

People Unlimited – Hivos Business Plan 2007-2010

Summary of general and cross-sector policy themes relevant for the Annual Plan 2007

Partner portfolio: broadening & deepening civil society

In line with the more prominent role of civil society on the global stage, Hivos partners have become more successful in engaging themselves with global lobby initiatives, campaigns etc. In many countries a significant number of professional NGOs have emerged that fulfil important roles in issues such as democratisation processes and economic development.

The reverse side of this professionalism is that organisations are more and more out of touch with the groups that are supposed to be their local constituency. A (worldwide) accountability gap confronts the NGOs. This is particularly true for outer regions, provincial capitals and other remote cities. This trend is reinforced by the tendency of international donors to work with easily accessible partners that speak the language of the global development community. This to the detriment of starting social movements and (rural) membership-based organisations that are generally less at ease in this environment. At the same time, contextual developments such as decentralisation of governance and the need to translate international agreements at the local level, demand a broadening and deepening of civil society. For these reasons Hivos will increase support for (bigger and smaller) *membership organisations* and *social movements*, with a focus on outreach in more remote parts of the countries. In its support to starting, innovative and promising initiatives, Hivos will emphasise the role of partners *outside the capital cities*.

Knowledge: new role & programmes

Hivos aims to be a knowledge-based organisation, fulfilling an 'integrator' role between academic and practice-based forms of knowledge and making this available for development processes. A main driver behind this is the increasing demand for knowledge by Hivos partners (and civil society actors in general) to tackle complex issues and do so more effectively by learning from generalised experience as well as more theoretical insights. New or more pressing dilemmas and threats (such as fundamentalisms) call for more knowledge in the fields concerned.

Hivos will therefore develop knowledge programmes in co-operation with partners and specialised knowledge institutions in North and South. These will focus on

- o Civil society building in developing countries (already started with ISS, The Hague)
- o Pluralism, tolerance and fundamentalism (with CSCS, Bangalore and UvH, Utrecht)
- o Diversity in media and culture (with FEI, Johannesburg and INCD, Ottawa)

And, in the course of the planning period potential topics are:

- o Access of quality products to mainstream markets
- o Civil society building in Iran, Iraq and Syria

Integration of new and existing knowledge will result in new, applicable insights that will be disseminated through learning trajectories and within the framework of capacity building for civil society actors, through (electronic) publishing e-learning, seminars etc. These outcomes will also be available for civil society actors, academic and development circles outside the current Hivos network of funding relations.

Pluralism & diversity

Self-determination, freedom of expression, diversity, democracy and pluralism are core values of humanism, as well as necessary elements of a dynamic, vibrant society. Fundamentalisms, by contrast, aim to restore old values and put the blame for social problems with 'the other'. This contradiction between fundamentalisms and Hivos' vision and values justifies a central role of pluralism and diversity within all programmes. Given the sensitivity of these themes in many countries, it will not be easy to achieve results and make them visible. Nevertheless Hivos will stimulate partners to engage in public debates, enter into dialogue about the values of diversity for both the individual and society, to forge coalitions to defend freedoms, and develop effective strategies based on knowledge and experiences (resulting from, among other, co-operation with knowledge institutions).

Regions: West Asia

A few years ago Hivos started a programme in Iran and Iraq on an experimental basis. Very few development NGOs are active in these countries, while the room for individual self-determination and freedom of expression is limited and is diminishing even further. The programme is therefore expanded and will also include Syria, focusing on activities related to civil society building.

At the same time, the South Eastern Europe programme will be gradually phased out. This is motivated by both the state of development of the region and its increased access to EU funding.

Finance: towards '25%'

The new system of co-financing means that the Dutch government will maintain a fixed ceiling of funding, while the number of applicants is likely to increase. Simultaneously, organisations are expected to generate at least 25% of its income from other sources by 2009. Increased competition on an already crowded 'charity market' for private donations would demand large expenditures on marketing, a road not followed by Hivos. Instead, it will reinforce the efforts to attract institutional funding in line with thematic strengths and expertise. Hivos will concentrate on multilateral (international) funds, the private sector and (well-to-do) 'unorganised' citizens in the Netherlands.

Gender mainstreaming

Hivos will continue to emphasise the central concern of gender equality. In addition to support to women's organisations within the GWD sector, it has also set clear targets within all other sectors on gender related criteria. Partner-specific forms of support on these issues will be provided. Given the yearly rate of renewal (10-15% new partners a year) this will be a considerable challenge.

Emergency relief

Based on earlier experiences, Hivos will build up its capacity in the field of emergency relief and reconstruction. This will mean that the first phase of emergency response will be provided through Alliance2015 partners specialised in the field (DWHH and Concern in particular) and that local partner organisations will be the main actors in reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. This implies that involvement is limited to the present 'Hivos countries' and that emergency relief will be integrated with reconstruction and rehabilitation activities. Hivos will enable partners to play a role in case of emergencies and strengthen its internal response capabilities.