



Save the Children
Norway

INTERIM EVALUATION CEDC PARTNER PROGRAMME OF SAVE THE CHILDREN NORWAY IN CAMBODIA

John Vijghen
Khun Sithon
January 2008

Commissioned to



ECR-Mekong

Affiliate of ECR-Group Foundation

CONTENT

Executive Summary Khmer	
Acknowledgements	iii
Acronyms	iv
Executive Summary	v
Evaluation Methodology	vii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Relevant Objectives	1
2. CEDC PROGRAMME	3
2.1 Section Outline	3
2.2 Objectives Partner Support	3
2.3 Compliance with Previous Recommendations	4
2.4 Partner Capacity Building Process and Achievements	7
3. PARTNERS' COMPLIANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS	10
3.1 OEC	10
3.2 CCPCR	19
3.3 VCOA	26
3.4 CCASVA	32
3.5 LAC	42
4. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	45
4.1 Partners	45
4.2 CEDC Section	47
4.3 Recommendations for Improvement of the Partnership Support	49
4.4 Suggestions for Follow-up	50

ANNEXES

A	Terms of Reference
B	List of Previous Recommendations 2005
C	List of Documents Reviewed
D	Lists of Respondents
E	Questionnaire Survey Results LAC
F	List of Capacity Building Recommendations – Simmons 2006

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following persons have contributed to this report and deserve our thanks:

The Head of Administration of SCN for his expedient communication with other SCN staff.
The Country Representative for his frank opinion and search for the truth.
The CEDC Programme staff for their cooperative attitude and useful information.
The Directors of the Partner NGOs for their cooperation and willingness to share concerns.
The Programme and Centre Staff of the Partner NGOs for their information and cooperation.
The many other respondents, in particular the beneficiaries and children, who contributed the most to this report through their opinion and suggestions.

And last but not least the field researchers who did the job as usual with professionalism:

Mr. Khun Sithon, Team Leader, ECR-Mekong;
Mr. Dara Khiev, Research Assistant, ECR-Mekong.
Ms. Phou Mean, Research Assistant, ECR-Mekong.

I hope that this report will contribute to an improved support to Partner NGOs to enable them to improve their operations and strengthen their organisations in order to assist even better than now children in need.

John Vijghen,
Team Leader
ECR-Mekong
15 February 2008

ACRONYMS

BA	Bachelor of Arts
CB	Capacity Building
CC	Commune Council
CCASVA	Cambodian Children Against Starvation and Violence Association
CCPCR	Cambodian Center for the Protection of Children's Rights
CECD	Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances
CO	Country Office
COSECAM	NGO Coalition to Address (Sexual) Exploitation of Children in Cambodia
CP	Cerebral Palsy
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CWCC	Cambodian Women's Crisis Centre
CWD	Children with Disabilities
DAC	Disability Action Council
DDSP	Disability Development Services Pursat
ECR	Experts for Community Research/Exploited Children Resources
ECR	Exploited Children Resources / Experts for Community Research
FDG	Focus Group Discussion
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICRC	International Crescent and Red Cross
IE	Interim Evaluation
IMS	Information Management System
LAC	Legal Aid of Cambodia
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCCL	Monitoring Change in Children's Lives
MODE	
MOH	Ministry of Health
MOSAVY	Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCA	Organisational Capacity Assessment
OEC	Operations Enfants du Cambodge
PHD	Provincial Health Department
REIS	Relevance, Efficiency, Impact, Sustainability
SCN	Safe the Children Norway
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
ToR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TPO	Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
VCAO	Vulnerable Children Assistance Organization
VSN(P)	Village Safety Net (Programme)
WVC	World Vision Cambodia

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Interim Evaluation (IE) examined in compliance with the Terms of Reference (ToR): *'if SCN in Cambodia and the Partners have been able to improve the work according to the recommendations stated in the above assessments (background). The period covered is January 2006 until present'*. The IE's specific objectives were:

- *Review and give an opinion on how SCN-CO has been able to implement and improve according to recommendations stated.*
- *Review and give an opinion on how the partners have been able to implement and improve according to recommendations stated.*
- *Outline new issues or concerns (if any) that have emerged that was not mentioned in the 2005 assessments.*

Through the briefing by the CEDC Programme staff, a conversation with the country representative and emphasised by the Reference Group the focus of the IE should be on the first two specific objectives, in other words how was the compliance by SCN-CO and the Partners with the recommendations made in previous evaluation reports.

The IE was conducted by a team consisting of an expatriate Team Leader, a National Consultant and one national Research Assistant during the month December 2007 and two national Research Assistants during January 2008. The main methods used were individual and group interviews, meeting observations and one questionnaire survey. All stakeholders, to know partner organisations, SCN-CO staff and beneficiaries including children were included in the fact-finding process. The partners and CEDC Programme staff were given opportunity for feed back and correction of the first draft report's findings.

The Mission was not assigned to examine in detail all recommendations, but to use the field findings as indication for the total compliance.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions are derived from the field findings and its consequences, which are in the course of the evaluation discussed with partner staff, CEDC programme staff and the country representative.

The compliance with the previous recommendations was high for two partners and moderate to even low for three partners. One of the two partners whose compliance level was high was also the one who had received previously only minor recommendations for improvement, indicating that this agency need little support. The main reason for the overall low level of attention to the recommendations seems to be a lack of a systematic review of the evaluation reports and a lack of reminders to comply. However, despite this many improvements have been achieved in the course of the two years since the evaluations took place, mainly because weaknesses were evident and acknowledged by the partners.

The compliance with recommendations for the SCN sections, in particular the CEDC section was moderate to high. The most relevant recommendations have been taken at heart and have been followed-up. However, the recommendation to built capacity in a systematic and comprehensive manner has been overlooked. Although much capacity has been built in certain areas and among certain staff the institutional capacity of most of the partners has not much increased and structural shortcomings identified during the previous evaluations still exist to a large extent.

The Mission observed that programme approaches need further improvement in terms of finding more effective mechanisms and procedures for residential care, street children interventions and child protection networks. Also, the cooperation between partners and other NGOs need more attention, while programme exchanges between the partners – in particular for the protection networks and residential centre management – could result in more effective interventions.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

It is recommended to:

1. Review carefully all previous recommendations which not have been followed up (sufficiently) and which are still relevant and devise a plan for follow-up together with the partners.
2. Review the partner relationship in terms of dependency (parent-child relations) and devise a plan for future support by SCN and what support should be provided by other sponsors in close consultation with the partners; in case the support will be temporarily an exit strategy should be developed as well.
3. Define all capacity building and organisational development needs for each partner and design a systematic and comprehensive capacity building plan indicating the capacity which will be built by SCN.
4. Focus CEDC section partner support more on programme improvement and organisational development, including improved cooperation with and between other NGOs.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The Interim Evaluation (IE) examined in compliance with the Terms of Reference (ToR): ‘if SCN in Cambodia and the Partners have been able to improve the work according to the recommendations stated in the above assessments (background). The period covered is January 2006 until present’. The IE’s specific objectives were:

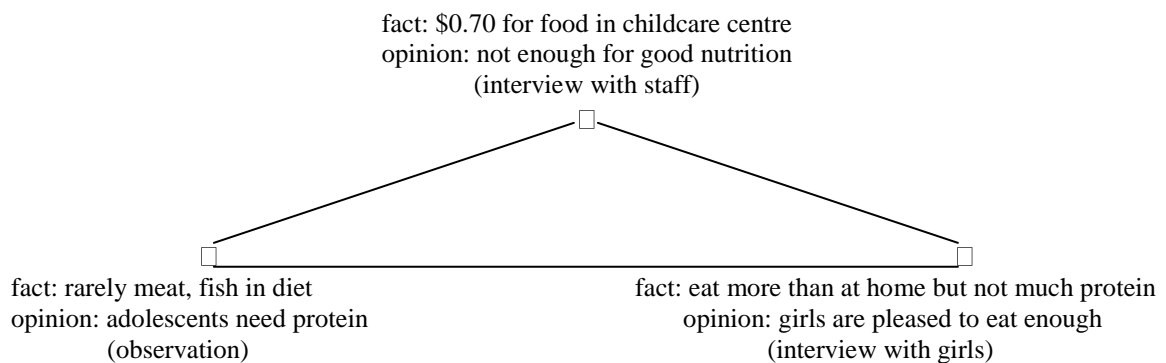
- Review and give an opinion on how SCN-CO has been able to implement and improve according to recommendations stated.
- Review and give an opinion on how the partners have been able to implement and improve according to recommendations stated.
- Outline new issues or concerns (if any) that have emerged which were not mentioned in the 2005 assessments.

Through the briefing by the CEDC Programme staff, a conversation with the country representative and emphasised by the Reference Group it was clear that the focus of the IE should be on the first two specific objectives, in other words how was the compliance by SCN-CO and the Partners with the recommendations made in previous evaluation reports. This has shaped the current report but some information about achievements and processes have been included when relevant in view of the (lack of) improvement or for future interventions.

The IE was conducted by a team consisting of an expatriate Team Leader, a National Consultant and one national Research Assistant during the month December 2007 (OEC, VCAO, CCPCR, CCASVA, CEDC) plus two national Research Assistants during January 2008 (LAC, SCN-CO). All team members are well-trained and very experienced in project evaluations. The Evaluation Team has been guided during some visits by Partner’s programme staff but these guides have not participated or interfered in any way in the fact finding process.

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The evaluation report was drafted based on information obtained from documents, field assessments of each of the partners, interviews with SCN-CO and CEDC section staff and from the feedback workshop. All information collected was triangulated, using different methods and/or sources. Although individual pieces of data might be erroneous – researchers are also just humans – the triangulation process ensures that findings, thus understandings of sets of facts, processes and/or phenomena are well understood. An example of a triangulation resulting in a finding is shown in the diagram below:



Finding:

Although girls are happy because they can eat more than at their own home, the nutritional value of the food that can be bought with the \$0.70 is not sufficient.

Desk Study

The desk study has reviewed a large number of documents provided by the SCN-CO and CEDC section. A part of these documents, including the partner and thematic evaluation reports of 2005, were provided early on during the assignment, while other documents were requested and received during and after the field work phase (See Annex C).

Field Assessments

The fieldwork was conducted among the five Partners, the CEDC Programme and the HR Department of SCN-CO. The main methods used during the partner field assessments were individual and group interviews, observations and one questionnaire survey among training participants. Although it was the intention to apply the Octagon technique to document group dynamics of beneficiaries, including children, this could not be done for various reasons – but mainly because it was not possible in the given time and period to bring persons who functioned in groups together. Instead, more informal group meetings were conducted with children and adults. Also the intention to conduct a survey among the various child target groups of the Partners could not be realised due to the disparity of these groups and the burden it would place on programme staff and respondents. However, a questionnaire survey was conducted among a relative large group of training participants of the LAC Programme. All stakeholders, to know Partner organisations, CEDC Programme and other SCN-CO staff and others were included in the fact-finding process and also given opportunity for feed back and correction of the first draft report.

TABLE OF RESPONDENTS

Partners	Staff		Community		Beneficiaries		TOTAL
	Field	Mgt	CC	Other	Child	Adult	
OEC	11	2	4	10	14	12	53
VCAO	4	2	1	15	14	*	36
CCPCR	2	2	4	23	22	*	53
CCASVA	7	2	-	5	20	8	42
LAC	5	-	-	-	-	37	42
SCN-CO	4	2	-	-	n/a	n/a	6
All	33	10	9	53	70	57	232

* No adult target group

Feedback

SCN has established a 'reference group', consisting of management, programme and partner staff, to brief, guide and give feedback to the Evaluation Team. Three meetings at the beginning, halfway and at the end were conducted with this group. However, the main purpose of these meetings was to confirm and emphasise the objectives of the Interim Evaluation, to report on the progress of the data collection phase and to brief the group about the methodology and limitations of the data collection.

Feedback was given about a number of findings after discussion with the CEDC Programme staff and/or the country representative; the feedback also provided additional facts or arguments to illustrate an opposite view as obtained from the field assessments.

A preliminary report with only the draft findings was circulated among all five partners, the CEDC section and members of the Reference Group. Following the review a half-day feedback workshop was conducted during which the evaluation methodology was described and an overview given of the findings. The feedback workshop was designed and indeed functioned to provide an opportunity to respond to the draft findings, to correct errors and to collect additional information from partners and CEDC section. Immediately or some days after the workshop each of the partners and the CEDC section submitted written replies with comments, clarifications, corrections and sometimes alternative views – the latter, however not always supported by facts.

The whole CEDC section was also present and prepared an extensive feedback. The partners did participate in large numbers, with programme and field staff and four of the five directors present (one director was ill), indicating a high motivation to provide input. This motivation was also evidenced by the very active participation during and the quality of the feedback.

A second complete version of the draft report has been submitted for a final review to the Reference Group. This draft incorporates comments and suggestions resulting from the Feedback Workshop and following submissions to the Evaluator which have – after consultation with the Team Leader and some confirmation of disputed facts - been found appropriate and useful. The Evaluator has informed all partners and the CEDC section about the arguments for not accepting points submitted as feedback which were supported with facts but not are incorporated in the final draft. After the review of the second version of the report by the Reference Group their comments and suggestions for improvement – submitted on 29 February 2008 - have been seriously considered and when found appropriate incorporated into the final report.

TABLE OF METHODS

nr	Methods & Tools	Respondents	Reason
1	Desk study	Documents	Background, Facts, Confirmation
2	Informal interviews	CEDC staff	Briefing, testing, confirmation
3		SCN Representative	Report issues
4		Partner's staff	Orientation
5		Partner's management	Background, opinions
6		Others	Opinions, confirmation facts
7		Structural interviews	Partner's field staff
8	Group interviews	Child beneficiaries	Experience, benefits
9	Observations	Partner/CEDC staff	Attitudes, Behaviour
10		Meetings, Activities	Facts, Practices
11	Questionnaire Survey	Training participants	Facts, Opinion
12	Feedback workshop	Partner/CEDC staff	Feedback, Confirmation, Facts

LIMITATIONS AND CONSTRAINTS

The cooperation of SCN-CO staff was good and suggestions for opportunities for meeting partners' staff were helpful. Also the Partners' management and staff cooperated well and only two constraints for data collection, besides the usual ones like restricted time and conflicting work schedules, were encountered.

The first constraint concerns the documentation required to verify SCN and partner staff statements and assess objectively the quantity, kind, content and participants of training and capacity building efforts provided by the CEDC and other SCN sections to partners; such documentation could not be obtained despite several attempts. The documentation received, such as the annual reports 2006 and draft 2007 or the detailed capacity and organisational assessment report by Simmons 2006, contains no detailed and systematic information about the training or capacity building activities provided during the period 2005 - 2007. For example, the annual report 2006 refers in chapter 6 to appendix 2 for such detailed information. However, after reviewing the appendix no data about training or capacity building activities for partners could be found. Also requests to the HR or CEDC sections for a systematic detailed overview of training and capacity building activities were met with a reference to the 4-year workplan and annual report – which both not contain this information. Consequently the Mission could not make an independent assessment of the capacity building provided to partners but had to rely on information provided by SCN staff during interviews.

The second constraint concerns getting reliable data and information from partners about their work and capacity building. The progress reports prepared by partners do focus on outputs and little on the process or training and capacity building, hence such documentation has proved to be of little use for the evaluation in terms of practices, processes or verification of capacity building efforts. Information obtained through interviews with partner staff was partly incomplete or unreliable because a proportional high number of partner's staff lacked recall of what happened exactly during previous years. Documentation about processes and practices in the past found at the partners' filing systems was few and incomplete. This has affected the reliability and validity of the facts obtained during the field assessment. Participants were given opportunity during the Feedback Workshop to correct or add facts, and through this process the reliability of facts and information presented in the report has been increased. However, some of the information about the partners in the draft report was disputed by the CEDC section. Where relevant and possible contradicting information obtained from partners' field staff or the CEDC section was verified through checking documentation or additional interviews in order to present a balanced view. In a few contradicting cases no facts could be found to support information of either party in which case this contradiction was noted.

The response rate for the LAC questionnaire survey among training participants was good, but the selection of respondents of the district and provincial level was fully based upon programme's documentation of participants and their contact addresses and telephones (participant lists). It could not be ascertained to what extent this might have influenced the respondent selection (e.g. excluding participants without telephone listing).

As was expected it was problematic to arrange interviews with government staff, mainly for the reason that the formal process for getting approval from the ministerial management is longer than the fact-finding process of the IE. This might have limited the input by government officials in this report.

The major issue was that a large majority of respondents, including from SCN-CO and Partner's management, had no or very little recollection of the recommendations made in the previous evaluation reports. Some of these recommendations seemed not applicable (e.g. inclusion of drug addicted children to the target group while this group did not belong to the Partners' target group for good reasons) while a focus of recommendations for some Partners was on improvement of management practices and human resource development. The latter emphasis – taking into account that in past years often many efforts were made to improve these aspects – seems not relevant if not first the root causes of these problems have been addressed. It was thus in such cases almost inevitable that the SCN-CO and Partners' staff felt that making efforts for improvement in these areas was beyond their control; consequently they were reluctant to discuss the efforts (not) made in this regard.

A major limitation for the data collection about the compliance with recommendations from previous evaluations and relevant achievements by the Partners was the lack of written documentation or lost institutional memory (due to staff leaving the organisation). Some partners had more documentation or institutional memory than others and this is reflected in the difference of the size of descriptions of each of the Partners in this report. When there is less material offered or lesser persons who remember facts, obviously the Evaluation Team has lesser facts to describe.

Despite these limitations and constraints the Evaluation Team is convinced that - due to the various methods used which corroborated each other and the opportunity for feedback - the current report reflects to a very high extend the actual situation in terms of compliance with the recommendations and the validity of other findings which are relevant for the partnership between SCN and the five organisations.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Evaluation Mission was assigned to assess whether the partners and SCN-CO and in particular the Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC) section complied with the recommendations for improvement stated in the reports by Edelweiss Silan, Ngy San and Taran Abrahamsen from 2005 (See ToR). A list of recommendations received from SCN-CO is attached as Annex B (200712_eval_SumRecom_scn).

The focus of the assessment lies naturally on the weak points or shortcomings which need improvement – as identified by the previous evaluation reports, which mentioned strong points only in passing-by as these not need strengthening. Therefore, strong points will be mentioned in this report only when relevant for the evaluation objectives. The Evaluation Mission also found that not all recommendations were relevant or realistic, while some of the evaluation reports seem to focus more on management than on programme issues. The quick reader of this report should keep this in mind; not complying fully with the recommendations by the various partners does not mean per se that the programme work and achievements for the benefit of the children concerned were not good.

In this chapter we will describe briefly the background of Save the Children Norway (SCN) Cambodia Office and its partnership programme to inform readers not so familiar with the organisation's work. The texts are edited excerpts of existing sources.

BACKGROUND

Save the Children Norway was among the first international organizations to have entered Cambodia after the Khmer Rouge in 1979. Initially, through the Oxfam led NGO Consortium. In 1983, the SCN country program was implemented through the SCN Thailand office. SCN opened a program office in Cambodia in 1988. For ten years, the program strategy was based upon community development and institutional partnership with government agencies. In 1998, in accordance with the shift in the global objectives and strategies of the home office, the SCN Cambodia office ceased to implement projects directly and instead developed partnerships with local non-government and government organizations. The programme areas were advocacy, basic education, sexual abuse and exploitation, and economic exploitation and children with disabilities. Since 2003 the SCN Country Programme comprises of two sections: Basic Education and Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC). The Country Office also support general advocacy on the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and capacity building for government and NGO partners.

1.2 RELEVANT OBJECTIVES

The four year Work Plan of the Country Programme of SCN Cambodia for 2006 – 2009 describes the strategic and specific objectives which are relevant to this Interim Evaluation. The CEDC Programme uses these objectives to guide their work (there are no other objectives formulated pertaining to the CEDC Programme).

- *'Fulfil the rights of children to the protection against violence, sexual abuse, and exploitation'*. Specific objectives are: 1) Develop stronger systems for prevention and protection of children from violence, sexual abuse and exploitation; 2) Children at high risk and children exposed to violence, sexual abuse and exploitation are protected and cared for; 3) (Vulnerable) children have their quality of life improved; 4) Children, communities, law/policy makers actively participate in advocating against and combating violence against sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

Expected results by the end of 2009 are: 1) Strengthening of child protection mechanisms; 2) Members of child protection committees and local authorities are able to maintain a functional system; 3) Children at risk of violence, sexual abuse, trafficking and exploitation are identified and their communities are informed about strategies to assist these children; 4) Adults are aware of children's rights; 5-7) Children at high risk or exposed to violence, sexual abuse and exploitation receive protection and care; have full access to quality education; are trained in life skills and vocational skills; 8) Reintegrated children will get access to schooling or earn stable incomes in safe environments; 9) Children participate voluntarily in combating violence and sexual abuse against children; 10) Communication tools for awareness raising and advocacy are produced and used; 11) Documentation on children's issues, good experiences and practices are produced for learning and sharing among stakeholders and public.

- *'Fulfil the Rights of Children with Disability to Social Security'*. Specific objectives are: 1) Improve public awareness about protection of and prevention from disabilities of children; 2) Empower and improve quality of life of children with disabilities; 3) laws, policies and social norms protect and care for the rights, dignity and interests of children with disabilities.

Expected results by the end of 2009 are: 1) Communication tools for awareness raising and advocacy are developed; 2) Villages and communes will have sufficient information and knowledge to prevent their children from disability; 3) Parents, caregivers and local authorities will be trained to provide adequate care and to be resource persons in their community; 4-5) Children with disabilities have access to healthcare, rehabilitation, psychological support, schooling and life skills programmes; 6) Children with disability's quality of life will be improved; 7) Laws, policies and procedures related to children with disabilities will be formulated, endorsed and promulgated; 8) Case studies of children with disability and relevant work experience will be documented and shared with stakeholders.

2. CEDC PROGRAMME

The work covered by the Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances (CEDC) section includes projects addressing sexual abuse and violence against children, child labour exploitation, children with disabilities and children affected by HIV/AIDS. The CEDC section is also responsible for the advocacy promotion on the Rights of the Child and supports the Cambodian NGO Committee on the Rights of the Child (NGOCRC), a network of NGOs in Cambodia that monitors the implementation of the CRC. The partners implementing projects or programmes supported by SCN-CO were in 2005 and still are: Operations Enfants de Cambodge (OEC previously called OEB) with target group children with disabilities, Cambodian Children Against Starvation and Violence Association (CCASVA) with target group street children and a centre for homeless children, the Cambodian Centre for the Protection of Child Rights (CCPCR) which promotes village child protection mechanisms and operates childcare centres, Vulnerable Children Assistance Organisation (VCAO) and Legal Aid Cambodia (LAC) which provides legal services and provide legal and community child protection training. Since year 2005 a new local NGO was added to the partnership (MODE) but this organisation is not part of this interim evaluation.

2.1 SECTION OUTLINE

The section is headed by the Programme Manager (female) who is responsible for the overall work of the section but also supports the programme management of four partners (LAC, NGOCRC, CCASVA and OEC); in addition she is in charge of the themes Village Safety Net programme, Juvenile Justice and Capacity Building and Organisational Development of the partners. The Programme Officer is responsible for support to three partners (CCPCR, VCAO and MODE); in addition he is in charge of the implementation of the Information Management System (IMS) and documentation work. The Assistant Programme Officer assists the Programme Manager and support the four partners under her charge; in addition he is responsible for improving the quality of the childcare centres' services and management, for improving counselling and prevention & protection from disability activities of the partners. The Programme Manager is for more than ten years with SCN-CO and from the beginning with the section, the Programme Officer worked with the CEDC section from 2001 to 2003 after which he was assigned at a SCN programme in Preah Vihear. He joined the section again in 2006. The Assistant Programme Officer was recruited in 2006. He has completed a B.A. Psychology and built experience in centre management and counselling working for renowned NGOs serving sexually and otherwise abused children and women.

2.2 OBJECTIVES PARTNER SUPPORT

The four year Work Plan does not describe explicitly strategic or specific objectives for capacity building of the partners, but in the section on 'Strengthening local capacity/Cooperation with partners' is stated that SCN-CO will '*assist partners in strengthening organisation competencies*' and '*continue to improve the skills and professionalism of the staff, partners and stakeholders in [...] key capacity areas to ensure lasting desired impacts for the children*'. (p. 35).

These key areas are:

- Frameworks and techniques related to country programme strategic objectives;
- Programme management capacity;
- Strategic thinking skills;
- Child rights programming;
- Monitoring system and capacity;
- English language proficiency;

- Competency and capacity in proposal writing/development;
- Capacity to do assessment and internal evaluation;
- Capacity to interpret challenges from research, evaluation, etc. into action plan;
- Documentation and building networks.

2.3 COMPLIANCE WITH PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for improvement were made in various reports during the previous reporting period, in Edelweiss Silan, Ngy San and Taran Abrahamsen dated 2005. (See the full list of recommendations in Annex B).

The compliance with the implementation of the recommendations is measured on three levels (low, moderate, high) in terms of trying to comply (performance) and four levels (none, low, moderate, high) in terms of results (achievements). The measurements are based upon the field research findings during the Evaluation and triangulated whenever possible using different methods and sources. However, most measurements remain 'qualitative' or arbitrary and thus subject to interpretation; these measurements should therefore not be used as the sole qualification of the SCN-CO and CEDC Section' performance and achievements in the area of partner support and capacity building.

Table 1: Compliance Level SCN-CO and CEDC

Nr	Recommendations in key-words	Compliance		Remarks
		Performance	Results	
1	Revision job descriptions	+++	?	new roles are defined
2	Differentiate partnerships	n/a	n/a	no need for different agreements
3	Local initiatives	n/a	n/a	no need for action; all partners are NGOs
4	Gender	+++	++	more women recruited
5	Restructuring management	+++	+++	both programme managers in Man. Team
6	Cross section teams	++	++	no cross-section teams, but regular reviews
7	OCA	++	?	effect on child focused approach not known
8	Plans for sustainability	+	-	SCN did not initiate; Partners did not push
9	Prioritise review work	++	+	SCN did not take the initiative
all		++/+++	++	

high = +++; moderate = ++; low = +; none = -; n/a = not appropriate; ? = unknown

During the Feedback Workshop the four present Directors of the Partners were asked to verify the draft findings for the CEDC section as far as they were aware or concerned. The Directors Group deliberated during the workshop and expressed to have given their view objectively but fair.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 1:

There is some confusion about the roles and responsibilities of management staff. This can be addressed by a revision of the Job Descriptions for the Programme Managers and the Programme Director, ensuring that the roles are clearly spelled out and not overlapping. The root cause of the problems would appear to have a long history, and should be dealt with in a sensible manner. External help for conflict resolution may be called for, so that processes are initiated to secure reconciliation and a good team spirit is established once again. On a positive note all staff would like the issues to be solved, and would welcome initiatives that could help them overcome their differences.

Compliance: **High:** *job descriptions for Programme Managers and Programme Director are revised to avoid overlapping roles. The Directors group of the Partners during the Feedback Workshop concluded that although they are not aware of these job descriptions they know who is their contact person and can be consulted for programme and other issues.*

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 2:

Partnership Principles: *SCN has an obligation towards the children to act as a fearless advocate of their rights. It should be acknowledged that development practices that ultimately have a negative impact on children must be attended to. SCN-CO should, in such circumstances, be able to initiate an immediate close dialogue with the partner so that adjustments are made in a timely manner. In other words the partner's right to independence cannot take priority over the children's rights to timely and adequate attention. On the other hand, mature partners with separate and efficient set of policies and procedures should not have to sign agreements allowing detailed control interference from SCN. The partnership agreements should be developed further and differentiated to cater for NGOs with fragile structures, and for the more mature and independent ones.*

Compliance: **Not appropriate:** *Partner agreements are not differentiated and the same for all partners regardless the status of their structures. In the view of SCN and the partners the agreements provide SCN-CO with the tools to interfere in case child interests are neglected or demand structural and programmatic changes if needed. The Directors group of the Partners during the Feedback Workshop concluded that before signing both parties agreed on the terms which are based upon the annual plan, progress reports, budget and financial management procedures.*

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 3:

Registered NGOs or local initiatives: *A wider definition should be introduced, allowing for co-operation with more loosely structured initiatives. SCN-CO may apply a partnership support to such initiatives, that function as a structural back-up when needed.*

Compliance: **Not appropriate:** *SCN has not followed-up on this recommendation because all partners are a registered NGO.*

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 4:

Gender: *Strongly encourage women to apply for positions in SCN, and ensure that the women within this organization are empowered and included. Partners should be encouraged to do likewise.*

Compliance: **High:** *for example recruitment advertisements encourages women to apply particularly for management positions. Partners are encouraged to employ more women. The Directors group of the Partners during the Feedback Workshop concluded however that not all field positions could be filled by women (for security reasons) while finding suitable female candidates often was very difficult.*

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 5:

Restructuring of the SCN Management Team: Programme implementation responsibility and thus the hands-on knowledge about the children and the partners rest with the Programme sections. Therefore, in order to ensure that the decision-making processes are based on accurate and up-to-date information about children and partners, it is strongly recommended that the two programme Managers be in the Management Team. As one of the programme managers is a woman, this initiative will also increase gender balance at a decision making level.

Compliance: **High:** The CEDC Programme Manager is an active member of the management team. This has facilitated an increased gender balance in the decision-making process. The Directors group of the Partners during the Feedback Workshop agreed with this finding as far as they could observe.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 6:

Monitoring and evaluations: With the development of realistic exit strategies and the establishment of appropriate training needs, as mentioned under point 4.3.1 and 4.3.2 a systematic annual Internal Partner Review consisting of cross section teams from SCN covering the operational aspects of the partners work may be established to measure progress, and to identify ways forward.

Compliance: **Moderate:** SCN has not established cross section teams. However, regular partnership reviews to measure progress and find ways forward have been conducted organised by the CEDC section. The Directors group of the Partners during the Feedback Workshop concluded that indeed they benefited from these regular reviews.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 7:

Organizational Capacity Assessment (OCA): Move the programming elements of the OCA to the front of the questionnaire, and rewrite the programming questions to ensure a child focus approach.

Compliance: **Moderate:** Two questions about how the organisation ensures child participation in the development of the plans and how children have been involved in the needs assessment are added. However, the programming part is still not at the front of the questionnaire while more importantly the answers to the added questions not necessarily will indicate a child focussed approach.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 8:

Residential care, even those meeting only very minimum standards, will entail regular substantial funding. SCN Cambodia must review with the implementing organizations the plans for sustaining the shelters in the long term.

Compliance: **Low:** SCN did not review with the partners sustainable plans for the childcare centres although partners were encouraged to seek additional funding.

Suggestion: A continuing constraint of some partners is that they obvious are unable to acquire support from other sponsors. Although raising the required funding is a first responsibility of the partners sustained and systematic support from SCN in securing additional funding would likely result in more sponsors and thus improve

sustainability. In order to protect the long-term investment of SCN in its partners it is recommended that SCN takes the initiative to contact potential sponsors and facilitates a joint meeting between partners and interested sponsors to ensure future funding for the childcare centres.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 9:

It is recommended that [Partners] and SCN Cambodia prioritize the review of their work in the centres, set up the minimum standards in the areas identified above, and work purposively on capacity building for all the staff.

Compliance:

Moderate: The Directors Group reported that CEDC staff visited the centres every month to build capacity on centre management and client counselling. However, the Evaluation Mission found that these visits are insufficient to achieve proper application of professional minimum standards of care.

2.4 PARTNER CAPACITY BUILDING PROCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The contract agreements between SCN and its partners describes SCN's role in terms of capacity building as follows: *'Both parties will work to compliment each other to create synergy, to share innovation, to promote the level of mutual learning, to establish good model(s) for advocacy and/or replication, and to strengthen the capacity of all stakeholders to be able to solve their own problems.'* (VCAO Section III). The Job Description of the CEDC Programme Manager describes the responsibility of the CEDC section to be:

- *To build and work with local partners and/or related government sectors in strengthening the implementation of and monitoring of child's rights.*
- *To ensure that SCN-CO at all times works in line with an updated capacity building plan developed for SCN-CO's partners. The partner capacity building plan should be linked to a clear exit strategy and the internal capacity building plan of SCN-CO staff.*
- *To ensure systematic documentation of the capacity building efforts applied by SCN-CO.'*

2.4.1 Process

The Evaluation Mission was informed by the CEDC section that no specific progress report is available about the partner capacity building offered or provided by SCN-CO, but that progress is reported in the annual reports. Indeed, chapter 6 of the 2006 Annual Report describes the process and achievements of the whole organisation, thus including but not exclusive for the CEDC section, as follows: *'The capacity building plan was compiled based on a thorough needs analysis and consultation with staff members and partners and therefore, it became a joint plan. [...] The capacity building activities were implemented through formal training/workshops, through on-the-job training activities and through formal and informal meeting. [...] The capacity building continues to focus on two aspects, the institutional capacity development and the programmatic capacity development. Institutional capacity development focused on strengthening the capacity of the organizations. This includes facilitating processes such as strategic and long-term planning, organizational management and leadership, financial procedures and policies, personnel policies, procurement policies, etc. within the organization. Programmatic capacity building focused on developing the capacity of key personnel within SCN-CO itself and the partner organizations.'* (p.13-14).

This description of the process was confirmed not only by the Evaluation Mission during their field visits end of 2007 but by a situational analysis of the capacity building process commissioned by SCN in 2006. This one month assessment states that: *'Capacity building by CEDC was*

this year mainly carried out through supervision, coaching and on-the-job training combined with development of various manuals, training material, models etc. in cooperation between CEDC and partners. [...] CEDC describe their role in the process as teacher, coordinator, observer and facilitator depending upon the actual situation and the capacity of the partners. They stress the importance of going to the field with the partners to observe, work with them, ask questions and give them feedback. They aim at helping the partners to make their own decisions and to help them improve but not to do the work for them' The report further describes how partners perceive the capacity building: *'The NGO partners describe CB from SCN-CO as based on a strategy of coaching, on-the-job training and learning through the cooperation. SCN-CO assesses and gives recommendations and training in order for the partners to improve their capacity and work. One NGO describes the process as: CEDC will identify our weaknesses and then provide training. None of the NGO partners express that the capacity building from SCN-CO is following a long-term structured CB plan.'* (Simmons 2006 p.12-14).

2.4.2 Achievements

The annual report 2006 describes as achievement for partner capacity building the following: *[...] strengthening local capacity in this context was carried at different levels: (i) SCN staff's capacity (ii) Partners' staff and organizational development (iii) local communities. Capacity building carried out through trainings, workshops or on -the- job trainings, consultation, exposure to field experiences, assist in design training tools and guidelines, curricula and action research. Meetings (monthly, quarterly), monitoring and supervision, home visits and interaction with communities were another means to enhance learning and strengthen local capacity. The processes have created opportunities for partners to exchange their experiences in working with different thematic fields, to identify the challenges and discuss the way forward.'* (p.12).

The annual report also states that: *'The project has enhanced the capacity of SCN-CO staff and partners to better deal with issues affecting children in a more holistic way as a result. With this capacity building project, core competence has been created and SCN-CO staff and partners have become resource persons who can facilitate capacity building processes to other relevant stakeholders. The role of SCN-CO staff in relation to strengthening the capacity of the partner organization continues to be more of a facilitator and coordinate technical support as and when required especially in the new programmatic areas. The combination of theoretical/skills training was a good approach to build local capacity. SCN-CO will continue to keep this momentum throughout the strategic period of 2006 - 2009.'* (p.14).

'The common "Country Program 4-year Work Plan for SCN-CO" is the main planning document for the CEDC section in relation to the partners. It is this plan that documents the partners' training needs and this plan that their progress is measured against.' (ibid p.14). However, after reviewing this workplan the Evaluation Mission could not identify elements that would allow measurement of the achievements. The plan is a list of activities that are *intended*. Without documentation to demonstrate that these activities indeed occurred, achievement can not be measured. For example, the annual project report 2007 lists as activities performed to build capacity of the partners only two:

Improve interactions and dialogues with partners and strengthen partnership relationship	SCN-CO staff and partners	A three-day partnership conference with all partners was organized in June 2007. This conference gave a platform to SCN-CO staff and partners to share and learn from each other and to strengthen network and cooperation [...].
Partners have better skills to document change in children's lives	All NGO partners	16 staff from NGO partners who are responsible to document changes in children's lives received a two-day training on how to write changes in children's lives.

Although undoubtedly SCN staff including CEDC staff have contributed to the organisational capacity and human resource skills of their partners – as evidenced by Simmons' report and by statements of the Partners Directors during the Feedback Workshop – the Evaluation Mission

could not obtain information to ‘measure’ the achievements and hence to assess the level of capacity improvement achieved. In this respect it seems that the objective ‘*systematic documentation of the capacity building efforts*’ still need to be followed up. This was also noted in the capacity building assessment in 2006: ‘*Lack of partners comprehensive and systematic CB plans influence SCN-CO’s possibility to focus their own capacity and training needs assessment. [...] None of the NGO partners express that the capacity building from SCN-CO is following a long-term structured CB plan.*’ (ibid p.13-14).

However, the kind of capacity building provided by the CEDC section – advice and technical instructions during field visits (e.g. counselling or centre management) – is difficult to quantify and thus also achievement is difficult to measure. One form of measurement is the opinion of the partners themselves. The Simmons report found that a majority of the NGO partners felt that they learned more from the SCN-CO staff than from external trainers because this staff knows their situation and their work in the field and gives practical advice (p. 14). But this finding was obtained from meetings with the management of the partner organisations (‘*findings uncovered through interviews with SCN-CO management staff and local partners*’ ibid p. 4). The Evaluation Mission found that among the partners’ field staff are many voices who want a systematic training provided by a professional institution, while indeed directors and headquarter staff of partners expressed satisfaction with the training received. This was also noted during the Feedback Workshop and comments received after the workshop from field staff members who had views contrary to the satisfaction which was expressed by their management. In fact one director of a partner organisation told the Evaluator in confidence that [he/she] wanted to please SCN and not to make complaints in order not to endanger the grant or constraint the cooperation.

The Evaluation Mission can not reveal for confidentiality reasons who or how many staff expressed these views. But the main finding is that while managing staff of the partners express overall satisfaction with the capacity building activities provided by the CEDC section and SCN, among their field staff much less satisfaction could be noted. It is thus important to find ways to more objectively measure the results of capacity building efforts – even if they are delivered informally or unstructured - in order to assure that the positive change as a result of the capacity building not only happens but also can be demonstrated.

What is not contested, at least not by SCN’s management, is that there is a need for more structure in the capacity building approach: ‘*Capacity building strategies/approaches of SCN-CO must be more structured based on partners’ needs.*’ (in lessons learnt of the Annual Project Report 2007). This same observation was already made more than two years ago: ‘*... in order to secure that workshops and on-the-job training is feeding into the longer term objectives of the individual partners, more systematic and integrated CB plans should be developed.*’ (Simmons p.21). The report continues: ‘*[The] Capacity Building process needs to be more systematic and structured in order to secure that partners take ownership of their own capacity building; that the training input feed into long term capacity building plans; that quality information is collected and; that focus stay on impact.*’ (ibid p.23).

2.4.3 Conclusions

Two years after these observations the Mission noted that little progress seems to have been made in achieving a ‘more’ systematic and structured capacity building approach. However, this should not be interpreted as evidence that also little progress has been made in terms of actual capacity built in the areas where the CEDC section provides coaching and training. The Mission, on the basis of the field visits and interviews, has the impression that indeed significant capacity has been built – unfortunately, this can not be demonstrated nor measured through objective sources or documentation. The Mission has also the impression that much of the capacity built among the partners also has been ‘lost’, at least for the partner, when partners’ staff resigned or could not be kept on staff due to funding constraints.

3. PARTNERS' COMPLIANCE AND ACHIEVEMENTS

In the following chapter the findings regarding the compliance by the Partners selected for review with the recommendations and suggestions for improvement made in the in the ToR mentioned evaluation reports are listed and discussed. Also, achievements of a more general character in regard of the Partners' programme and work are described in so far relevant for the partnership programme.

3.1 OPERATIONS ENFANTS DU CAMBODGE (OEC)

The NGO is a long-term SCN Partner. OEC used to be called OEB with the B standing for Battambang. After 2006, the organisation expanded its operations into Pursat province and changed its name to OEC with the C standing for Cambodia. OEC is an organization working for the welfare of children and youth with disabilities, including people handicapped through landmines. The NGO operates in districts of Battambang and Pursat provinces a community support programme focussing on health care and nutrition, rehabilitation and primary education; adolescents are offered a life skill training programme. OEC has currently 63 staff.

3.1.1 COMPLIANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for improvement were made in various reports during the previous reporting period, in Edelweiss Silan, Ngy San and Taran Abrahamsen dated 2005. However, the recommendations and comments made in Abrahamsen regarding OEC were or also made by the other evaluators or were conclusions without specific recommendations; for this reason the recommendations listed in the Abrahamsen report are not included in this report¹. (See list of recommendations in Annex B).

The compliance with the implementation of the recommendations is measured on three levels (low, moderate, high) in terms of trying to comply (performance) and four levels (none, low, moderate, high) in terms of results (achievements). The measurements are based upon the field research findings during the Evaluation and triangulated whenever possible using different methods and sources. However, most measurements remain 'qualitative' or arbitrary and thus subject to interpretation; these measurements should therefore not be used as the sole qualification of the Partners' performance and achievements.

Table 2: Compliance Level OEC

Nr	Recommendations in key-words	Compliance		Remarks
		Performance	Results	
1	Continue rehabilitation	++	++	budget constraints; lack of cooperation
2	All CP cases part of TG	+++	++	budget constraints; lack of cooperation
3	Strengthen IGA skills	+++	+	budget constraints; lack of support
4	Provide credit	+++	+	budget constraints; lack of support
5	Revolving fund for IGA	+++	+	no access to credit fund
6	Cycle to go to school	+++	+	no access to credit fund
7	Coop with MoSAVY	+++	+	little cooperation by government agencies
8	Contribution from others	+++	++	little support from other NGOs
9	Document GP&LL	+++	+	little usage for purpose
10	Staff capacity building	+++	++	little systematic training
all		+++	+	high performance but low level of results

high = +++; moderate = ++; low = +; none = -; n/a = not appropriate

¹ See Annex B Abrahamsen. The numbers 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 21 and 22 are no recommendations. Nbr 13 is about alleged nepotism at the NGO but it was beyond the Mission's mandate to try to validate this. Nbr 16 is addressed by Ngy's report. Nbrs 19 and 20 concern small points for financial affairs the Mission feels not relevant at this time.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 1:

Continue with the medical and physical rehabilitation by referral to Emergency and ICRC, the case blind and deaf referred to Krousar Thmey for services.

*Compliance level: **Moderate:** due to budget constraints and little cooperation government health facilities.*

- OEC has established and maintained a good cooperation with ICRC to get aid materials for CWDs and support for physical rehabilitation of CWDs in the target areas.
- Financial support for operations of children with hernia problems is sponsored by SCN but not enough to assist all children with hernia problems in the target area. From 2006 to the first quarter of 2007, 255 children were found to be with hernia problem, and about half of them were referred to the NGO EMERGENCY for medical surgery.
- Blind and deaf children are referred to Krousar Thmey for medical and physical rehabilitation, including education.

For example, programme staff referred to an old case but as a demonstration of what still is valid now: *The case of Vatt Seryvuth: he is a boy born in 1991 in Banan district of Battambang with his left foot disabled. In July of 2001, he fell from his bicycle and his left hand was broken. Then his father brought him to EMERGENCY for treatment, but he was not accepted because the EMERGENCY made agreement with PHD to treat only people affected by war or mines. The father contacted OEC to help him. OEC contacted EMERGENCY, but OEC was asked to get permission letter from the provincial hospital. The hospital said that he can stay at this hospital and no need to go to EMERGENCY, but the service was not free of charge. Because the father could not afford money to pay for the service, he then sought for treatment from traditional healer in the village.*

Suggestion to OEC:

- Develop a policy regarding charging costs by government health facilities and subsequently adjust budget or cooperation / referral system.
- Develop policy for coverage area: 1) support all identified cases; or 2) refer to other agencies; or 3) find other solutions. Our suggestion is full coverage, although this might affect the total project area by reducing the area.

Suggestion to SCN-CO:

- SCN-CO should lobby the PHD in Battambang or the MOH at the central level to admit for free poor children for medical operations. CEDC has made some efforts but with little result. Lobby by OEC alone would not be very effective as they do not yet have much recognition in the province and at national level.
- Partners, including OEC, feel that SCN-CO staff neglected the issue of cooperation with government agencies and should put more emphasis on assisting Partners in achieving better cooperation.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 2:

All cerebral Palsy cases should be part of the project with the focus on follow up and support only on physiotherapy, basic health care, nutrition, and knowledge of taking care, disability awareness, and child rights.

*Compliance level: **High:** but difficult due to budget constraints and little cooperation government health facilities.*

- CP was included in the project since 2002. OEC has a resource person who is experienced in CP and targeting the CP cases. The project facilitated the provision of materials (e.g. tricycles) to families of children with CP. However, CP cases are most difficult to intervene and require a huge effort.
- It is important to ensure good practice of the parents to care for the children with CP and rehabilitate them. This requires a long-term attention by OEC staff, also in former project areas. However, the social workers have not enough time to do so because they are required to move to and work nearly fulltime in new communes after every six months.
- OEC ensures that families do physiotherapy and that CWDs are living in hygiene environments and receive proper care and support from the family members.

Suggestion to SCN:

- Because SCN encourages the Partner to include CP cases SCN consequently should be giving financial support for the very long recovering period.

Suggestion to OEC:

- OEC should insist on including in their partnership contract that sponsor(s) keep their commitment for a long time. Especially for CP cases premature withdrawal is a waste of efforts and if no long-term support can be assured OEC should not take on this task.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 3:

Strengthen the life skills activities not just with children but some cases to parents or members of family who can help to generate income to support the differently able children of the target group.

Compliance level: High: but results low due to budget constraints and little support SCN

- About 70 families received fund of less than \$50 to rear pig (2007). However, most of the chicken and pig got sick and died afterward. The poorest families do not have an ability to find food for the pig because the pigs eat usually left-over food, but these families could not find even enough food for themselves to eat.
- OEC proposed to SCN to provide revolving fund to the poorest families of CWDs to raise cows, but SCN did not agree because it required a lot of budget.

Suggestion to SCN:

- SCN-CO should facilitate that OEC gets funds from social banks; if these banks require guarantee which OEC could not provide SCN-CO might guarantee the repayment.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 4:

Seeking possible support and contribution from partners and potential donors in addressing livelihood and poverty, especially providing credit, loan and/or other support services to reduce the poverty of family of children with disabilities.

Compliance level: High: but results low due to little support from partner, locally based NGOs and donors

- It seems not possible for OEC to get livelihood support contribution from other NGOs because it concerns different target groups.

Suggestion to OEC and SCN:

- This is a worrying finding as only through lifting the families out of the poverty spiral they will be able to care for their CWD in the future. SCN and partners should develop a proper policy to deal with this issue.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 5:

Include in the proposal to get reasonable revolving fund to support children who receiving the life skills training that enable them not just apply the skills but generate income.

Compliance level: High: but results low due to lack of access to credit fund or adverse.

A girl, 16 years, and a polio victim, was given a prosthesis for a leg from the hip down. She started school at 11, when she got the prosthesis. She enjoys school, and is now in grade 6, and will be ready for secondary school next year. Due to her age she has also been given pig-raising skills and provided with pigs through a credit scheme. As the secondary school is a bit far, and she does not know how to get there, she has decided to stop schooling to look after her pigs (evaluation report 2006 page 5).

- OEC has not enough budget to achieve a comprehensive income generation support because there is only 50\$ available for life skill training and activities to generate income. Alternative raising cows suggested to SCN were rejected.
- More importantly, offering adolescent beneficiaries income generation activities might have an adverse affect on their future by encouraging them to stop schooling (see example above).

Suggestion to OEC:

- Although the previous evaluation report emphasises a need for better programme decisions for support to individual beneficiaries (keeping the best interest of the child in mind contrary to just offering immediate relief) no recommendation was made to this effect. The evaluation Mission did not notice that the programme staff had learnt this lesson. However, it is imperative that the organisation's programme will benefit its beneficiaries not only immediately but especially in the future. Hence, programme staff will need to consider all consequences of the immediate support for the future development of the beneficiary.

Suggestion to SCN:

- The CEDC programme staff 's activities since the 2006 evaluations do not demonstrate that the 'lesson learnt' of the potential adverse effects of short-term assistance for example through income generation activities has been part of its advises to improve the programme. The Evaluation Mission did not notice at any partner that the CEDC programme staff's advises were aimed at such programme improvement, but instead mostly on better reporting and keeping in line with programme plans. However, without constant programme improvements the ultimate benefits for the target group might be less than possible. CEDC programme staff should be concerned with guarding and improving the quality of the partners' programme in this respect.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 6:

Seeking small fund to support the at least a selected children with disabilities who have good potential and living far from school to get a bicycle or tricycle to go to school.

Compliance level: High: but results low due to lack of access to credit fund

- OEC cooperates with ICRC and NCDP to get aid materials, such as tricycles.

Suggestion to OEC and SCN:

- SCN should continue to facilitate funding from other sponsors for wheel chairs, bicycles etc. like they did before. In this respect SCN could assist partners to refer to sponsors of other partners, for example the Liane Fonds (Netherlands). Partners should exchange more information about funding sources; a database with such information and active support from SCN might be useful.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 7:

Strengthen the cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation (MoSVY), the Disability Action Council (DAC), and the local authorities, especially commune councils to develop appropriate methodology, questionnaires, and data collection on children with disabilities.

*Compliance level: **High:** but little result in terms of methodology development due to lack of specific capacity and irregular data collection due to low level of commitment of commune council*

- OEC has a good cooperation with DAC; director of OEC attended many meetings with DAC.
- OEC has trained member of Commune Councils to become their liaison in the commune and play a vital role to collect information about CWDs and collaborate with village authorities. OEC developed the mechanism to collect such information. Each CC member received an incentive of \$20 for 6 month.

Comment:

Constraint is likely in terms of lack of capacity and heavy burden on CC members by other programs. Question is whether giving such incentives without proper supervision and support is effective.

- OEC is recognised by the provincial MOSAVY but there is no close collaboration in project implementation, except in Pursat province where the social worker is the staff of MOSAVY.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 8:

Create network and explore potential contribution from children, parents and other development programs within or outside target areas to ensure the positive contribution to overcome the challenges of project implementation.

*Compliance level: **High:** but little contribution from other development programmes due to different priorities.*

- From 2006, OEC has identified potential trainees and build up their capacity to become resource persons in their communities, especially parents of the children with disabilities.
- OEC also contacted the NGO Action for Health in the province which has a service for the poorest families, to get support for the families of CWDs to send their children for medical surgery.
- OEC has never created any network with other development programs to overcome the challenges of the project.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 9:

The good case studies and experiences and lessons learnt need to be documented for purposes of fund raising, replication of successful cases, and avoid mistakes.

Compliance level: **High:** *but little effect on partners' fund raising, replication or lessons learnt.*

- OEC has documented a number of case studies of children with disabilities. SCN's project staff trained them on Monitoring Change in Children's Lives (MCCL).

Comment:

There is no indication that SCN has followed-up on this training and facilitated 'institutional learning' or use for fund raising.

- MCCL is devised to provide information to Child Link for fund raising. However, OEC reported that the case studies have not been used for their fund raising. The case studies of the children with disabilities have been required by SCN, the format of the writing has been developed by SCN and the cases have been forwarded to SCN. While the MCCL case studies are documented life histories there seems not made any attempt to review such stories to learn lessons (in case the interventions came short) or for best practice models (in case the application was exemplary). This might be seen as an opportunity not used.

Comment:

It might be that the concept of good practices is not understood by SCN-CO and Partner staff; good practices are not just successful practices but they must be innovative and replicable. Also the concept of lessons learnt might be less understood; this is learning from mistakes in future activities in an active manner (e.g. during planning reminding about previous mistakes or wrong assumptions).

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 10:

Staff capacity building in social work counselling, networking and small business management and income generation is crucial need for effective and successful project implementation.

Compliance level: **Moderate:** *but little systematic training provided.*

- Social workers who have been with OEC less than two years did not receive any training. Social workers who have been with OEC for a long time received a number of trainings, but those trainings were not systematic and not so related with social work, networking and small business management. Some social workers received 2-3 days of training in child rehabilitation, child psychology, child rights and the roles of parents. Most often the trainings were provided by SCN staff and by OEC. Only a few social workers got a three-day-training in psychological health at TPO.

Comment:

It seems obvious that such short duration courses are only useful if they are part of a training plan and the courses are regularly given so that there is a 'learning momentum'. This seems not to be the case.

- Social workers use their experience to collect information about CWDs and raising awareness on protection and prevention of children from disabilities. They do not have the insight, skills and knowledge needed (social work approaches, community development and small business management) to ensure the success of the life skill activities.

3.1.2 GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Activities in Battambang project area

The project activities in Banan and Rattanak Mondul districts in Battambang province have been completed; OEC worked in both districts for a long time. However, the project activities in other parts of the province are not yet expanded to the extent needed to assist all CWD. There is still a high demand for intervention in the province from the above mentioned districts and areas not yet covered.

Extension of Project Activities in Pursat Province

By the end of 2006 the project extended interventions to districts Krakor and Karvagn in neighbouring Pursat province. Although OEC implements a UNICEF funded programme in all districts in Battambang province, this programme is not similar to the SCN more intensive support programme. It was confirmed through third-party sources that probably less than half of all CWD in the province receive support – indicating that OEC's assistance in Battambang is not yet covering all potential beneficiaries. Despite this OEC has expanded to neighbouring province Pursat's districts. One project assistant and two social workers operate in Pursat.

It would be advisable for OEB to consolidate its present programmes and address the issues mentioned, before further expansion, so that the current weaknesses will not tarnish OEB's good reputation (Evaluation report 2006, page 1)

The previous evaluation already noted the negative consequence of the extension. The current Evaluation Mission confirmed that efficiency has decreased due to a higher demand on coordination by the project management staff. They needed to cover not one but two provinces with each their own government bureaucratic procedures. Also for monitoring the time demand became higher due to the increased cover area. Staff questions the relevance of the extension because there are still many CWDs in Battambang province not attended to, while OEC has not enough capacity to address both Battambang and Pursat.

Comment:

The suggestion to move seems not supported by logical arguments and is an example of 1) donor demands; 2) partner dependency and 3) lack of NGO cooperation. The latter point is demonstrated as there is another NGO in Pursat (DDSP) targeting children with disabilities which likely is in a much better position to cover the districts. The result of the extension is a lesser efficiency because of having to work through two provincial bureaucracies and longer supply/work lines. Also, SCN did not provide finances for the additional human resource needed to realise the expansion properly, resulting in a drain on human resources from the Battambang project area.

Suggestion to OEC:

- OEC should carry out a study to define the advantages and disadvantages of continuing project activities in Pursat versus focusing on coverage of the whole Battambang province. In case the arguments are in favour of the latter approach OEC should consider handing-over activities in Pursat to another organization.

Suggestion to SCN:

- In case the study findings argument for continuation in Pursat province SCN should provide sufficient budget to cover the project area without OEC requiring to reallocate funds and human resources from the Battambang project area.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The project has not developed a systematic monitoring and evaluation plan. Monitoring happens through two-monthly meetings of all social workers where information is disseminated and future work plans prepared. During these meetings the project coordinator also built capacity of the

team. The project coordinator monitors the activities of the social workers but infrequently and not according a monitoring plan.

SNC staff visits the project one time per every three months. During these visits comments or suggestions for improvement in the field are given, for example about the workshops or about CWDs who need surgery. However, it is reported that no program support advice is given during these visits.

The project has no baseline data to measure the improvement caused by the project. Therefore an assessment was done to measure the awareness of the population about the prevention of disability in 2006, followed by an assessment to measure people's knowledge about disability in 2007. Despite these assessments the project staff seems not to know where to make improvements of the project activities. The project staff realises this and want to conduct specific surveys to assess the project activities for internal use. OEC staff got training in M&E by SCN staff but this seems not to include the more technical survey skills needed to conduct the specific surveys wanted by OEC staff.

Comment:

The Evaluation Mission is the opinion that conducting a baseline survey is not a skill that is easy to master. It will require a specialist in this field to train the OEC staff. The SCN staff has not demonstrated to possess such skills, while this also not should be expected in their current role to support the partner.

Suggestions:

- Project coordination staff needs more and better systematic training on M&E, preferably by a specialist trainer.
- The Project should consider hiring a consultant to develop a M&E Plan.

Local Resource Persons

The district social workers collaborate with commune council (CC) members to follow-up on project beneficiaries and collect information about CWDs. The result is disappointing despite the \$20 per month incentive paid because the CC members work only when the social worker is present. In practice the social workers do much of the work the CC members are supposed to do.

Project Sustainability

The project approach changed three times due to SCN requirements. However, these requirements were not based upon any systematic assessment about the effectiveness of the project implementation. The change was purely required in order to enlarge the target group. This has affected the quality of the rehabilitation programme for children with disabilities.

- *1998-2001: OEC implemented project activities during 2 years in each district and intervened in all communes at the same time. Three types of CWDs were targeted: polio, mine, and clubfoot.*
- *2002-2005: SCN required a shorter period of intervention in each commune; after negotiation was agreed to limit the period to 4 months.*
- *2006-2009: OEC extended the intervention period to 6 months to overcome the ineffectiveness of the short project implementation time. All types of CWDs were included in the target group.*

The Project social workers complained that six months in each commune is still not enough; it is difficult or impossible for them to ensure the quality of the intervention in such short time. While perhaps knowledge can be built within the six month period it is not possible to ensure that care and support for CWDs is appropriate, especially physiotherapy and care for CP cases. Doing the physiotherapy at home requires extensive follow up from the social workers. It was the Project's

intention that this would be taken over by community members but this did not happen, despite the financial incentives.

Comment:

This emphasis on quantity by SCN was seen throughout the whole partner programme. Result is overall a lack of sustainability and loss of investments due to insufficient consolidation.

Suggestion to SCN:

- SCN should focus on guarding and improving quality and sustainability of the programmes and hence give partners more time to consolidate their interventions. The individual cases and the context of particular communities in terms of local support, resources and motivation are very diverse and do not allow defining fixed or limited periods for the intervention ahead of time. Therefore, SCN should allow the partner to define the time needed in any project location for realising consolidated interventions.

3.2 CAMBODIAN CENTRE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

CCPCR is a long-term SCN Partner. CCPCR aims at preventing children from being trafficked, exploited and sexually abused, and providing victims with proper physical and mental support. The organization operates childcare centres and a prevention programme focusing on establishing Village Safety Net programme (VSNP) in Kampong Cham and Kampong Thom provinces. CCPCR operates childcare centres in Sihanoukville, Sway Rieng and Phnom Penh, the latter co-financed by SCN. CCPCR employs a total of 12 staff. Staff turn-over during the 2006-2007 period was: 14% leaving; 18% starting.

3.2.1 Compliance with Recommendations

Recommendations for improvement were made in various reports during the previous reporting period, in Edelweiss Silan, Ngy San and Taran Abrahamsen dated 2005. (See list of recommendations in Annex B).

The compliance with the implementation of the recommendations is measured on three levels (low, moderate, high) in terms of trying to comply (performance) and four levels (none, low, moderate, high) in terms of results (achievements). The measurements are based upon the field research findings during the Evaluation and triangulated whenever possible using different methods and sources. However, most measurements remain 'qualitative' or arbitrary and thus subject to interpretation; these measurements should therefore not be used as the sole qualification of the Partners' performance and achievements.

Table 3: Compliance Level CCPCR

Nr	Recommendations in key-words	Compliance		Remarks
		Performance	Results	
1	Minimum standards	++	++	not applied but care improved
2	Plans for sustainability	++	+	no other sponsors identified
3	Complete VSNP cycle	+++	++	follow plan but move before consolidation
4	Raising standards	+	+	no models documented, no standards raised
5	Review of work	+	-	no programme review
6	Empowerment; M&E	+ / ++	-	no community empowerment; no PMP
7	Link VSNP and centres	+	+	only linkage is child referral from VSNP
all		+ / ++	+	Moderate to low performance; low results

high = +++; moderate = ++; low = +; none = -; n/a = not appropriate

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 1:

Addressing the need of vulnerable children and victims for alternative care: if the response of the program is to continue to support the shelters, it is imperative to guarantee that minimum standards in supporting the children are met. SCN Cambodia partners have started to develop minimum standards but these have to be improved.

Compliance:

Moderate: *SCN's 2003 standards were further developed in 2005. Currently a Ministry decreed Minimum Standards replace these standards. But the centre staff has no copy of any of the standards and is not checking its application.*

Non-residential care

- Young adolescents are encouraged and to a limited extent supported to live independently if reintegration in their families is not an option. No alternative care through foster-parents, group homes or otherwise have been provided or considered for lack of such a programme or policy. Reintegration follow-up is for girls working at garment factory only.

Residential Care

- CCPCR's centre in Phnom Penh policy is to admit only girls under 18. The accommodation has been improved through the building of additional bedrooms. During the evaluation visit there were 17 girls in the centre, all under 18 years old and one boy aged 15 years. He was admitted because his female sibling was admitted and he could not return to his family due to domestic violence. All school-aged children in the centre go to school. Older girls are offered vocational skill training.
- The childcare centre in Phnom Penh is operated by 3 staff: centre manager, houseparent and reintegration officer; one guard ensures safety for the residents.
- Minimum standards apply to the childcare centre programme, not to the community prevention programme. According to centre staff since SCN partners started to develop minimum standards there has been only one meeting. According to the management CCPCR's centre applies minimum standards but during the Mission no written minimum standards to guarantee the quality of care could be shown. However, the centre manager knew about the Minimum Standards for Child Care in the Shelter².
- While not having available minimum standards for care at the centre the residential care is somewhat improved though support by SCN. But if too many children are referred to the centre, for example by police after a raid, there is a constraint to provide appropriate care due to limited resources.

Comment:

In view of the extensive efforts made by the NGO childcare centre sector to develop minimum standards, the Ministerial decree on minimum standards for residential care and the signing of the 'Agreement on Guidelines for Practices and Cooperation between the Relevant Government Institutions and Victim Support Agencies In Cases of Human Trafficking', by the Ministries of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women's Affairs and 24 NGOs on 7 February 2007 – among which are 3 SCN partners – there is no need for any separate effort to develop minimum standards among partners³.

Reintegration

- Young children below 12-13 years who were raped are reintegrated back to their families after the completion of the court procedure (if any). In case of domestic violence reintegration back into the family is only considered if the family situation is not harmful for the victim.
- The reintegration of children who completed the vocation skill training back to their community has overall not been successful, at least in terms of being able to earn a sustainable income through a job or self employment. Unfortunately, CCPCR lacks the finances to support them to apply their new acquired skill through a small business capital or loan. Also, some children who were raped and/or trafficked experienced problems in their community to become accepted because of the stigma they carry. The only option for the NGO in such conditions was to find a job for them elsewhere. Although these girls can return to the centre for support in case of need they are in fact on their own and thus vulnerable again when they are employed, lacking a social network that could support them.

² The NGO sector of childcare centres developed minimum standards for care during 2005 and 2006, lead by the NGO coalition COSECAM. The MoSAVY endorsed these standards on November 2006. Furthermore, on 7 February 2007 an Agreement about standards of childcare was signed by 5 government ministries and 24 NGOs, among these CCPCR.

³ Replicated in 'Situation Analysis of Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Kingdom of Cambodia: 2006-2007', by John L. Vijghen, COSECAM 2008, Annex C.

Vocational Skill Training

- There are two trainer positions of which one is a vacancy; two types of training are provided, namely sewing and weaving. 4 resident adolescents receive skill training; however, the teaching equipment is very old and not very appropriate tools for teaching garment factory jobs. The centre grows some vegetables and raises chickens and used to have some pigs, so that the residents also could learn some agricultural skills. Also English language teaching is provided to enhance the chances to get a job.
- Most girls go to work in garment factories after the training. CCPCR has no funds to facilitate starting a small business after completion of the training and only a few girls could succeed in opening a business in their commune. Most girls are not reintegrated in their original community but live close to their work in the garment industry. CCPCR's policy is that reintegration officers follow up on their condition twice a month.
- There are no funds for clients starting a small business.

Capacity building

- SCN staff trained centre staff in case management and filing procedures during a 2-day course (Centre manager, Reintegration officer and 7 volunteers).
- Training on group counselling was conducted by SCN staff with role plays learning the various steps of counselling and admission interviewing. Participants were house parent, reintegration officer and centre manager. Although the staff felt that they learned a lot, they want much more training on counselling, preferably with adequate teaching material and in an appropriate teaching location.

Comment:

The SCN trainer has a bachelor psychology degree and several years experience in counselling traumatised child-victims, but he has no access to an appropriate teaching accommodation where for example through mirror-windows actual counselling sessions could be observed and used for practices. However, the CEDC staff maintains that nevertheless now 'a psychological care system' exists which did not prior to 2007. This might be true, but is it the informed opinion of the Evaluator (who is a trained counsellor) that psycho-social counselling is such a specialised skill that it not should be taught to persons without an adequate social work training (through education or experience); the danger exists that inadequately educated and trained persons will try to provide counselling to cases which are often beyond their skills potentially causing more damage to the child-victim. The Evaluation Mission found that the training participants (centre staff and reintegration officers) have not enjoyed advanced social work education.

Suggestion to CCPCR:

- The NGO should consider enrolling one of its professional childcare centre staff in a long-term social work and/or psycho-social counselling training programme.

Suggestions to SCN:

- It is and will remain useful to continue the training and on-the-job advice by CEDC staff about admission procedures, client case and centre management. However, centre staff without proper social work education should not be encouraged to provide therapeutic counselling to traumatised victims.
- Fortunately, there are currently adequate social work learning institutions available which offer training in a systematic and professional manner⁴. SCN might consider sponsoring applications by its partners for enrolment of its staff in such professional training programmes. The CEDC programme staff could in such case continue to act as their mentor and assist them to provide professional counselling at the centre once they have acquired a professional level.

⁴ For example, the Social Work School operated by Social Services of Cambodia or the 2-year Psycho-social Counseling Training programme offered by COSECAM to its members (including CCPCR, CCASVA and VCAO).

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 2:

Residential care, even those meeting only very minimum standards, will entail regular substantial funding. SCN Cambodia must review with the implementing organizations the plans for sustaining the shelters in the long term.

Compliance: **Moderate:** *efforts are made but no other sponsors have committed.*

- The partner relies solely on funding source from SCN and seems not to be able to attract other sponsors. However, it is reported that SCN staff never had meetings with the partner to discuss the sustainability of the shelter.
- The centre maintains connections with other centres for referral of young children who need long term care or youth above 18 years, such as WVC, CWCC, HAGAR, Child Home Centre.
- Despite that the centre's admission criteria limit access to child-victims of domestic violence, rape or trafficking many children were found during the Evaluation Mission not to belong to these victimised target groups but to come from poor families.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 3:

Complete the cycle of the implementation of the VSNP in the Project Areas before moving to other areas. The next stages of the implementation, if the concept will be followed, are on empowerment of the adults and the children, and working for sustainability.

Compliance: **High:** *Completed according plan but not very effective or sustainable*

- The prevention activities of the VSN programme consist mainly of 1) workshops; 2) networking with local authorities; and 3) making home visits to solve the problems, in particular domestic violence. CEDC programme staff focuses their partner advice on proper implementation of these three activities. However, resolutions are in practice difficult to achieve. See the example below told by one of the partners' staff.

'In cases of domestic violence caused by alcohol consumption the local authorities do not know how to solve the problem. Their only option is to educate the drunks when they are sober to behave properly. That does not help much. We need to know ourselves how to solve this kind of problem before we can counsel the local authorities. Now we cannot really do much to facilitate a solution. We only can tell the local authorities how to educate the drunks.'

- The workshop provides knowledge to local authorities and committee members about domestic violence and other problems such as trafficking, sexual abuse, gambling, etc. The VSNP is meant that the committee members, including local authorities take action to prevent and protect children from those problems. However, committee members complain that people already knew this in their community. Most cases are about domestic violence. They face the problem that they do not know what to do to resolve the problem, except to 'educate' the violator – which is not very effective. Therefore, the partner's staff needs to have skills for reconciliation and for alternative dispute resolution to assist people to solve the problems.
- The performance of the VSN programme is good if the local authorities handle the situation well, but resolving the problems is hard – especially in cases of gambling, drinking and patronising brothels. However, the planned cycle of support for the VSN programme is not long enough to complete the intervention while no exit strategy exist. After moving to a new location according to the plan the old communes have to fend for themselves with little or in practice no support anymore from the VSN programme.
- The in 2006 with SCN agreed approach to organise workshops in the commune, district and at the provincial level fails to achieve good results because of too infrequent activities. The

first 3-day workshop in the district is followed-up only by one meeting after 3 to 4 months. Also for the provincial meetings is only one time a follow-up planned with limited participation from district authorities and commune council. Some local authorities who participated did not have anything to report or had no idea what to do about the problems, mostly because they are occupied with doing other things.

- The involvement of grade 5 children is limited and not effective. Older children do not listen to the younger ones. According to the Partners' staff it would be better to involve only children of the secondary school level.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 4:

The main challenge for CCPCR is to ensure successful models of VSNP are developed, managed, and documented. There is so much to do to firm up the various components of the work on VSNP in the community and the raise the standards of the centre based programs. All the changes necessary to strengthen the project depend on staff capacity.

Compliance: Low: no successful model is documented and standards (practices and approaches) are not raised since beyond the level found during the previous evaluations.

- The programme is required to document successful intervention models but fails to document systematically.
- The support by CEDC programme staff is limited to advice about the need of improvement. However, the partner's field staff does not know how to achieve this improvement. Programme strategies are discussed with programme manager or the partners' director who join partner meetings and learn through direct contact with SCN-CO staff more about the VSN programme's concept and approach, while the field staff – as they expressed – remain in the dark about the programme strategies.
- The possible change of trained commune council members after elections is a recurring constraint. The VSN programme should train new commune council members but has no resources to do so.
- The implementing field staff (in the provinces), in particular new staff members, are not very familiar with the VSN programme's concept and strategies; that is better understood by the partner's management. No partner has a formal orientation training of the VSN programme for new staff, while formal written guidelines about how to implement the VSN programme could not be made available during the Mission's visit, indicating that these are also not available for the partners' field staff.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 5:

It is recommended that CCPCR and SCN Cambodia prioritize the review of their work in the centres, set up the minimum standards in the areas identified above, and work purposively on capacity building for all the staff.

Compliance: Low: SCN with partners review regularly their performance but there is evidence that programmes and strategies are not reviewed by the partner in terms of effect and impact. Attention is given to build capacity by SCN but this seems not to be a priority for the partner.

- The shortcomings described in the previous evaluation report are seemingly not addressed by the partner, while no minimum standards are applied. The partners' management staff did not express to realise the importance of minimum standards for the childcare centre.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 6:

The capacity building for the staff should also cover capacities in empowering people in the community and working with families of vulnerable and abused children. The projects should continue to develop and implement the monitoring system that they have started, and look at ways that the use of the monitoring system on indicators related to the child protection in communities can be institutionalized within local government.

Compliance: **Moderate:** *community empowerment capacity building is limited to regular committee workshops (6 to 10 per year) and advice by field staff during visits but is not providing committee members with enough capacity to find sustainable solutions.*

Low: *little effort for development and no implementation of monitoring plan or institutionalisation within local government.*

- The VSN programme supports community people to operate the VSN through workshops but has no activities to empower or build the capacity of community members to deal with problems.
- No monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan has been designed and knowledge among implementing staff about M&E is poor. Performance indicators at the output level are documented but no impact indicators are described. Reportedly SCN suggested its partners to regularly monitor activities and conduct evaluations to assess the impact of the project activities.
- SCN-CO did not provide or finance any formal training about M&E to the partners. Partners suggested that SCN would establish a M&E section to ensure the quality of CEDC and partners programmes in an independent way.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 7:

Strengthen the direction and management of the projects. It will be important for long-term planning on sustainability of the work on the projects if CCPCR would be able to clearly articulate how the VSNP and the Centres are strategically situated in their own organizational direction. This will help both SCN and the NGO to define further areas of collaboration and support in their relationship.

Compliance: **None**

- The VSNP and centre are separate programmes which also separately are operated, as explained by the centre staff. The linkage is only visible when a child who is a victim or at risk in the community is referred to the centre.

Suggestion:

CCPCR was found among the agencies with a very low compliance rate. Therefore, instead of making new suggestions in this report CCPCR is recommended to review in-depth all previous recommendations and the findings contained in this evaluation report and consequently develop mechanisms and approaches to improve management and programmes.

3.2.2 GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Programme: Market analysis for skill training

The programme carries out an informal market analysis but does not have the skills or finances for a professional market study. The programme wants to diversify their skill training but lacks financial resources. The skill trainings are traditional for girls, namely sewing and weaving. The partners' director explained that he did not expect that the skill training would contribute much to the livelihood generation improvement of the clients. The training is more meant to facilitate the psycho-social recovery and building life skills.

Administration: Updating centralized filing system, developing clear procedures

SCN-CO has invited all administrative staff to attend training courses to develop a standard filing system for all SCN partners. However, the training remained introductory and there is no written manual describing clearly procedures and definitions. Furthermore, reportedly there has been no follow-up by SCN-CO to ensure proper application. Therefore, the filing system is not updated and not adequate. SCN-CO introduced new software for the finance system and arranged for training; it seems that there are only minor problems in this area.

Staffing: Need for more and better paid staff, strengthen professional skills

The partner has considered recruiting more staff and increasing salaries to find better capable and qualified staff. However, requests for higher budget were not honoured by SCN due to their policy that partners should diversify their funding sources to ensure more sustainability.

Structure: Development of clear policies

The VSNP and childcare centre management, administrative system and also the overall NGOs management are in need of improvement. During the Mission no policies and procedures for proper management could be shown in writing.

3.3 VULNERABLE CHILDREN ASSISTANCE ORGANISATION

VCAO is a long-term SCN Partner. VCAO works for poor and socially vulnerable children providing education and promoting healthy expectations for the future. SCN-CO supports the VCAO Prevention of Sexual Exploitation of Children Programme in Siem Reap and Kampong Cham provinces. The programme is centre-based for protection activities and field-based through the Village Safety Net program (VSNP) for prevention activities. VCAO employs currently a total of 62 staff. Staff turn-over during the 2006-2007 period was: 14.3% leaving; 20.5% starting.

3.3.1 Compliance with Recommendations

Recommendations for improvement were made in various reports during the previous reporting period, in Edelweiss Silan, Ngy San and Abrahamsen dated 2005. (See list of recommendations in Annex B).

The compliance with the implementation of the recommendations is measured on three levels (low, moderate, high) in terms of trying to comply (performance) and four levels (none, low, moderate, high) in terms of results (achievements). The measurements are based upon the field research findings during the Evaluation and triangulated whenever possible using different methods and sources. However, most measurements remain 'qualitative' or arbitrary and thus subject to interpretation; these measurements should therefore not be used as the sole qualification of the Partners' performance and achievements.

Table 4: Compliance Level VCAO

Nr	Recommendations in key-words	Compliance		Remarks
		Performance	Results	
1	Minimum standards	++	+	no written minimum standards available
2	Plans for sustainability	+	-	no sustainable solutions identified
3	Complete VSNP cycle	++	+	limited empowerments; little sustainability
4	Raising standards	+	+	no models documented; no standards raised
5	Review of work	++	+	no follow-up on review
6	Empowerment; M&E	+ / ++	-	no community empowerment; no M&E plan
7	Link VSNP and centres	+	-	no strategic link between centres and VSNP
all		+ / ++	+	

high = +++; moderate = ++; low = +; none = -; n/a = not appropriate

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 1:

Addressing the need of vulnerable children and victims for alternative care: If the response of the program is to continue to support the shelters, it is imperative to guarantee that minimum standards in supporting the children are met. SCN Cambodia partners have started to develop minimum standards but these have to be improved.

Compliance: Moderate: no written minimum standards available at field level, but residential care is well functioning, despite only one staff for all care, counselling, management and administration

Residential Care:

VCAO has childcare centres in Kampong Cham and Siem Reap. The Evaluation Mission visited VCAO's childcare centre in Kampong Cham. There is no policy for non-residential care and no indication that after admission in the centre alternatives for residential care are considered for the younger residents, except long-term stay in government operated childcare centres. As part of her duties the centre manager is responsible for reintegration (back to family or reintegrate into soci-

ety after leaving the centre), but she has transferred this task to the two male social workers operating the VSN programme in Kampong Cham.

The current centre manager has been in duty since October 2006. No document is available to guide the manager in ensuring the quality of care for the child residents, but she uses what she learned from her predecessor. The centre manager is responsible for all matters regarding the management, care, counselling and looks after 16 girls. Reportedly, a request for recruiting a house parent was not approved by SCN-CO. The operation of the childcare centre is constraint by lack of staff and resources. There are very limited resources for food, clothes, toiletries or materials for learning at public school and the ongoing inflation while the budget remains fixed puts a heavy burden on the centre manager. However, while during interviews the girls confirmed the shortages they do not complain as they at their homes were used to this condition; they are happy to get enough to eat every day. On the other hand, the centre has not enough funds to support the learning of the 12 girls who go to public primary or secondary school. Especially the girls at the upper secondary school need to pay for extra lessons in order to join the exam preparation.

Despite of these limited resources, the centre functions well in terms of providing for the daily life of the child residents. The Evaluation Mission observed that there are plenty of home garden vegetables grown by the girls and they also raise chickens and some pigs.

Minimum Standards:

There is no document available to guide the centre staff in applying minimum standards, but reportedly the minimum standards of the MoSAVY are consulted in some cases. The guideline for operation of the centre is based on the experience of the staff and verbal instructions from the organisation's management.

Vocational Skill Training:

There are two kinds of vocational skill trainings provided for resident girls, sewing (14 girls) and beautician (2 girls). The sewing training is conducted in the centre; the beautician course outside at the market where a shop has been rented (2 girls). Child residents complained during interviews that they do not have enough or proper equipment for the skill training. In the Siem Reap childcare centre child-residents learn to weave silk and can earn some income from sale to private businessmen. They are also referred to other childcare centres for other kinds of vocational skills.

Staff Capacity Building:

The centre manager and the two social workers participated in a two-day counselling training provided by SCN-CO staff. The staff was the opinion that, although useful, the training was not sufficient to ensure the quality of their counselling activities. However, they were pleased with the on-the-job advice they received to improve procedures, client case and centre management.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 2:

Residential care, even those meeting only very minimum standards, will entail regular substantial funding. SCN Cambodia must review with the implementing organizations the plans for sustaining the shelters in the long term.

Compliance: Low: No other sponsors found but referral of young clients for long-term stay to government centre possible.

- The organisation has not been able to ensure long-term funding for its centres or the VSN programme from other than SCN donors. Reportedly, SCN-CO has not reviewed with VCAO options for sustaining the centres in the future. Child residents at VCAO's centres aged 14 or below who need permanent shelter up to their adulthood will be referred to government centres which according to government officials contacted by VCAO can admit any number of children.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 3:

Complete the cycle of the implementation of the VSNP in the Project Areas before moving to other areas. The next stages of the implementation, if the concept will be followed, are on empowerment of the adults and the children, and working for sustainability.

Compliance: Moderate: the plan has been followed but the network was not always consolidated before moving to next planned project area; little efforts for actual empowerment or achieving sustainability after moving to new project areas.

- The workshop only provides knowledge about informing the local authorities in cases of domestic violence but people already knew this in the community. The partner's staff needs to have skills for reconciliation and for alternative dispute resolution to solve the problem.
- The performance of the VSN programme is good if the local authorities handle the situation well, but resolving the problems is hard – especially in cases of gambling, drinking and patronising brothels. However, the planned cycle of support for the VSN programme is not long enough to complete the intervention while no exit strategy exist. After moving to a new location according to the plan the old communes have to fend for themselves with little or in practice no support anymore from the VSN programme.
- The in 2006 with SCN agreed approach to organise workshops in the commune, district and at the provincial level fails to achieve good results because of too infrequent activities. The first 3-day workshop in de district is followed-up only by one meeting after 3 to 4 months. Also for the provincial meetings is only one time a follow-up planned with limited participation from district authorities and commune council. Some local authorities who participated did not have anything to report or had no idea what to do about the problems, mostly because they are occupied with doing other things.
- The involvement of grade 5 children is limited and not effective. Older children do not listen to the younger ones. According to the Partners' staff it would be better to involve secondary school children.
- The project area selection is based on information obtained from the district office and communes. Although no systematic assessment is carried out by VCAO additional information has been collected through visits to communes. Despite this, relevant information for planning purposes remains limited.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 4:

The main challenge for VCAO is to ensure successful models of VSNP are developed, managed, and documented. There is so much to do to firm up the various components of the work on VSNP in the community and the raise the standards of the centre based programs. All the changes necessary to strengthen the project depend on staff capacity.

Compliance: Low: no successful model documented; no standards raised and practices and approaches are still like observed by the previous evaluations.

- The programme is required to document successful intervention models but can not document because the current approach is not so successful. VCAO tried to develop a good model but failed because the resources are insufficient. In practice only VCAO programme staff implement activities while local community members 'are standing on the sideline'. A constraint is also that reportedly SCN-CO has not provided any guideline or capacity building for the partners to develop a successful VSNP model. The partners complained that without financial support to local authorities to carry out the programmes' activities no model can work. SCN-CO staff takes the position that those activities are within the mandate of the local authorities and that therefore no financial support should be given. However, as a consequence local au-

thorities are most often not committed to take part in VSNP's workshops, but instead continue their government role to mediate when people have a dispute or in case of violence in the traditional manner.

- Reportedly the support by CEDC programme staff is limited to advice about the need of improvement. However, the partner does not know how to achieve this improvement. CEDC also reportedly not discussing programme strategies with the field staff. Mainly the programme manager or the partners' director join partner meetings and learn through direct contact with SCN-CO staff more about the VSN programme's concept and approach.
- The possible change of trained commune council members after elections is a recurring constraint. The VSN programme should train newcomers but has no resources to do so.
- The implementing field staff, in particular new staff members, are not very familiar with the VSN programme's concept and strategies; that is better understood by the partner's management. No partner has a formal orientation training of the VSN programme for new staff, while formal written guidelines about how to implement the VSN programme are not available.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 5:

It is recommended that [Partners] and SCN Cambodia prioritize the review of their work in the centres, set up the minimum standards in the areas identified above, and work purposively on capacity building for all the staff.

Compliance: **Moderate:** *SCN with partners review regularly their performance but there is little evidence that programmes and strategies are sufficiently reviewed in terms of effect and impact. Attention is given to build capacity by SCN but this seems not to be a priority for the partner.*

- The shortcomings described in the previous evaluation report are seemingly not addressed by the partner, while no minimum standards are applied. The management staff did not express to realise the importance of minimum standards for the childcare centre. There is no indication what follow-up activities by the partner are initiated to make improvements after the partnership reviews.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 6:

The capacity building for the staff should also cover capacities in empowering people in the community and working with families of vulnerable and abused children. The projects should continue to develop and implement the monitoring system that they have started, and look at ways that the use of the monitoring system on indicators related to the child protection in communities can be institutionalized within local government.

Compliance: **Moderate:** *community empowerment capacity building is limited to regular committee workshops (6 to 10 per year) and advice by field staff during visits but is not providing committee members with enough capacity to find sustainable solutions.*
 Low: *little efforts for development and no implementation of monitoring plan or institutionalisation within local government.*

- The VSN programme implemented by the partner shows similar shortcomings seen at other partners operating the VSNP. This indicates a programme defect. The partner supports community people to operate the VSN but has not activities to empower or build the capacity of community members to deal with problems.

- No monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan has been designed and knowledge among implementing staff about M&E is poor. Performance indicators at the output level are documented but no impact indicators are described. Reportedly SCN suggested its partners to regularly monitor activities and conduct evaluations to assess the impact of the project activities.
- SCN-CO did not provide or finance any formal training about M&E to the partners. Partners suggested that SCN would establish a M&E section to ensure the quality of CEDC and partners programmes in an independent way.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 7:

Strengthen the direction and management of the projects. It will be important for long-term planning on sustainability of the work on the projects if VCAO would be able to clearly articulate how the VSNP and the Centres are strategically situated in their own organizational direction. This will help both SCN and the NGO to define further areas of collaboration and support in their relationship.

Compliance: ***None***

- The VSNP and centre are separate programmes which also separately are operated. The linkage is only visible when a child who is a victim or at risk in the community is referred to the centre through the VSNP social workers.

3.3.2 GENERAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Program: Market analysis for skill training

Although an informal assessment of the job market was made no professional study was conducted to analyze the job market for vocational trainees. Not only lacks the organisation the human and financial resources to conduct a professional job market analysis, but they seem not to appreciate the necessity to conduct a systematic market analysis. Such an analysis would have to take into consideration the employment opportunities at the location where the client will be reintegrated. The current job market assessment focuses on the opportunities in the project area.

Childcare Centre:

Reportedly, the centre in Siem Reap will be shut down in 2008 in order to strengthen the centre in Kampong Cham. The children in the Siem Reap centre will be reintegrated or referred to other NGO centres.

Administration: Developing clear procedures and accounting manual.

The accounting manual is being updated and will be used from January 2008 onwards. SCN facilitated training on and introduction of the Conical Hat Software for accounting system. The Mission was informed by SCN-CO that partners were required to use this software for their financial accounting and reporting to SCN. However, the partners' accountant has already received training to use another (the Peechtree) programme that they still use for their other sponsors. The Conical Hat software not only required new training of the accountant but also cost the partner about \$400 per year for update and maintenance.

Comment:

It seems not a proper practice to insist that partners use a particular accounting programme which required special training for the partners' accountant and cost extra money for the annual update while the accountant was already proficient using another more general accounting system that was accepted by other donors.

Staffing:

Salaries are only slightly increased because reportedly SCN-CO limits increase of the budget. According to staff interviewed the low salary level incited former staff who enhanced their qualifications through training provided by VCAO and SCN-CO to leave, among them two provincial managers. VCAO performs annual staff performance including a question about which training they want. A systematic training need assessment has not been conducted. The capacity building by SCN-CO is not systematic and in the opinion of interviewed partner staff it would be better to provide a systematic training programme conducted by outside experts.

Structure: Improvement of policies

Although some policies for improvement have been developed, they have not yet resulted in actual improvement. A child protection policy and code of conducts was updated in May 2007. There is no minimum standard document available or written guideline for childcare centre operation and management. The partners' programme manager did not demonstrate to appreciate the importance of introducing and applying minimum standards.

3.4 CAMBODIAN CHILDREN AGAINST STARVATION ASSOCIATION

CCASVA is a long-term partner of SCN. Its mission is developing knowledge, skills and good behaviour about children and youth in order to help them become responsible members of the community. SCN-CO supports CCASVA's Street Children Programme in Phnom Penh. The NGO employs 13 staff. Staff turn-over during the 2006-2007 period was: 12% leaving; 38.5% starting.

3.4.1 Compliance with Recommendations

Recommendations for improvement were made in various reports during the previous reporting period, in Taran Abrahamsen, Edelweiss Silan and Ngy San dated 2005. (See list of recommendations in Annex B).

The compliance with the implementation of the recommendations is measured on three levels (low, moderate, high) in terms of trying to comply (performance) and four levels (none, low, moderate, high) in terms of results (achievements). The measurements are based upon the field research findings during the Evaluation and triangulated whenever possible using different methods and sources. However, most measurements remain 'qualitative' or arbitrary and thus subject to interpretation; these measurements should therefore not be used as the sole qualification of the Partners' performance and achievements.

Table 5: Summary Compliance CCASVA

N r	Recommendations in key-words	Compliance level		Remarks
		Perfor- mance	Results	
1	street education	+++	++	work constraints; no improvement efforts
2	school enrolment	+++	+	children drop-out because lack support 2 nd year
3	life-skills provision	+++	+	bureaucracy; lack of budget
4	support to parents	+++	++	not in proposal, but low amount
5	link micro-credit	++	+	no link with credit facility; low sustainability
6	children groups	++	+	no programme support
7	allowance for groups	+	-	no programme support
8	shelter support	++	++	lack of funds for proper nutrition; little manage- ment improvement due to staff changes
9	improve database	+	+	IT support from SCN half-way terminated
10	cooperation officials	+++	++	little commitment officials; district network
11	cooperation Ministry	+	-	no cooperation with government agencies
12	education follow-up	+++	+	little commitment teachers; little support ch-group
13	NGO network	++	-	difficult to develop common strategies
14	child issues	++	+	some issues on agenda
15	intervene in violence	+++	n/a	action belongs not to mandate, instead complies with specific objective to build local capacity
16	drug addiction	n/a	n/a	not belong to target group
17	capacity building	+	+	little systematic training by SCN or others
18	improve reintegration	++	+	no improvements identified
19	training needs	+	+	no TNA, no support from SCN
20	vision and mission	++	+	not much achieved yet
21	familiarise by-laws	+	+	not much achieved yet
22	update organogram	+++	+++	new organogram
Average		++	+	

high = +++; moderate = ++; low = +; none = -; n/a = not appropriate

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 1:

Continue to provide street based education on basic health care and sanitation that is useful and help children to escape from communicable other deceases and illness. The services are also very useful for street and working children to have more opportunity for income generating activities.

*Compliance level: **High:** but constraints due to internal administrative procedures, no secure meeting location, lack of educational-game materials, budget constraints, little material support from SCN, and few efforts for programme improvement.*

- When street children have problems they come to meet the programme facilitator, e.g. when police confiscate their things, when parents force them to drop-out of the study programme, or in case there are disputes in their groups. Children who participate in the study programme do that during 30 to 45 minutes in the morning or afternoon so that during the day they can continue to earn income through work on the street or at the market.
- However, the lack of a suitable location to meet and educate street children in the target area is a constraint. The program also lacks teaching materials and games.
- Children with a disability condition that not can be dealt with by CCASVA are referred to other NGOs. There are no specific guidelines or policies for referral to guide the field staff – it is fully up to the management to make the decision. Field staff requires permission from the director before they can send children to public school or hospital for treatment; when he is busy or away it might take time to get the permission. The programme is able only to give first aid and treatment for skin diseases.
- The basic healthcare curriculum is difficult to understand and not updated. The programme staff members received only half a day training to learn how to educate the children. Staff mostly instructs the children about basic healthcare without using visual aids because the available material is too difficult for the street children to understand.
- Reportedly, SCN-CO staff collects information during their visits, but are not paying much attention to improve the programme.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that SCN-CO reviews with the Partner the referral practices, assist in the development of referral and other policies and procedures and introduce a system of delegating decision-making responsibilities in case the Director is not available.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATION 2:

The efforts to get the children enrolled at school should be further implemented although these activities have not been parts of project activities as stipulated in the implemented proposal.

*Compliance level: **High:** but low result due to budget constraints.*

- The programme put a lot of effort in negotiating with school directors, teachers, parents and local officials to get children enrolled at school. However, the programme is limited in giving support to the children only in the form of pens, notebooks or a uniform. This makes it difficult to ensure that the children will not drop-out, in particular if teachers press them to pay for extra lessons or when parents demand them to earn more income.
- The programme policy is to support children going to school during one year of enrolment. However, the programme tries to get donations from foreigners to enable children to continue schooling for subsequent years, but these donations are not sufficient for a long period or to support all children. Therefore, not all street children who want can continue the second or following years.

Comment:

Making many efforts to get street children enrolled but stop the support for consecutive school years seems not only a waste of investment but is obviously against the interests of these children.

Suggestions:

- It is suggested that the programme should adjust its strategy and once children are admitted into the programme and able and motivated to continue schooling, the support should be continued. To this end CCASVA should make an agreement with the sponsor to continue support for a duration of at least 3 school years for any child in the programme. This to ensure that the child's motivation to learn not will be frustrated by premature termination of the support.
- The field staff is concerned about not having enough time to combine street-based activities with follow-up and referrals. This is indeed a concern and it is suggested to employ an additional staff who will be responsible for the non-street based activities, such as education, vocational skill training, revolving fund for income generation, sending rescued children to a safe centre or arrange that children get treatment at the hospital.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 3:

Life skills should be provided to all children who have potentials to use skills to earn income with clear criteria for selection.

Compliance: High: but constraints due to lack of policies and guidelines and limited number of beneficiaries due to lack of budget.

- Children learn a particular kind of skill or business through a 6-months apprenticeship. The programme sends them to private entrepreneurs. This skill-building is followed-up every two weeks by the reintegration officer. The kinds of skill they can choose to learn are: motorbike repairing (4 boys), hair cutting (1 boy who dropped-out); beautician (1 girl); sewing (2 girls who dropped-out) and other manual vocations.
- Due to limited funds received from SCN only a limited number of children will be selected for the training programme, even if they have the potential and motivation to learn and when an apprenticeship is available. Often, child applicants have to wait for a long time to know whether they will be accepted due to lack of policies and delay of decision-making in case the Director is not available.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested to develop policies and guidelines for selection of children and introducing them into vocational skill training programmes, to delegate selection responsibilities to field staff and to streamline the approval process.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 4:

Some parents should be considered to get support from the project, especially in skills training and income generation activities so that the children will get benefits from that support.

Compliance: High

- The parents of every child that received training or got a loan were always called and involved through the family assessment and businesses management process. However, the loan amounts to USD 50 which is not enough for creating a sustainable income source for the family.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested to explore credit fund options with public lending institutions, like the Vision Fund to increase loan amounts for a second cycle for credible loan takers.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 5:

The project should request to get fund support or create link with micro credit organisation(s) to ensure that start up fund will be available to children and families after graduated from skills training.

Compliance: Moderate: no link with micro-credit facility hence limited number of beneficiaries; not much sustainable result.

- Only youth are provided with credit to start-up a business and generate increased income, not their families. Some youth got a credit to buy a pulling cart to collect scrapes so that they can change from using a plastic bag to a cart with which they can collect more. The programme does not have any link with other organisations to get credit.
- However, the credit did in fact not help much to improve the children's daily living conditions. The credit is very limited and often not enough to start-up a business. Furthermore, sometimes children move away with their family and the loan can not be recollected. Providing the credit is thus a risky business and public credit institutions are therefore not interested to provide funding.

Suggestion:

- See above nr. 4

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 6:

The creation of children groups and the capacity building of the group members should be further strengthened and promoted in all target areas.

Compliance: Moderate: not well functioning due to lack of programme support.

- Only two children groups – each with 3 children - were created in the Olympic stadium programme area. These groups are used to provide information to the programme's staff about the target group. The formation of these groups is difficult because the children do not have time to help the program; they need to earn income for their family. There is no financial support for the group members, except \$1 for transportation costs to attend the meeting. In 2006, quarterly meetings were held, but in 2007 there is only one meeting with the groups planned.
- The children groups do not function well due to lack of support from the programme. The programme facilitators perceive the child groups as a good mechanism to link the programme staff with the target group, provided more support will be given to the group members. However, there seems to be a lack of attention for developing policies and guidelines for a child-to-child approach among the partners' director and SCN-CO staff.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that SCN-CO will initiate among all partners without proper policies and guidelines for child participation a process to start development and introduction of such policies, and once developed will facilitate a proper training process for field staff.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 7:

Children group member(s) who are very active supported the project should entitle to get small incentive (financial allowance) and involve with the project implementation.

Compliance: Low: no results due to lack of programme support.

- see above

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 8:

Shelter should be further supported, as it is important for children who are facing serious violence, sexual abuses, and other critical situation with management improvement. The nutrition at the centre should be improved with effort to generate support from other donors not just relied on the two organisations: SCN and Terres des Hommes.

Compliance: Moderate: not much management improvement; lack of funds for nutrition.

- Centre management skills did not improve because the former centre manager who got the training and support resigned. The current centre manager used to be the social worker, but according to her did not receive (yet) any counselling and shelter management training. However, CEDC section maintains that such training was provided to all the staff.
- There is no minimum standard document for the centre care and management. Also the reintegration support policy is not clear to the staff. Children come from the street and are sent to the community but often return back.
- There is not enough financial support to improve the nutrition intake of children in the centre, although the budget for food recently increased from 0.5\$ to 0.7\$ a child per day. There is no written guideline or standard to ensure a proper nutritional intake.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 9:

Establish and improve the database of children for appropriate planning, monitoring and evaluating of the project implementation.

Compliance: Low: support by SCN half-way terminated.

- The implementation staff can collect data only, but they are not trained to compile and analyze the information. In 2003-2005, one of SCN's staff started a database for publications but due to his resignation the work halted halfway. Another SCN project officer developed another database in Excel which should be easier to use for partner's staff. However, this data base system is not appropriate for analysis, planning and monitoring purposes.

Comment:

It is bad practice to commence with any endeavour to improve the operation of partners without completing it – for whatever reason – as it will put into question the capacity and sincerity of the sponsoring agency and will de-motivate the partners' staff to improve practices.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that the Partner explores opportunities among other agencies which maintain databases about child protection and victims to replicate these databases and consequently install and maintain this database.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 10:

Strengthen cooperation and collaboration with Sangkat Councils and police and also human rights organisation to protect the child rights that is important mechanism to help to intervene and solving issues that children faced.

Compliance: High: but cooperation is constraint with low level of commitment from local authorities and lack of cooperation mechanisms among human rights organisations. The partner cooperates on district level with government-led child protection network which facilitates the work on community levels.

- The local authorities are not so much interested in helping children as they are interested in building the infrastructure in their 'sangkats'. However, they cooperate to some extent with the programme. The programme's workshop informs them about the difficulty children could face when confronted with domestic and other violence. To encourage authorities and council members to participate in workshops the programme pays \$2 to participants but still many don't come because they are busy with other activities.
- The workshop also reminds the teacher who collect money about the plight of the children, but still money is demanded from schooling children. But the raised awareness changed the attitude of some teachers who try to help the kids.
- The programme has not developed mechanisms to involve human rights organisations in the project implementation. The programme staff are both trainers of local authorities and community members and service providers for the victims. It are the programme staff who facilitate the intervention and push authorities and others to intervene in child abuse cases.
- This strategy is not sustainable because neither victims nor local authorities can find other than the programme to provide assistance; they rely on the programme staff to find solutions.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 11:

Cooperation and collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation; the Ministry of Labour and Vocational Training; the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports; and the Municipality should be further promoted to ensure effective implementation of the project.

Compliance: Low: no effective cooperation with government agencies.

- There is no specific agreement with the relevant government agencies to ensure the proper implementation and real impact of the programme, for example to strengthen cooperation with local authorities and pressure them to solve the problems. At the moment there is only an informal form of cooperation with government agencies.
- The programme staff work hard to convince local authorities to participate in the programme but reportedly support from the partner's management and SCN-CO is not enough.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 12:

Closely follow up with the children and teachers on education and situation of children at schools, if possible using support from the Children Groups.

Compliance: High: but enrolment and retention results low due to little commitment teachers, limited child-group support and overburdened field staff.

- The use of children groups to report on the target group is considered by the programme staff to be a good strategy because these children know their peers. They can encourage their peers and can inform the programme staff about class attendance, education performance and the

family situation. But the programme lacks adequate resources to strengthen the current children groups or to recruit staff to coordinate and monitor the children who study in public school.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that the Partner reviews in-depth its human resource base and determines what staff is needed for which tasks in order to execute the programme properly. If needed the programme budgetline for staff should be adjusted.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 13:

Extend network with other organisations (Friends, Krousar Thmey, World Vision, etc.) provided services and support to street and working children to identify appropriate approach to address the needs and possible to develop a common strategy with respect to vision and mandate of each individual organisation.

Compliance: Moderate: it is difficult to initiate the development of common strategies among NGOs by CCASVA.

- The childcare centre maintains contact with NGOs for referrals and to get legal services in case these are needed.
- There exist a Street children Task force since 1999 of which the partner is a member, which meets every quarter but is not pro-active. The partner did not pay much attention to implement this recommendation because they could not find a way to motivate other NGOs to reach a common strategy, mainly because each agency has their own agenda.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 14:

Issues of street and working children should be included in the agenda of Child Welfare Task Force and Child Network Coordinating Committee that meet on a monthly basis.

Compliance: Moderate: some issues on the agenda but no strong advocacy.

- The partner joins the monthly meetings of the taskforce and committee where they are able to discuss support for children from other NGOs. However, these discussions have not yet resulted in actual assistance.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 15:

Strong action and measure should be taken to intervene in domestic violence, sexual abuses, child labour exploitation, and other inappropriate acts commit by parents towards the children.

Compliance: High.

Comment:

It is not the mandate of the partner to uphold the law which is a task for the police and authorities. Therefore, this recommendation is not appropriate. The only action by the partner could be and indeed is done is advocating for law enforcement.

- The partner feels that this recommendation is not very realistic because the programme aims that local authorities and community members take responsibility and intervene. To this end the programme for 2006-2007 includes a specific objective to build local community capacity to prevent and protect children.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 16:

Children with drugs addicted should be included as target group and further services and support should be developed.

Compliance: **Not appropriate:** *the recommendation is not realistic because there are no resources or capacity for delivery of proper services.*

- This recommendation is deemed by the partner not to be very realistic because dealing with drug addicted children requires special skills and resources which the programme lacks.
- Also, the childcare centre is afraid of confronting gangs if they provide services to drug addicts. However, awareness raising to prevent drug-usage could be included in the information campaign.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 17:

Staff capacity building is very important to ensure that all recommendations will be successfully implemented. The areas of staff capacity building include counselling, communication, small business management, and practical to apply the life skills to generate income. The drug use knowledge also necessary skills to be promoted.

Compliance: **Low:** *little systematic staff skill enhancement by SCN.*

- There is no systematic training programme designed for the programme staff to build capacity. Reportedly, they received training during 2 days from SCN-CO staff. The SCN-CO staff also make visits to meet with the programme staff in the field or at the childcare centre, but this did not help much to realise improvements because the SCN-CO staff could only remind the staff that improvements are needed – not how to do it.
- Although the partner has a budget for capacity building a constraint is that the programme staff has little time to study because of the high workload. A constraint is also that they are not able themselves to identify the most useful area of training to be more effective in their work. Furthermore, the partners' director was not able to find an appropriate training institution for his staff.
- Newly recruited programme staff did not get an orientation training about the programme.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that the Partner should explore systematic staff training options outside of SCN-CO, for example as member of the umbrella organisation COSECAM demand this kind of training.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 18:

Identify improvements to reintegrate street children.

Compliance: **Moderate:** *little success identifying improvements.*

- The programme recruited reintegration staff since 2005 but financial support to ensure the reintegration is limited. Therefore, the programme failed to identify effective strategies to improve the reintegration of street children.
- The programme staff tried to cooperate with local authorities to watch the families of the reintegrated children, in particular the domestic violence cases, but in most situations the problems remain. Also, the programme activities did not succeed in improving the living condition of the families of reintegrated children who often are trapped in the poverty cycle. Consequently, children are often forced to drop-out of school again and work on the street.

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that the Partner communicates with better resourced and equipped NGOs targeting street children, like Friends, to identify potential improvements for reintegration.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 19:

TNA based on the target groups needs' assessment and baseline studies, prioritize training needs, and ensure that newly recruited staff complement the current organizational capacity.

Compliance: Low: no training needs assessment done.

- The partner has no capacity or resources to conduct a professional TNA. There are no baseline studies conducted to enable measurement of the impact of the programme.
- Although SCN-CO conforming to the partnership agreement are involved in new recruitments the newly recruited staff seems not to have the qualifications the programme needs. This might be because the offered salary is lower than other NGOs in Phnom Penh can offer (salary is less than 150\$ per month for street-based programme facilitators).

Suggestion:

- It is suggested that the Partner consults other SCN partners to explore options for a joint staff training needs assessment commissioned to a professional; for example as member of the umbrella organisation COSECAM request this kind of training needs assessment.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 20:

Develop realistic and genuine vision and mission statements, board structures, financial and administrative policies, accounting procedures, and a central filing system.

Compliance: Moderate: some progress but not much yet.

- The partner has made progress to develop the organisational structure, and is waiting for the next board meeting to discuss and approve the structure and policies, like the child protection, by-laws and procedures. However, the programme staff is obviously not involved in these revisions as they do not know anything about it. These matters belong to the tasks of the director.
- Although staff received training about the new filing system, in order to function well all staff needs to know how it should be done and be able to use a computer. SCN-CO staff did not provide a written guideline; they verbally instructed the staff what were the definitions of the folder and subfolder and categories in each folder. The filing system is currently not in order. The administration staff insists that an expert consultant should develop the system and train all the staff how to work with it.
- It is a main constraint for programme staff that financial and administrative policies, and accounting procedures are not improved and that it still takes much time to get an approval or cash advance for child care, e.g. medical treatment.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 21:

The management should familiarize itself with the organization's by-laws, adjusting and revising them as deemed necessary. Who is in the board?

Compliance: Low: not much achieved yet.

- There are three members of the board, but the board functions not yet well. The director is looking for two additional board members. The role of the management team is not clear.
- The programme staff and manager are not familiar with the by-laws because the document is not made available by the management.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 22:

The organogram requires up-dating to clarify any misleading or confusing information about the organization's governing structures.

Compliance: High: in 2007 a new organogram was drafted.

- The organogram is revised in 2007 including the new reintegration officer, and two house-parent assistants.

3.4.2 CONSTRAINTS TO ACHIEVEMENTS

The street-based programme's selected target focal points (meeting places) are: Olympic Market, Ou Rossey, Deum Kor, and Lucky Market (but children can be coming from other places). However, during the current year the meeting place with children moved often from one location to another. The idea is that the programme staff can build a relation with the children. However, the lack of material and resources is a constraint that hampers the impact of the programme. The current operational strategy is not so effective, with only one staff for each location, no permanent place to meet while it anyway is difficult to collect the children because they come from different corners of the market or location.

The low salaries are a main constraint to get and keep qualified staff. For example, this year the staff salaries increased 5% but were also deducted with 5% to support the organisation. A strong indication that salaries not meet their needs is that several programme staff also work as motor-taxi driver to support their living.

3.5 LEGAL AID OF CAMBODIA

LAC is a long-term partner of SCN. The legal NGO provides legal services for the poor and aims in general at promoting the rule of law and a democratic and legitimate society in Cambodia. One strategy to achieve this is improving public understanding of the rule of law through training and consultation. SCN finances the LAC project Promotion of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child implemented by the Juvenile Unit of the Child Justice Programme in Battambang province. LAC employs 63 staff members, including lawyers; the Unit employs 6 staff, including 2 female lawyers.

3.5.1 COMPLIANCE WITH RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for improvement were made in various reports during the previous reporting period (e.g. in Abrahamsen) dated 2005 (See list of recommendations in Annex B).

The compliance with the implementation of the recommendations is measured on three levels (low, moderate, high) in terms of trying to comply (performance) and four levels (none, low, moderate, high) in terms of results (achievements). The measurements are based upon the field research findings during the Evaluation and triangulated whenever possible using different methods and sources. However, most measurements remain 'qualitative' or arbitrary and thus subject to interpretation; these measurements should therefore not be used as the sole qualification of the Partners' performance and achievements.

Table 6: Summary Compliance LAC

Nr	Recommendations in key-words	Compliance level		Remarks
		Performance	Results	
1	update organogram	+++	+++	updated organogram
2	fieldwork payments	+	+++	no long delays
3	erroneous bookings	+++	+++	annual audit
average		++	+++	

high = +++; moderate = ++; low = +; none = -; n/a = not appropriate

The SCN-commissioned evaluation in 2005 concluded that only in the field of accounting improvements were called for. The number of recommendations to comply with are therefore limited and of a financial nature.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 1:

Organograms describe an organization's formal decision-making structures, and normally reflect the organization's information channels. Absence of the support functions may cause confusion about their relative position/status in the organization.

Compliance: High: the organogram existed from before 2005 and is updated.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 2:

Two people have bank withdrawal signing rights, the absence of one, delays payments beyond the money in the cash box

Compliance: None: The same procedure as before is used but staff do not report long delays.

PREVIOUS RECOMMENTION 3:

Regular (monthly) financial reports to the responsible budget holder will ensure that erroneous bookings, or "forgotten" expenses are accounted for both at project and overall level. When donor funded projects have different fiscal years the timely identification of project booking mistakes is crucial if expenses are not to be left uncovered. Consolidated accounts or financial reports give management a better foundation to apply strategic financial management.

Compliance: High: Annual financial audit by accredited audit firm did not identify problems.

3.5.2 ACHIEVEMENTS

In consultation with the Reference Group it was decided that in the case of LAC the training provided to provincial, district and commune officials and members would be assessed to ascertain compliance with the partnership agreement. A series of structured interviews were held in person or through telephone with a selection of training participants from the province (4 persons) and the districts (3 persons). The results of these interviews show a high level of appreciation for the way LAC organised the training (7 out of 7); all respondents felt that what they learned was very useful for their work (7 out of 7); and a majority perceived that what they learned was fully worth the time they invested (4 out of 7) (See Annex E).

Training

Also a questionnaire survey was conducted among commune-level training participants in commune Oumal, Battambang district and commune Kea, Mong Russey district. The communes and 31 respondents from the committees in these communes were ad random selected. A majority of respondents are school directors; the selection reflects the composition of the child protection committees which members were the training participants. All respondents had participated in the training sessions, about two-thirds during the years 2006 and 2007 (67%). A slight majority had attended three or more training sessions (55%).

The results of the survey were very positive: 97% (30 out of 31) appreciated the way LAC organised the training sessions; more than two-third of the respondents (68%) felt that what they had learned improved their own work – only 1 respondent felt that he had no benefit from the training; 94% (29 out of 31) judged that what they had learned was fully worth the time they had invested – overall between 2 days in one year to 9 days spread over two years (See Annex E).

Meetings

LAC organises every two months a meeting with all the committees for woman and child protection. In the meeting, they discuss about their planning and solve the problems. For example, when a child did not go to school, the school director will report this to the meeting. The members will discuss why this child did not go to school and they will invite the child's parents to ask for the actual reason. Sometimes, the parents did not know that their child didn't go to study. Other families have domestic conflicts that caused the child to drop out from school. The village chief reports such and other problems, like gangs of youngsters acting violently, children using drugs or gambling, or being raped to the meeting to find solutions.

After the participants received the training session and have had committee meetings every two months, they seem to understand the law better and how to help the child or woman-victim than before. They are now able to coordinate their actions with others and to do their protection work better. As a result, respondents reported, violence and other social problems in their communes have been reduced because people listen to the committees.

Conclusion

According to the survey results and after meeting with all the various respondents it seems that most of them are satisfied with the work of LAC. After they received the training session and conducted the meeting every two months they seem to understand the law and the ways to help children and women better than before and seem to know how to coordinate actions with other institutions. Respondents reported that as a consequence violence and other problems have been reduced in their communities because people listen to the committees.

Ideas

Some respondents suggested that:

- LAC should provide a training session to all villagers, not only to committee members. Trainees seem not to inform all the villagers - only those who have or make a problem;
- LAC should create a centre to educate children who uses drugs;
- After making the planning LAC should monitor activities.

4. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter we will analyse the outcome of the assessment on the compliance with the recommendations by the partners and the SCN CEDC and HR/Admin sections. Because a major recommendation concerned the capacity building of the partners we will also discuss the overall achievement in this area for the organisational management and programme improvement. Furthermore, some points regarding the partners' programme which emerged during the Mission are discussed.

4.1 PARTNERS

The Interim Evaluation is not aimed at comparing partners among each other in terms of compliance with recommendations nor in terms of achievements in the areas of management, programme or capacity. Not only would this be rather useless but it could cause constraints in the partner relationships. Detailed information about the compliance with recommendations for each partner can be found in the separate sections of chapter 3. Here we will try to discern what can be said for the partnership as a whole and the support to partners in general. Indeed, the five partners share some commonalities but also demonstrate differences in approach, structure and management, and programme. Because of these differences we can not reach one conclusion which is valid for all. For example, although Legal Aid of Cambodia's programme supported by SCN like all other partners aims at protection of children they not run childcare centres, while not all partners work with street children like CCASVA. These programmatic differences also mark differences in structure and management, and the capacity that is needed. Furthermore, partners are generally not operating in the same geographic areas which each have their own particular constraints.

4.1.1 Compliance with Recommendations

The recommendations previously made were in three distinct areas, to know organisational structure, programme management and capacity building. The compliance with the recommendations by the partners was overall moderate, except for one organisation for which previously only few recommendations were formulated. Also the result from following-up on recommendations, if that was done, was generally low. This is for a large extent due to the inherent problems with organisational development and programme management, and in particular with relative low level of staff capacity. However, a major reason for not following-up on most of the recommendations was that partners did not consider these thoroughly during the two years after the evaluations – in fact mostly forgot about them. Although SCN during review meetings discussed progress or the lack thereof it seems that also they 'forgot' to monitor the follow-up of the recommendations.

This does not mean that partners did not improve in some areas that were the subject of recommendations, or that the CEDC section not focussed on support in such areas. The partners and CEDC section are aware of their weaknesses and they have over the past year tried to strengthen the organisational structure and staff capacity. It just means that this happened without parties specifically following-up on recommendations to address these weaknesses.

4.1.2 Capacity Building Interventions

The most commonalities among the partners are to find in the area of organisational development and capacity building. One major recommendation for all partners and SCN was that: '*SCN-CO may want to consider supporting a systematic Training Needs Assessment to look at individual staff needs and wants and identify capacity gaps in the organization*'. Among the CEDC section's mandates is: *to ensure that SCN-CO at all times works in line with an updated capacity building plan developed for SCN-CO's partners* (CEDC Mandate in SCN Office Handbook chapter 06.2.2 page 1). As far as the Mission could ascertain such a comprehensive needs assessment has not

taken place and no systematic capacity building plan has been developed. There is also no evidence that the partners themselves have undertaken such a comprehensive assessment or developed their own capacity building plans. Despite the lack of such plans CEDC staff has addressed several of the capacity weaknesses of the partners based upon findings during monitoring visits or on request by the partners themselves. None of the partners could demonstrate that they had built staff capacity outside the intervention by SCN.

A major recommendation concerned the need for an exit strategy ‘.. to ensure overall programme sustainability and induce healthy cooperation with the partner ..’. Although CEDC section staff members clearly know what an exit strategy means and they in interviews expressed to appreciate the recommendation in this respect, no such strategy has been formulated for any of the partners.

4.1.3 Residential Care

Keeping in mind that the partners differ from each other there are parallels between some of them, such as the residential childcare offered by CCPCR and VCAO. The target groups are more or less the same, the admission procedures and basic forms of care are similar, and constraints to operate the centres are management and skills issues. SCN through coaching and on-the-job advice has during the past two years and before aimed at an improved living environment for the child residents. This has had some positive effect in terms of improved admission procedures, better financial management, introduction of client case management systems and generally more understanding about proper care principles among centre staff, including adopting child protection policies.

Therapeutic counselling methods have been introduced to centre staff, but as one of the previous evaluators in 2006 observed: ‘*It should be recognized that social work and counselling cannot be learned in 5-days workshops.*’ On the issue of counselling training the Mission differs of opinion with the CEDC section staff who feel that therapeutic counselling skills should be taught to the centre staff; the Mission is the opinion that persons with no or limited social work or psychological educational background should not be taught these skills as unprofessional treatment could cause much harm to traumatised clients.

Despite the improvements there has been little evidence that the living environment and opportunities for child residents have been significantly improved over the past two years. For example, nutritional values of food rations are still at the bottom level for adolescents, due to limited and fixed budgets which not take increased food prices into account. Vocational training programmes are not market-demand driven and the teaching materials are old and inadequate. Income generation activities during the reintegration phase lack adequate support to ensure that all clients will be able to earn a sustainable income. Thus while staff attitudes towards child residents likely have been improved the livelihood chances of the residents did not.

4.1.4 Village Safety Net Programme

The Interim Evaluation was not designed to assess the VSNP in any detail, but during the evaluation issues connected to this programme emerged. Also some recommendations made by the previous evaluators were about the improvement of the programme. Therefore, we will discuss what constraints emerged during the Missions’ visit to the VSNP.

Partners’ programme staff for the VSNP seems not always to comprehend the concept of the programme and tend to focus mainly on the workshop facilitation. However, the merit of the VSN programme is with the motivation of community members and local officials to establish mechanisms and procedures to protect their children from trafficking, exploitation and violence. Building this local system is often difficult and requires constant attention and support from the partners’ staff beyond the formal meetings. Also, it seems that some partners’ management underes-

estimate the difficulties their staff encounters during implementation and are not providing the support and encouragement they need to fulfil their difficult tasks.

The Mission got the impression from interviews with CEDC section staff that they have a more positive opinion about the progress of the VSNP than most of the partners' staff. One of the main constraints of this programme for all the partners is that demands put at commune council members, village leaders and other community members have to compete with the many demands made by other programmes. Without these community members taking full charge the VSN programme will not progress.

Suggestion:

A thorough assessment of the VSNP will be needed to identify constraints and options for overcoming the problems and consolidate the efforts.

4.1.5 Street Children Programme

The Interim Evaluation was not designed to assess the street children programme of CCASVA in any detail, but during the evaluation issues connected to this programme emerged. Also some recommendations made by the previous evaluators were about the improvement of the programme. Therefore, we will discuss what constraints emerged during the Missions' visit to the partner. Only CCASVA operates a street children programme. One of the elements of this programme is the involvement of child groups to monitor other child participants of the programme in terms of their schooling and problems. However, these child peer groups have still little capacity to systematically provide this information.

Suggestion:

These groups will need more input from the programme to function properly.

4.2 CEDC SECTION

The recommendations made two years ago specific for the CEDC and Admin sections have for a large part been complied with, except about monitoring and evaluation, and programme review to achieve sustainability. It is in these two areas that the Mission noted some concerns in regard of the CEDC section's approach.

4.2.1 M&E

The section's monitoring is done during regular site visits and mission reports are prepared including the issues found that need follow-up. The section prepares for each visit a mission report describing what has been done and whether issues that need to be followed-up have been encountered. Furthermore, there are quarterly progress and review meetings to discuss common issues and report on progress made to all partners. Because the mission or review reports are not describing in great detail the concerns encountered at and particular issues addressed by each of the partners it is suggested for the future to prepare an annual summary of the mission visits with an evaluation of the progress achieved. Staff from various partners requested the Mission during its visit to recommend that SCN would establish a separate M&E section which would naturally be more objective towards the partnership support than programme staff can be. This indicates that partners' staff – at least those who expressed this – are the opinion that more independent monitoring would result in a different evaluation outcome.

Suggestion:

The Mission will not take over this suggestion for a separate M&E section at SCN but will recommend - as was done before by other evaluators - to design a more systematic monitoring plan and involve staff from other SCN sections in the evaluation of mission findings.

4.2.2 Programme Review

An improved programme review among partners by the CEDC section was recommended previously and this was one area where the CEDC section scored low in compliance. This finding is disputed by the section with a reference to the coaching, support and advice about approaches and methods they have given to the partners, and the quarterly partnership review meetings. The Mission has no reason to doubt that the section indeed has supported the partners through their coaching and on-the-job advice, and that indeed partners have gained insight during the regular reviews. But this is not in dispute; the issue is that systematic programme improvement among partners in terms of better methodologies, procedures and mechanisms than before has only in a limited way taken place. For example, the residential care is still not guided by the minimum standards now a requirement by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Non-residential care is more seen as a last than as the first course of action. The Village Safety Net programme experiences constraints to remain being effective when after some time the committees seem to be affected by 'fatigue' - or in other words are losing motivation and becoming less active. None of the partners was able to demonstrate that mechanisms to avoid this or to compensate for the loss of motivation were introduced. It is well possible that the CEDC section staff has made attempts to get improvements realised and that the limited improvement is due to the partners' limited capacity. Or that the partners have not heeded the advice provided to them by the CEDC section. However, the finding remains that the current support system, while improving skills and elements of the care and programme, it not has resulted in overall tangible and sustainable programme improvement.

4.2.3 Partners' Capacity Building

During the period of the partner assessments in 2005 also a thematic assessment was made concerning the whole CEDC programme (See Taran Abrahamsen). An analysis of the capacity building process and achievements was made end of 2006. Because the Mission's fieldwork time was restricted and the focus was on compliance with the recommendations the findings in both of the mentioned reports were used as a point of departure to base the Mission's findings on and compare with the capacity available before in order to detect change.

The CEDC section has, despite the lack of a 'more' systematic and structural approach, in the view of the Mission, on the basis of the field visits and interviews, built significant capacity in terms of organisational improvements, like proper functioning financial systems and introduction of child protection policies, and technical skills like centre management procedures or social work practices. Unfortunately, this achievement can not be demonstrated by objective sources or documentation⁵. The Mission noted that, despite the many capacity building activities, after the assessments took place little progress seems to have been made in achieving a 'more' systematic and structured capacity building approach. Instead capacity is built when requested or when during field visits weaknesses are observed.

This less systematic and structural capacity building approach not involving the organisation as a whole has the disadvantage that while some staff and parts of the partners' organisation have gained enhanced capacity other staff and parts have not – among others resulting in apparently little appreciation for newly learned techniques and practices among those not involved in the coaching and training. As this includes the organisations' management it seems sometimes to be a constraint for the trained staff to apply new techniques and procedures. Also, this lack of institutional built capacity has resulted in a loss of much of the capacity built among the partners' staff, when the trained partners' staff resigned or could not be kept on staff.

⁵ CEDC section and other SCN staff referred to the 4-year Work Plan and Annual Report Appendixes for detailed information about the capacity building activities for partners. The Work Plan outlines the capacity building activities intended in terms of kind of training and number of participants but is of course not providing data about achievements. The Annual Report 2006 Appendix 2 is about capacity building and organizational development but does not provide information about the number, kind or duration of training and coaching activities and remains general in this respect.

4.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE PARTNERSHIP SUPPORT

The previous evaluations have resulted in many recommendations, a majority of which are still very relevant. It seems not very useful just to repeat these sometimes detailed and minor recommendations (See annex B). It will be more useful and applicable to limit new recommendations to the major issues and also limit the number of recommendations so that follow-up will be more likely.

Prior to state the recommendations the Mission want to give her straight opinion about the performance of and achievements by the partners and SCN sections. It is undoubtedly true that many efforts have been made by all parties and that many 'battles' have been won, meaning many achievements have been accomplished. But the 'war' has not been won, meaning that if all efforts and achievements are put together the improvements do not add up to a comprehensive and sustainable result in terms of better programmes, organisational structures or programme skills. The lack of a *systematic capacity building plan* is in the view of the Mission among the major reasons why the war not yet has been won.

It is therefore recommended to:

1. Review carefully all previous recommendations which not have been followed up (sufficiently) and which are still relevant and devise a plan for follow-up together with the partners. See the highlighted parts in the Annex B which indicate previous recommendations which in the view of the Evaluation Mission are still relevant and should be followed-up.
2. Review the partner relationship in terms of dependency (parent-child relations) and devise a plan for future support by SCN and what support should be provided by other sponsors in close consultation with the partners; in case the support will be temporarily an exit strategy should be developed as well.
3. Define all capacity building and organisational development needs for each partner and design a systematic and comprehensive capacity building plan indicating the capacity which will be built by SCN; the plan should also indicate where partners could request support for those capacity building areas not supported by SCN; where and whenever possible SCN should advocate on behalf of the partners to acquire the full support needed to built in a comprehensive and systematic way capacity and skill.
4. Focus CEDC section partner support more on programme improvement and organisational development, including improved cooperation with and between other NGOs; let learning organisations be more responsible for the building and enhancement of the professional skills of the staff.

4.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP

Throughout the report partners and SCN sections are suggested to take action or follow-up on specific issues. A summary of each of these suggestions are listed here for each of the partners and SCN-CO.

4.4.1 Save the Children Norway - Cambodia Office

- **Suggestion 1:** A continuing constraint of some partners is that they obvious are unable to acquire support from other sponsors. Although raising the required funding is a first responsibility of the partners sustained and systematic support from SCN in securing additional funding would likely result in more sponsors and thus improve sustainability. In order to protect the long-term investment of SCN in its partners it is suggested that SCN takes the initiative to contact potential sponsors and facilitates a joint meeting between partners and interested sponsors to ensure future funding for the childcare centres.
- **Suggestion 2:** SCN-CO should lobby the PHD in Battambang or the MOH at the central level to admit for free poor children for medical operations. CEDC has made some efforts but with little result. Lobby by OEC alone would not be very effective as they do not yet have much recognition in the province and at national level.
- **Suggestion 3:** Partners, including OEC, feel that SCN-CO staff neglected the issue of cooperation with government agencies and should put more emphasis on assisting Partners in achieving better cooperation.
- **Suggestion 4:** As SCN encourages OEC to include CP cases SCN consequently should be giving financial support for the very long recovering period.
- **Suggestion 5:** SCN-CO should facilitate that partners get funds from social banks; if these banks require guarantee which the partner could not provide SCN-CO might guarantee the repayment.
- **Suggestion 6:** Only through lifting the families out of the poverty spiral they will be able to care for their children with disabilities in the future. SCN and partners should develop a proper policy to deal with this issue.
- **Suggestion 7:** The CEDC programme staff's activities since the 2006 evaluations do not demonstrate that the 'lesson learnt' of the potential adverse effects of short-term assistance for example through income generation activities has been part of its advises to improve the programme. The Evaluation Mission did not notice at any partner that the CEDC programme staff's advises were aimed at such programme improvement, but instead mostly on better reporting and keeping in line with programme plans. However, without constant programme improvements the ultimate benefits for the target group might be less than possible. CEDC programme staff should be concerned with guarding and improving the quality of the partners' programme in this respect.
- **Suggestion 8:** SCN should continue to facilitate funding from other sponsors for wheel chairs, bicycles etc. like they did before. In this respect SCN could assist partners to refer to sponsors of other partners. Partners should exchange more information about funding sources; a database with such information and active support from SCN might be useful.
- **Suggestion 9:** SCN should focus on guarding and improving quality and sustainability of the programmes and hence give partners more time to consolidate their interventions. The individual cases and the context of particular communities in terms of local support, resources

and motivation are very diverse and do not allow defining fixed or limited periods for the intervention ahead of time. Therefore, SCN should allow the partner to define the time needed in any project location for realising consolidated interventions.

- **Suggestion 10:** It is and will remain useful to continue the training and on-the-job advice by CEDC staff about admission procedures, client case and centre management. However, centre staff without proper social work education should not be encouraged to provide therapeutic counselling to traumatised victims.
- **Suggestion 11:** SCN might consider sponsoring applications by its partners for enrolment of its staff in social work and other professional training programmes instead of training by its staff. The CEDC programme staff could in such case continue to act as their mentor and assist them to provide professional counselling at the centre once they have acquired a professional level.
- **Suggestion 12:** SCN-CO should review with CCASVA the referral practices, assist in the development of referral and other policies and procedures and introduce a system of delegating decision-making responsibilities in case the Director is not available.
- **Suggestion 13:** It is suggested that SCN-CO will initiate among all partners without proper policies and guidelines for child participation a process to start development and introduction of such policies, and once developed will facilitate a proper training process for field staff.
- **Suggestion 14:** A thorough assessment of the VSNP will be needed to identify constraints and options for overcoming the problems and consolidate the efforts.
- **Suggestion 15:** It is suggested to design a more systematic monitoring plan and involve staff from other SCN sections in the evaluation of mission findings.

4.4.2 Relevant Suggestions for Most Partners

- **Suggestion 1:** It is suggested that the partner reviews in-depth its human resource base and determines what staff is needed for which tasks in order to execute the programme properly. If needed the programme budgetline for staff should be adjusted.
- **Suggestion 2:** It is suggested that the partner should explore systematic staff training options outside of SCN-CO, for example as member of the umbrella organisation COSECAM demand this kind of training.
- **Suggestion 3:** It is suggested that the partners consult each other to explore options for a joint staff training needs assessment commissioned to a professional; for example as member of the umbrella organisation COSECAM this kind of training needs assessment could be requested.
- **Suggestion 4:** The NGO should consider enrolling one of its professional childcare centre staff in a long-term social work and/or psycho-social counselling training programme.
- **Suggestion 5:** Project coordination staff needs more and better systematic training on M&E, preferably by a specialist trainer.
- **Suggestion 6:** The Project should consider hiring a consultant to develop a M&E Plan.

- **Suggestion 7:** It is suggested that the partners explore opportunities among other agencies which maintain databases about child protection and victims to replicate these databases and consequently install and maintain this database.

4.4.3 Operations Enfants du Cambodge⁶

- **Suggestion 1:** Develop a policy regarding charging costs by government health facilities and subsequently adjust budget or cooperation / referral system.
- **Suggestion 2:** Develop policy for coverage area: 1) support all identified cases; or 2) refer to other agencies; or 3) find other solutions. Our suggestion is full coverage, although this might affect the total project area by reducing the area.
- **Suggestion 3:** OEC should insist on including in their partnership contract that sponsor(s) keep their commitment for a long time. Especially for CP cases premature withdrawal is a waste of efforts and if no long-term support can be assured OEC should not take on this task.
- **Suggestion 4:** Although the previous evaluation report emphasises a need for better programme decisions for support to individual beneficiaries (keeping the best interest of the child in mind contrary to just offering immediate relief) no recommendation was made to this effect. The evaluation Mission did not notice that the programme staff had learnt this lesson. However, it is imperative that the organisation's programme will benefit its beneficiaries not only immediately but especially in the future. Hence, programme staff will need to consider all consequences of the immediate support for the future development of the beneficiary.
- **Suggestion 5:** Only through lifting the families out of the poverty spiral they will be able to care for their children with disabilities in the future. SCN and partners should develop a proper policy to deal with this issue.
- **Suggestion 6:** OEC should carry out a study to define the advantages and disadvantages of continuing project activities in Pursat versus focusing on coverage of the whole Battambang province. In case the arguments are in favour of the latter approach OEC should consider handing-over activities in Pursat to another organization.

4.4.3 CAMBODIAN CENTRE FOR THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

- **Suggestion 1:** CCPCR was found among the agencies with a very low compliance rate. Therefore, instead of making new suggestions in this report CCPCR is recommended to review in-depth all previous recommendations and the findings contained in this evaluation report and consequently develop mechanisms and approaches to improve management and programmes.

4.4.4 CAMBODIAN CHILDREN AGAINST STARVATION ASSOCIATION⁷

- **Suggestion 1:** SCN-CO should review with the Partner the referral practices, assist in the development of referral and other policies and procedures and introduce a system of delegating decision-making responsibilities in case the Director is not available.

⁶ This partner got more suggestions for follow-up than any of the other partners, not because they are performing less well but because they submitted the most extensive feedback with specific requests for recommendations to address the issues.

⁷ The fact that this partner received more suggestions than several other partners is mainly due to the large number of recommendations provided by previous evaluations.

- **Suggestion 2:** The programme should adjust its strategy and once children are admitted into the programme and able and motivated to continue schooling, the support should be continued. To this end CCASVA should make an agreement with the sponsor to continue support for a duration of at least 3 school years for any child in the programme. This to ensure that the child's motivation to learn not will be frustrated by premature termination of the support.
- **Suggestion 3:** The field staff is concerned about not having enough time to combine street-based activities with follow-up and referrals. This is indeed a concern and it is recommended to employ an additional staff who will be responsible for the non-street based activities, such as education, vocational skill training, revolving fund for income generation, sending rescued children to a safe centre or arrange that children get treatment at the hospital.
- **Suggestion 4:** CCASVA should develop policies and guidelines for selection of children and introducing them into vocational skill training programmes, should delegate selection responsibilities to field staff and should streamline the approval process.
- **Suggestion 5:** CCASVA should explore credit fund options with public lending institutions, like the Vision Fund to increase loan amounts for a second cycle for credible loan takers.
- **Suggestion 6:** It is suggested that the partner communicates with better resourced and equipped NGOs targeting street children, like Friends, to identify potential improvements for reintegration.
- **Suggestion 7:** The child groups will need more input from the programme to function properly.

**Evaluation conducted by
ECR – Mekong**

ecrmekong@gmail.com