government. This is a significant achievement in terms of transparency.

Interview of HEKS partner WORD, Tamil Nadu, India, 2.11.2010

Knowledge sharing, networking, agenda setting

HEKS' specific contribution is to facilitate knowledge transfer between its partners. In 2010, three partners in Bangladesh pooled their expertise in the land struggle for Dalit and Adivasis communities and transferred their experiences to further HEKS partners in an attempt to build similar coalitions to those working on the land struggle issue with HEKS India. In South Africa and Zimbabwe, the evaluation of the country programmes reinforced the collaboration between partners:

A key driver for collaboration this year was the external programme evaluation and the post-evaluation workshop. This was the first time that partners had met each other face-to-face and shared what, how and with whom they work, with one another. This was an extremely important process as independent partnerships emerged as a result. It seems that there are closer working relations between partners working in the same geographical areas. Partners shared funding opportunities along with strategies towards sustainability.

Donna Andrews, HEKS South Africa, Annual Report 2010

Active Consultation Stimulates Transparency and Accountability: The evaluation and definition of the new Zimbabwe country programme brought about an understanding of some tenets of positive partnerships. The partners were engaged during the country programme evaluation (input into definition of the ToR; field work with consultants; commenting draft report; and discussion of final version during a partners' round table meeting). During the drafting of the country programme, partners had an opportunity to shape the programme and to make their experiences relevant. The whole process brought about an understanding of positive partnerships. They commented, "Although there are power differences between HEKS and its partners, these processes assisted in cultivating an attitude of equality and mutual learning." Other partners felt that such sharing promoted trust, respect, ownership and equality.

Juliana Manjengwa, HEKS Zimbabwe in HEKS newsletter " info@", January 2011.

The facilitation role of HEKS offers platforms through which partner organisations can share and reflect on their role in the development of their societies. Such exchanges lead to a common vision and shared agendas. A breakthrough was achieved in the very difficult context of the Middle East where an Israeli organisation and a Palestinian organisation managed to develop a common model to address the most disputed issue of the right of return:

Despite the sensitive conflict atmosphere and conditions and the lack of joint actions in 2010, it was impressive that Zochrot and Badil insisted on continuing their joint action with HEKS' support to develop practical suggestions for the Palestinian refugees' return. The two organisations are highly motivated to challenge the most controversial issue in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and they are grateful for HEKS' continued support which provides them with the needed space. It's appreciated that the two organisations are not giving up hope or belief in their capacities to contribute toward the end of the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis by creating a think tank in which Israelis and Palestinians, most of whom are refugees, are developing a shared,

practical vision for Palestinian refugees to return to their land as a means to achieve just peace. The two organisations will share their plan with their audiences and it's expected that it will provoke reactions on both sides.

Rula Atamneh, HEKS Office Israel-Palestine, Annual Report 2010

Another interesting example is the development of HEKS' partner in Southern Africa, Refugee Minister Centre (RMC), working in the legal defence of refugees. Acknowledging that this partner was active in exactly the same field as HEKS in Switzerland, HEKS initiated a knowledge sharing experience with both organisations' staff with exchange visits in 2009. Through this exposure, RMC reasserted its vision, stepped up its networking in South Africa and was invited, in 2010, by the Church World Service in the USA. The evaluation of HEKS' South Africa programme states that partners, such as RMC, are playing a central role in ensuring rights for migrants – in terms of local and international laws.

Pattern 4:

Rural communities experience development when they address the conflicts that affect them.

This pattern relates to HEKS' third field of observation (see 1.1):—*The degree of fulfilment of rights and protection against human rights violations*

Rural development and conflict transformation are two sides of the same coin. Production can be increased only if people are safe working in the fields; economic growth is sustainable only in a stable environment. As experienced in the Philippines, communities are willing to engage in conflict situations in order to safeguard their assets.

The most important development in Fukol is the local peace initiative. The focus placed on poverty alleviation by HEKS and its partners addresses one of the root causes of conflict and war. The progress made in economic development also becomes a strong basis for communities' push for peace to ensure that the improvement of their livelihoods can continue. The community of Fukol is currently negotiating with the government and the MILF to declare their community as a "zone of peace"; a parallel initiative to the national peace talks. The aim is to get the two camps to commit not to engage in armed conflict inside Fukol. Other specific rules are yet to be negotiated.

Barbara E. Salazar, HEKS Office Philippines, Annual Report 2010

In Zimbabwe, the programme evaluation report states that food security and development education have been tackled together as "two sides of the same coin". HEKS' support enabled farmers and young people to access knowledge, skills and developmental assets and to generate food, income and social justice. At the same time, farmers addressed local-level conflicts in their respective areas. As experienced in Zimbabwe, the people of our concern involved in community gardening were divided because of political affiliation. But thanks to integrated conflict transformation initiatives in the food sovereignty project, HEKS' partner organisation (Christian Care) managed to unlock the situation and to convince both sides to work together in order to improve their lives. The community garden is now a flourishing success.

In Colombia, the rural communities that HEKS and its partners are working with are “surrounded” by conflict and man-made environmental damage. Their economic, social and cultural rights and, especially the right to food, are being trampled underfoot. By negotiating with the local authorities and by organising themselves, the villages are managing their own water supply.

The rural communities in the region of Tibu, north-east Colombia, are facing various bitter conflicts. They experience insecurity through paramilitary groups and guerrilla activity in the region, which is an important strategic and economic zone (there are huge oilfields, coca crops, mineral resources) on the border with Venezuela. The rural population is suffering violent displacement from their land by expanding agro-business producing agro fuel from sugar cane and Palma Africana. Another negative consequence of deforestation and monocrop farming is the drying up of watercourses and polluted groundwater, preventing the population's access to water. This was the case for the village of Ambato. To resolve the problem, the villagers negotiated with the local government to take responsibility of an old aqueduct. With the support of the HEKS project, they reinstated it and planted 500 trees at the source to protect it. In 2011, they will install the canal system for distributing the water to 40 families. Sixty villagers, especially young people, carried out training in reforestation. They have already planted 3,000 trees. This example is encouraging; other villages, for example Esmeralda, are now busy tackling their water problem.

Marie-Therese Roggo, Desk Officer Brazil and Colombia, Annual Reporting 2010

5.4 Recurring challenges

Not all patterns observed by HEKS foster development. Projects supported by HEKS and its partner organisations also meet resistance in the living systems in which they work. Discouraging reactions are observed in different contexts and challenge HEKS' programmes. The challenges listed below are by no way exhaustive. They were, however, highlighted in the review and interpretation of the data collected in 2010 through HEKS' CMS:

Lack of political will to sustain change

Change creates imbalance between given traditional powers and evokes resistance. This kind of resistance needs to be anticipated and addressed with a careful DO NO HARM analysis.

The local politicians are not supporting us. For example, in the rainy season, access to Assentamento is difficult. But the mayor is not interested in repairing the road or the bridge.

Interview with Ermilom, Munizip Coracao de Jesus, Brazil, 19.09.2010

HEKS' support is critical because we can finance activities that nobody would fund, for example, vegetable production. The government is only interested in supporting big projects, which are not adapted to the reality of small-scale farmers.

Interview with Ester and Tatiana, HEKS partner MST-NM, Brazil, 20.09.2010

Fear and a lack of self-confidence

Communities experience division. Discrimination going back centuries is not easily erased. Standing up for one's rights requires taking risks. Self-organisation, capacity building and awareness raising processes need time and are not linear and acquired once and for all, as observed, for example, in India:

We are unable to grow vegetables regularly or monitor the vermicompost units without the continuous monitoring of the organisation. My neighbours lack self-driven motivation as we belong to the untouchable community.

Interview with Mrs. Muthu, India, 13.10.2010

People are unable to get 100 days employment through the MNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) in spite of regular monitoring. ARISE is unable to meet all the demands of the people, especially for the income generation programmes, due to which people lose interest. There is a long way to go to building the confidence of the Dalit community.

Interview with HEKS partner ARISE, India, 13.10.2010

Short-term vision

Ownership of the projects by the communities is key to sustainability. Daily needs and concerns might, however, precede over long-term visions.

The idea of the project is not yet anchored in the minds of the families. It is good that nutrition of the people is improved and that surplus is produced for regional markets. But sustainability is only reached when the idea of seeds is understood and vegetable production is not only seen as monetary income.

Uli Ide, HEKS Development of Rural Communities Advisor, November 2010

The immediate positive impact of the work done by partners can be seen when it comes to dealing with immediate problems faced by vulnerable groups such as refugees, migrants, small farmers and emerging community-based organisations. (...) Some of the partners, however, struggle with how they relate their immediate work with an overall contextual analysis of key social, economic and political phenomena (HIV/AIDS as a social crisis, the systemic foundations of xenophobia, and the need for a sustained approach to mass mobilisation and organisation).

South Africa programme evaluation report 2010

Ongoing crises

In areas of decade-long, ongoing crises (for example in South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, the Middle East and Zimbabwe), the minimal stability required by long-term development programmes is lacking and programmes keep oscillating between development and humanitarian aid.

Likewise, climate evolution with recurring hurricanes and floods constantly endangers the progress achieved in development programmes. In 2010, areas where HEKS had implemented rehabilitation programmes were flooded twice in Albania as well as in the Philippines.

6 Conclusions

The results show that change has to come from within communities, villages and local organisations. It is encouraging that beneficiaries, as well as partner organisations, are observing some changes. HEKS contributed to these by triggering reflections, facilitating processes and giving input.

The results show that pattern 3 (NGOs are more effective in a facilitating role: capacity building, networking and knowledge sharing are catalysts for change) is the added value of HEKS. HEKS acts as a catalyst for local learning, knowledge building and networking. In particular, the HEKS Offices offer partner organisations the space and time for joint reflection on their context and

on project work. HEKS strengthens networking as well as analytical and adaptive capacities and allows partners to develop a joint agenda. Measuring the impact of HEKS in its facilitating role is, however, challenging as this kind of contribution has indirect consequences on project implementation.

7 Perspectives

- HEKS' CMS tool is still in its early development phase. It certainly proves to be interesting as it sheds new light on HEKS' work. Many Country Directors pointed out that the questions they asked in the interviews about changes experienced in people's lives gave them insight into information and dynamics that they had not been aware of so far. The CMS gives new access to people's lives and concerns beyond the scope of the projects supported by HEKS. Such information is valuable as it gives new insights into the many dynamics where projects come into play. It is, however, rarely mentioned in project reports as these usually have a very narrow focus on planned progress.
- The bird's eye perspective adopted by HEKS concerning detailed research in the identification of patterns in its overall international programme is cost effective in terms of invested financial and human resources. Based on existing data, it offers a systematic way to interpret those and to compare observations made at different levels in various projects. It thus allows focusing on key issues in a short time.
- The representativeness of a select number of interviews in a panel of projects raises some issues: how many interviews must and can be conducted? How can bias induced by the interviewer be avoided?
- The increasing investment in reporting and evaluation requirements is challenging HEKS and its staff as well as its partner organisations. HEKS still needs to improve its reporting and evaluation practice. In order to do so, HEKS must harmonise and better exploit its instruments (FFPG, evaluation guidelines, CMS, reporting formats) and reflection/analysis platforms.

8 Annex: reference literature

A school of organisational developers (some of them attached to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and others working around the world in community development) are reflecting on how the way living systems function in nature could be applied in organisations. Their reflections can be found in the following books:

C. Otto Scharmer, Theory U, Berrett-Kohler, San Francisco, 2009

Margaret J. Wheatley, Leadership and the New Science, Berrett-Koehler, San Francisco, 2006

Margaret J. Wheatley and Myron Kellner-Rogers, A Simpler Way, Berrett-Kohler, San Francisco, 1999

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