SSID
DOMINICAN CHURCHES SOCIAL SERVICE

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT
Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010
REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The Dominican Churches Social Service —SSID—, is made up of 15 Evangelical Protestant denominations and 18 parachurch institutions in the country. It has more than 48 years of institutional life and was created as an answer to the social, economical and political difficulties that severely hit the poorest and most vulnerable population in the Dominican Republic.

Since its creation, the SSID has fought tirelessly for the sustainable transforming development of the poorest and most vulnerable population of the country, such as the *batey* communities and their Dominican-Haitian descendants.

The 2006 – 2010 Strategic Plan decided to alter the focus of the SSID´s work. It changed it from a welfare approach to one aimed at strengthening the communities' self-management and community management processes to fulfill the people´s Basic Rights.

The SSID´s proposals are aimed at the vulnerable population of Haiti and Dominican Republic and revolve around the sustainable transforming development approach —STD—. It is characterized by Christian principles and values, training, education and community organization for self-management and management of solutions in accordance with the needs of the communities themselves.

In order to continue with the STD process and aware of the need to anticipate situations and adapt quickly to the changing environment in the Dominican Republic and the constant crisis in the Republic of Haiti, the SSID set out to assess the work done in the past five years —according to its Strategic Plan 2006-2010— and propose new aspects that should be incorporated in the next Strategic Plan 2011-2015. It also reviewed areas of its organizational structure to guarantee the effective implementation of the next plan. Therefore, this assessment took into account the five regional offices and the national headquarters of the SSID in Santo Domingo:

- East Regional Office, located at the National Office in Santo Domingo.
- Northwest Regional Office, in Dajabón.
- South Regional Office, in Barahona.
- Southwest Regional Office, in San Juan de La Maguana.
- Monte Plata Regional Office, in Sabana Grande de Boya.

- National Office in Santo Domingo, the capital city.

The SSID intended to develop the following programs according to the needs of the communities:

1. Education
2. Agricultural
3. Health

4. Environmental
5. Microcredit
6. Law and justice
7. Church and society
8. Emergencies

Most of the national and international platforms in which the SSID is involved with are part of the Law and Justice Program. Rights, governance, domestic violence and gender approaches are implicit in its work and in each program. The subjects specifically dealt with are HIV/AIDS, protection and awareness of the conflict and environment.

The results of the assessment are presented under the following aspects:

1. The SSID Proposal: Sustainable Transforming Development
2. Results and Impact
3. Main Strategy: Training and Expanding of Knowledge
4. Relations and Alliance Network
5. Organizational Structure and Capacity
6. Conclusions
7. Recommendations
8. General Conclusions

1. THE SSID PROPOSAL: Sustainable Transforming Development (STD)

In the last few years, the Dominican Christian Churches integrated to the SSID decided to work the Sustainable Transforming Development approach and, in 2005, the SSID welcomed that decision. Promoting it is a challenge because it transforms human beings. STD aims to give a sense of life, "based on educational processes that change people, so they can lead a more decent life as individuals and as active members of their communities"[1]. Implementing STD implies the union and commitment from the churches to expand emphasizing Christian principles[2], and for its leaders to support a change in the focus of their service mission to the most vulnerable communities in society.

The SSID defines itself as "a Christian institution that promotes community self-management."[3] The self-management and management promoted by SSID is characterized by an implicit alliance with the communities in the geographical areas where it works. It follows a process that begins with the

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[1] Barahona Regional Office presentation on the definition of STD.

[2] SSID Principles and Values: Moral Integrity, Fairness, Justice, Cooperation, Openness, and Christ-Centered. By Christ-centered, we understand: "We love Christ's truth and justice, and take as an example his teachings of love, humility and commitment; there by redeeming human beings socially and spiritually".

[3] SSID Strategic Plan 2006-2010, p. 1. Subtitle.

person, the family and their promotion and participation in a community organization.

The community self-management and management process develops at three levels: local or community, provincial, and national and international.

– *Local Level*: SSID starts work with a personal approach to the community. The self-management process starts when the community identifies and prioritizes its basic needs. It then chooses men and women as its leaders to take part in the education and training processes so that, later, they will pass on to their community the knowledge they´ve gained. As a result, these people reinforce their leadership role, based on principles and values, and have a heightened self-esteem and training. Later, in the process of teaching-while-acting and by their example, they have a bearing on the behavioral change of the members of their communities. The ministers, from their churches, take part, promote and support the development processes of their communities. At the local level, the SSID team trains, supervises and checks the appropriate use of contents. The assessment team perceived differences in the work development of the five regional offices.

- *Provincial level*: Community leaders, once organized and trained to act, approach state entities, the mayor's office, private companies, international NGOs and Churches, to obtain the services and resources needed by their communities (medical services, drugs, teachers and classrooms, agricultural inputs such as seeds and technical assistance, construction of aqueducts and roads). Church leaders support the promotion and acquisition of money and resources in kind. The SSID regional offices are facilitators for community management —with their support, contacts and the backing of the national office.

-*National Level*: Church leaders are perceived as isolated supports. At this level, the SSID national office aims to gain the commitment of decision-makers in government and in social and agricultural ministries, the Sugar State Council —owner of great extensions of unexploited land—, the national Church network, and the cooperation agencies interested in supporting the country's and Haiti's community development, so vulnerable communities get—from the Dominican and Haitian governments— an answer to their needs according to their basic and universal rights.

- *International Level*: In the last three years, the SSID has reached executive positions in international platforms, reinforcing its alliance with Churches and international cooperation agencies in risk reduction, and as a spokesperson for the needs of communities in the Latin-American region. The SSID has organized voluntary work for self and community management, in which the network of Churches has an active participation. The base of voluntary workers

also allows SSID to maintain a direct line of assistance in times of emergency in the country and to the population affected by Haiti´s earthquake (12 January 2010). The SSID demonstrated its skills in coordinating public and private institutions and agencies; in organizing the receipt, transport and delivery of donations in kind and in cash; in mobilizing volunteers and national and international staff; in supporting the Churches and involving the affected communities in the decision-making process for the delivery and distribution of aid. Once the critical stage of the earthquake was over, the SSID and its international cooperation partners decided to continue helping in the border camps of Gantier and Boen —applying the sustainable transforming development —STD— approach—. It had the support of the network of Churches and gave priority to the organization of refugees for self-management and management of the main needs of those affected.

2. RESULTS AND IMPACT

The community work done by the SSID is recorded by each regional office. It is presented by the national office in its —duly audited— annual reports. The evaluation team had the opportunity to speak to about 120 people from different communities (see interviewees appendix) and confirmed that the SSID work helps the communities, mainly the inhabitants of former *bateyes* who —thanks to the work done with the SSID— have been able to improve their quality of life.

During the five-year period 2006–2010, the regional SSID offices worked with the same communities and had 14,924 direct beneficiaries and 15,576 indirect beneficiaries. Of these, 15,576 were women and 14,924 men. In turn, 19,162 were Dominicans and 11,338 Haitians[4]. As a result of new partnerships aimed at a specific population previously determined by the project, we were able to extend the coverage of certain services.

Working with voluntary leaders is a feature of the communities with which SSID works. It has identified nearly 1,200 leaders. In order to guarantee the correct operation of institutional administrative aspects, SSID has a group of 177 community leaders (174 women, 3 men) working as health and pre-school promoters. Each of them receives a monthly bonus of RD$ 400 (USD$ 11) which helps them keep their commitment, devote time to it, and motivate the active participation of other members of the community.

The SSID´s direct and indirect impact was confirmed by the assessment team in visits to the communities of the five regional offices. The following issues are worth noting:

- An increase and diversification of food production by the families.
- A better organization of the communities.
- A reduction —almost to 0— of malnutrition among the children of the families covered by the health program.

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[4] SSID Program and Budget 2010. May 15, 2010. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, p. 11.

- A decrease in the level of illiteracy among adults.
- Involvement capability in the community development processes.
- Effective prevention of cholera and dengue fever among the communities involved.
- Behavioral changes in issues such as hygiene, nutrition and personal care.
- Improvement of the primary health care programs.
- Increased capability for conflict resolution.
- Increased family income.
- Increased social empowerment.
- Building of roads and bridges to combat isolation.
- Nearly 1,200 community leaders.

All these are indicators of an improved quality of life among the communities working with the SSID.

The number of women organizations has increased and some of the women are now members of the executive committees of women's national and international networks (Petronila Ureña, Health Promoter of the Monte Plata Region).

"An important change brought about by the SSID is that it teaches how to fish instead of eating fish. Since the very beginning, it has taught us to get organized and trained for self-determination, now it is stronger." (Field worker, East Regional)

"We have learned to work as volunteers. We give —health services— take people to receive health attention, surgeries, and medical operations, identify people with health problems and take them there, it is heavy work but we feel pleased. These things we do, we learned with the SSID and now we are doing it without their direct support." (Northwest Regional, Dajabón community)

"Before, children died of malnutrition and diarrhea. People thought it was witchcraft. That belief has disappeared since parents take proper care of their children." (Barahona community)

3. MAIN STRATEGY: TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE

The main strategy in SSID community work is the training and dissemination of knowledge in the community through its leaders.

The training areas developed by the SSID with the communities are primary health care and sanitation; pre-school for children and literacy for adults; opportunities for the Haitian migrants to learn Spanish; agricultural production through the Food Security Program; environmental care and management; law and governance; and —as a cross cutting area— the reinforcement of self-management and community management capabilities. These are all areas that provide answers to the needs and expectations of the communities

working with the SSID. The regional teams have a clear perspective of the meaning of the STD approach but —in the work done— we did not perceive the emphasis on the Christ-centered principles and values.

In developing its activities, the SSID promotes equality between women and men. Communities perceive the SSID as a "partner" and facilitator of the processes they develop together. With a horizontal approach, it educates, directs and provides accompaniment for the community to do the work. It provides logistical support and promotes the creation of partnerships between the social organizations.

Each region chooses the training programs —depending on their needs and communities—, guides and monitors the promoters, education and production leaders.

Apparently, the issue of family violence is dealt with sporadically. It is an aspect that affects all communities. The SSID does accompaniment work on violence cases in which the assaulted persons report them directly at the Office. This situation is recurrent in the Monte Plata Regional.

The SSID is open to the participation of young people, women and adults. It expects the community to choose its leaders for training as health promoters and education and agricultural work facilitators. It keeps them up-to-date on important issues for the well-being of the community.

Sometimes, it trains young people and teaches them to apply what they learn, but no guidance is given about where to do it. It might be worth identifying the best practices and lessons from the San Juan Regional on men's health programs and the work done by youths going door-to-door raising awareness of sexually transmitted diseases.

The interviewees value the training for self-management. They think that the leaders trained with the SSID get greater recognition from their communities because they offer services, child and adult education, and share their knowledge and experience in farming and animal husbandry. They highlight the way the training is done and the possibility of multiplying that knowledge, sharing it with the community, learning to overcome difficulties and use the resources available, to cultivate the land to increase their income, the animal breeding programs and family savings. In the areas of health and education, the training and the results have generated confidence in mothers.

The leaders have the responsibility of transmitting the knowledge to their communities. The SSID also guides them in the creation of their own organizations and the management and self-management of their own development processes. The leaders help the organization by distributing in-kind aid, organizing campaigns and looking after the population in special circumstances. Other institutions hire them. They recognize that the training they received has reinforced their leadership skills. Some of them were illiterate and overcame such limitation thanks to the SSID education programs.

Because of the alliance between the SSID and the Ministry of Agriculture, there are five professionals appointed to three regional offices to support the Food

Security Program. Each technician has his/her own responsibilities, reports to the regional Ministry office regarding his activities, and receives agricultural inputs and materials for his fieldwork. The technicians also work as a team to solve problems and deal with land titles and improvement of housing.

Once the training is over, the regional team does the follow-up to verify the implementation of what was taught, and motivate the leaders to disseminate their knowledge and experience among their communities.

The interviewees remarked on the changed behavior of SSID during the last years. They mentioned that the SSID now reinforces talents, guides and supports the community organizations mediating with the Dominican government so that they claim their rights and find solutions to their common needs.

The process and the method used by the SSID for training and updating, contributes as well to personal development, and women have taken advantage of it. Perhaps the reason for that is that the topics are culturally related to women's activities. However, women are also exploring in agriculture, rights and governance, with significant results.

It is easy to observe a gender aspect in the participation and construction of community networks: women struggle for aspects related to family health and education for their children; men worry with aspects of agricultural production. However, changes are noticeable in women but not in men.

Men are reluctant to take part in the health programs on subjects that concern them. The San Juan Regional has experience in working with youngsters who —as health promoters— visit families promoting awareness on sexually transmitted diseases.

The permanence and persistence of the SSID in working with the same communities for long periods, more than 20 years, has been valuable to foster mutual confidence and develop training processes aimed at changing the habits and behaviors in communities.

Given the nature and mission of the SSID, we recommend checking on the management and inclusion of the spiritual content, the transmission of the Christ-centered principles and values associated to the work done, the rights and responsibilities of every citizen, as well as motivating and promoting the equitable representation of men and women in the diverse programs.

The regional SSID offices are in contact with organizations, institutions and authorities in the region, cooperate with state institutions, civil society organizations and NGOs in order to carry out the training programs.

The poverty, isolation and mistreatment suffered by the communities of Haitian immigrants and Dominican-Haitians, are a challenge. The SSID must share its long experience and knowledge with this population, with a sustainable transforming development approach.

4. RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

In order to find the necessary resources and meet the goals proposed for the 2006-2010 period, the teams of the regional and national offices of the SSID contacted local, provincial, national, and international institutions. As a result, SSID had the training experts, logistical support and temporary alliances with the Churches, social and community organizations, state entities, private companies and international cooperation agencies.

-Local and Provincial Relations

The communities have gained knowledge about their rights and responsibilities as citizens, and the principles of governance, which allow them to deal with different entities. They follow an internal organization process to identify and prioritize their common needs, design a strategy for the procedure, and contribute funds and labor. When they need the support of the SSID, they ask for it at the regional offices.

The community leaders (volunteers, health and education promoters), trained by the SSID, take part in different organizations that support health and education, such as the Mother's Union, Mother's Club, Health Committee, School Parents; also in the Water Committee, and several agricultural cooperatives and associations (Ass. of Oregano Producers, Ass. of Fish Farmers, etc.). Nowadays, there are other organizations present in the communities and the leaders cooperate or are active members of them. In some of the communities visited, they have created a coordinating entity called the Community Development Committee. They have realized that all procedures are more effective in cases in which the community is united and struggles together for their common needs.

The mutual support between the churches and the SSID is a strategic alliance for sustainable transforming development and mobilizing the communities to work for their common needs and interests. The ministers find that working with the regional SSID offices is an appropriate space to take part in the social work of the Church. They can offer spiritual support and receive information from the SSID to pass it on to the communities in their sermons.The Church and ministers have an impact when they back a cause, they help in times of disaster, and lend their churches for community activities.

The partnership between the SSID and PLAN International supports the work of the regional offices in infrastructure projects and complements the training programs; meanwhile, the regional offices cooperate with the mayor's offices, the municipality, and NGOs to support the communities.

When the municipalities want to do a health campaign, they contact SSID to take advantage of its community relations network. When the mayor needs support for dealing with provincial authorities or businesspeople, they organize a committee including representatives of the civil society, the community organizations and the coordinator of the regional SSID office.

At the provincial level, public processes for community participation in the preparation of budgets with State funds are an opportunity for the communities.

- National and International Relations

In the last three years, the SSID has become involved and takes part in the leadership teams of the following national and international platforms:

At the national level:

- Member of the Advisory Committee on Social Policies of the Presidency of the Republic.
- Member of the Board of Directors of the National Committee for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS.
- Participation in national broadcasts.
- Member of several social networks.

At the International level:

- Member of the World Emergency Committee of Church World Service.
- Representative in Dominican Republic of the Global Network for Disaster Reduction

- Member of the CLAI – Latin-American Church Council
- Member of the ACT Alliance Cabinet Meeting
- Ally of the World Council of Churches
- Participant in the work discussions of the Lutheran Church
- Honorary member of the Provisional Commission for the Re-founding of Haiti of the Evangelic Churches
- Member of the Dominican-Haitian talks

As the SSID participation bears results, the activities are included in annual reports and press releases. They are also published in the SSID Web site.

The continuous communication between all levels is a basic aspect of participation and a guarantee of the sustainability of the local, provincial, national and international partnerships.

- Emergency Treatment Alliances

SSID has 48 years of proven experience in channeling aid to the poor population affected by emergencies. That has not been an obstacle to our regular work, as could be confirmed in the support given to groups of population affected by Haiti´s earthquake in January 2010.

When attending an emergency, the SSID works mainly through the Church network, which allows it to reach effectively the communities and affected families. The membership of the SSID in ACT Alliance implies the need to specify its role, as well as an opportunity and a challenge for the coming years.

5. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND CAPACITY

To carry out the Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010, the SSID used its organizational structure, made up by: five organizational levels, posts, duties, human resources, communications, delegation and work processes and procedures, among others.

Organizational Levels:

1. General Assembly
2. Board of Directors
3. Central Office
4. Regional Offices
5. Promoters

We mention the Promoters as Level 5, because they are the community leaders that help the SSID carry out its programs. They are members of the communities, have the ability to summon the people, are responsible for transmitting and multiplying their knowledge, present periodical reports of their activities to their regional office and receive a monthly bonus.

By the end of 2005, the SSID staff had 8 positions, held by 46 persons. Of those positions, four were operative and four administrative. The operative positions were held by 29 professionals and technicians, and the administrative positions by 17 persons, two of which were professionals and the others support staff.

SSID STAFF
December 2005

Positions	Permanent Staff		Total
	Operative	Administrative	
1. Secretary		8	8
2. Assistant		6	6
3. Messenger		1	1
4. Program Manager	3		3
5. Regional Coordinator	5		5
6. Foreign Coordinator	3		3
7. Skilled Technician	18		18
8. Accountant		2	2
TOTAL	29	17	46

Source: Strategic Plan 2006-2010

By the end of 2010, the staff consisted of 33 persons, 21 of which held operative positions and 12 administrative positions. There were also 177

promoters, receiving a monthly bonus of RD$400 (USD$11) in four of the regional offices and RD$300 (USD$9) in the East Regional.

SSID STAFF
December 2010

Permanent Staff	Regional Offices					Central Office	Total
	Monte Plata	East S.P.M	South Barahona	Southwest S.J.M.	Northwest Dajabón		
Operative	3	3	2	3	3	7	21
Administrative	1	0	1	1	2	7	12
TOTAL	4	3	3	4	5	14	33
Volunteer Promoters	20	29	55	38	35		177

Source: Financial Office, December 2010

Regarding the distribution by gender, at the end of 2010, 15 of the 33 employees were women (18 men). Among the 177 promoters, 174 were women.

SSID STAFF
Distribution by Gender
December 2010

Permanent Staff	Regional Offices					Central Office	Total
	Monte Plata	East S.P.M	South Barahona	Southwest S.J.M.	Northwest Dajabón		
Women	2	0	2	4	1	6	15
Men	2	3	1	0	4	8	18
TOTAL	4	3	3	4	5	14	33
Volunteer Promoters							
Women	20	29	53	38	34		174
Men	0	0	2	0	1		3
TOTAL	20	29	55	38	35		177

The majority of women could be explained because community social work is seen as a woman's work and because of its minimal economic retribution, something not attractive for men who are usually in charge of providing for their families.

In December 2005, 46 persons, 29 in operative positions and 17 in administrative positions, made up the staff. In December 2010, the staff consisted of 33 people, 21 in operative posts and 12 administrative: a decrease of 13 people in 5 years. Among the people that left, some were professionals that held important posts —such as the Communications post

(bilingual), which has not been replaced due to lack of resources. The reduction of personnel took place at the National Office and it has brought a work overload for the remaining employees.

SSID STAFF
COMPARISON
December 2005 - 2010

Permanent Staff	December 2005	December 2010	Difference
Operative	29	21	8
Administrative	17	12	5
TOTAL	46	33	13
Volunteer Promoters		177	

Source: Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010

The audited annual reports confirm that the goals were met —and, sometimes, even exceeded— despite the reduction of the team. The SSID also began the changes in its approach, risking rejection and confusion among the communities; the Haitian emergency was dealt with at an international, national and border levels; the commitments with the national and international partners were fulfilled, as well.

The assessment team thinks the employee's productivity, in general, had to increase during the five-year period and so, the cost-benefit is high. The activities and achievements are high in relation to the monetary resources used.

The regional and national office teams did an excellent job managing the monetary and material resources. Thanks to that, they were able to fulfill the goals and programs planned. Besides, thanks to the national and international partnerships, some regional offices have additional staff devoted to the programs. The National Office remains with a decreased staff due to a lack of resources to finance the general administration costs.

The SSID has an egalitarian approach towards men and women. According to its Articles of Association, the leaders of its member institutions must make up the Board of Directors; most of them are men. Today, for the first time, there is a woman in the Board of Directors. Among the Coordinators of the Regional Offices, there are two women. The administrative team at the National Office is male; the women have assistant posts.

The terms of reference used for this assessment included eight organizational aspects, considered as organizational capacities by the assessment team. The team designed a self-assessment and grading instrument for the regional and national offices, taking into account the CURRENT development LEVEL and the

DESIRED LEVEL for 2015 in order to face the challenges of the future strategic plan:

Next, we present the results of the capacity self-assessment for December 2010, according to the following grading scale:

1. Very Low   -   There is <u>no evidence</u> of a relevant capacity
2. Low   -   <u>Incidental evidence</u> of the capacity
3. Average   -   <u>Partially</u> developed capacity
4. High   -   Evidence of <u>development</u> of the capacity, but not complete
5. Very High   -   <u>Completely developed</u> capacity

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SSID
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY DIAGNOSIS
NATIONAL AND REGIONAL OFFICES
CURRENT DEVELOPMENT LEVEL
December 2010

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Capacity	Regional Offices					Nat. Off.	Current SSID Level
	Monte Plata	East S.P.M	South Barahona	Southwest S.J.M.	Northwest Dajabón		
1.Application of the new self-management and management approach	4	4	3	3	3	4	4
2.Learn from experience	4	4	4	3	4	4	4
3.Establish relations and partnerships	5	5	4	4	4	4	4
4. Accept change and pass it on	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
5.Acting when facing an emergency	4	4	4	3	4	4	4
6.Resource management	4	3	3	3	4	4	4
7.Recording of information and corroboration of results	4	4	4	4	3	4	4
8.Use of information from Annual Reports and the media	3	4	3	3	3	4	3
Current Average	**4**	**4**	**3**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**4**

The capacity to apply the new self-management and management approach, to identify best practices and learn from experience, to establish relations and partnerships, and to manage economic and material resources to achieve the goals of the Strategic Plan, are all in a high level of development. The assessment team agrees that even though, during the five-year period, there were difficulties to obtain resources for the National Office the level is high. The allies are more interested in financing regional projects and only a few contribute funds for the National Office.

The team feels ready to accept change and capable of passing it on to others. They are motivated and ready for daily work. The SSID offers job stability. The average age of women in the regional offices is 44 (men 50), and at the national office is 48 and 49, respectively.

There is an evident development of the ability to act in emergencies. However, in the Southwest Regional Office that capacity has reached only an average or partial level. The other offices have reached a high level of development for that capacity.

The ability to manage resources is at an average or high level. The expected results were partially achieved in the five regional offices. The San Juan and Barahona offices think their contribution was low in relation to the financial goals.

The Barahona office considers it had a partial participation in the raising of funds to finance the Strategic Plan 2006-2010.

The capacity to record information and corroborate the results are considered to be in a high level, while the use of institutional information and the media — internally and externally— are only partially developed. It is necessary to give and ask for feedback from the SSID strategic allies, internally, and from the communities and cooperation agencies.

The development level of the capacity to carry out the Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010 is high, with an average of 4/5. The three regional offices in the border with Haiti have an average grade of three (partially developed capacity), maybe because they feel they could have done even more. The National Office and the East and Monte Plata Regional Offices consider their capacity to be at a high level, reflecting their satisfaction with the work done.

The following table shows the level of capacities expected by the SSID team for the following five-year period.

SSID
ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY DIAGNOSIS
NATIONAL AND REGIONAL OFFICES
DESIRED LEVEL FOR 2015
December 2010

Capacity	Regional Offices					Nat. Off.	Level 2015
	Monte Plata	East S.P.M	South Barahona	Southwest S.J.M.	Northwest Dajabón		
1.Application of the new paradigm	5	5	5	4	4	5	5
2.Learning from experience	5	5	5	4	5	5	5
3.Establish relations and partnerships	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
4. Accept change and pass it on	5	5	5	5	5	4	5
5.Act when facing an emergency	5	5	4	4	5	5	5
6.Resource management	5	5	4	5	5	5	5
7.Program content systematization	5	5	5	5	4	5	5
8.Use of information from Annual Reports and the media	5	5	4	4	4	5	5
Expected Average	**5**	**5**	**5**	**5**	**4**	**5**	**5**

In general, the team considers it must totally develop all of its capacities in the next five years. That means the South (Barahona) and Southwest (San Juan) Regional Offices will need some extra effort and support to be able to fulfill their dreams and goals. This diagnosis will help define the priorities according to the contents of the Strategic Plan 2011 – 2015 and the SSID human resource development program.

- *THE INCOME BUDGET SP 2006-2010*

The estimated budget for SP 2006-2010 was of USD $8'496.600; 80% (USD $7'080.500) for the programs and 20% (USD $1'416.100) for administrative expenses.

SSID
ANNUAL BUDGET
IN USD DOLLARS
2006-2010

ITEMS	YEAR					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total USD$
Facilitation Processes (Education, Dialogues, Emergencies …)	1´250000	1´500000	1´300000	1´230500	1´800000	7´080500
Administration	250000	300000	260000	246100	360000	1´416100
TOTAL USD$	1´500000	1´800000	1´560000	1´476600	2´160000	8´496600

Source: SSID Annual Audit and Management System

The total income during the five-year period was USD $11'306.804.

SSID
ANNUAL INCOME
IN USD DOLLARS
2006-2010

ITEM	YEAR					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (To Sept. 30)	Total USD$
Facilitation Processes (Education, Dialogues, Emergencies …)	1´850562	2´433100	3´522260	1´163971	2´336909	11´306804
Administration						
TOTAL USD$	1´850562	2´433100	3´522260	1´163971	2´336909	11´306804

Source: SSID Annual Audit and Management System

It is important to know the annual administration expenses at the national and regional level to verify the cost-benefit of the programs.

The income was received in funds (USD $5'320.932) and in-kind (USD $5'985.872, valued by the SSID administration at market prices).

SSID
ANNUAL INCOME IN CASH AND IN-KIND
IN USD DOLLARS
2006-2010

ITEM	YEAR					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (To Sept. 30)	Total USD$
CASH	1´053591	1´139613	1´097445	872817	1´157466	5´320932
IN-KIND	796971	1´293487	2´424815	291154	1´179443	5´985872
TOTAL USD$	1´850562	2´433100	3´522260	1´163971	2´336909	11´306.804

Source: SSID Annual Audit and Management System

Because of steps taken by the national and regional offices, the income was a 133% (USD $11'306.804) of the budget, of which 47% (USD $5'320.932) was in cash and 53% (USD $5'985.872) in-kind, most of it for the programs.

SSID
COMPARISON
BUDGET VS. INCOME
IN CASH AND IN-KIND
IN USD DOLLARS
TOTAL FOR 2006-2010 (Sept. 30 2010)

ITEMS	IN USD$	
	TOTAL BUDGET	TOTAL INCOME
CASH	8´496.600	5´320.932
IN-KIND		5´985.872
TOTAL USD$	8´496.600	11´306.804

Steps taken by the national and regional offices' coordinators led to the collection of 33% more resources than expected. Apparently, the greatest contribution came about from the management of the National Office and the Southwest San Juan, South Barahona and Northwest Dajabón Regional Offices, probably due to the special challenges posed by their work at the border.

6. CONCLUSIONS

During the five-year period (2006 – 2010), the SSID regional offices continued working with the same communities, having 14,924 direct beneficiaries and 15,576 indirect ones. Of these, 15,576 are women and 14,924 are men. In turn, 19,162 are Dominicans and 11,338 are Haitian[5]. As a result of new partnerships aimed at a specific population previously determined by the project, we were able to extend the coverage of certain services.

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[5] SSID Program and Budget 2010. May 15, 2010. Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, p. 11.

The interviewees appreciate the help given to the poor and neediest, as well as the presence of the SSID when communities undergo difficult moments; the development and education programs; the fact of being Church; the devotion and charisma of the SSID work, which reflects an egalitarian and fair treatment, responsibility and concern for each community's progress.

- **The SSID Proposal**

During the past five-year period, SSID maintained its geographical, community and program coverage. New experiences on native perennial crops and fish for human consumption began. The health area focused on training the promoters in aspects of public health previously agreed with the Health Ministry.

The SSID proposal of a Sustainable Transforming Development —STD—started to be implemented with three interdependent aspects:

1. Development of community capacities to manage resources and fulfill basic needs.

2. Climatic risk prevention and emergency response.

3. National and international partnerships to guarantee the basic rights of the vulnerable population.

To achieve these goals, the organizational structure works as directive, administrative and technical support.

- **Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010**

The Strategic Plan was a guide, a point of reference for the work of the SSID during the five-year period and was developed by projects. Having a prospective view, looking five years into the future, allowed them to overcome many internal difficulties —caused by the lack of economic resources— and move forward to achieve the 2010 vision, the proposed aims and goals, while attending unforeseen situations, such as national emergencies, and giving effective support to the Haitian population affected by the earthquake (January 2010). Once the crisis was over, a new alliance was established between the SSID, Church World Service CWS and Christian Aid, to continue giving support —with the STD approach— to the population of the Gantier and Boen settlements in the Dominican-Haitian border.

Emergency attention, a common thread in SSID's work, should be redefined after recent experiences. It should not be a reactive work —when the emergency occurs— but an integral part of the SSID Strategic Plan.

The two SSID work areas —sustainable transforming development and emergency attention— require the commitment of the Churches and society in general in order to achieve their goals and efficiently influence the national and international decision-makers, guaranteeing to the vulnerable population access and fulfillment of their basic rights.

The proposals, structure and content of the SP 2006 -2010 are still valid. We suggest the next ST (2011 – 2015) be updated bearing in mind the recommendations made in this evaluation. The SP must include a definition of the programs and projects to be developed. We recommend continuing using the logical framework to specify the goals, define the indicators and draw up the projects.

The change in the focus of the work —passing from being a welfare institution to one that promotes self-management and community management to achieve a sustainable development— has began and has been well received and understood by the SSID team and the community leaders. However, the STD concept, contents, processes and phases must be further developed to guarantee its appropriation by the team, the executives, and the General Assembly, and its assimilation in the work done with the communities.

- ### *Program contents*

Work processes characterize by responding to the agenda of the community organizations. The SSID team —as facilitator— does not impose program contents; it leans on the relations network for training and updating the communities.

Based on experience, specify the cycle and phases —initiation, development and exit— for a community to follow; that facilitates the training and repetition of the STD processes. The previous definitions would help establish the level and status of the basic needs of the communities and their capacity for self-management and community management and, thus, the necessary work plan to reach the level of development expected by SSID.

- ### *Gender*

The regional offices promote training as a means to reinforce women's leadership. Today, many of them hold executive positions in the organizations to which they belong and are characterized by their commitment to the development of the programs and activities. The SSID regional offices are an example; that is not the case with the national office.

It is worth noting the egalitarian and respectful treatment given by the regional teams to the communities. They keep them informed, take into account their decisions, work together, monitor the implementation of their training, and present progress reports to the community. The training programs take place either at the regional offices or in community premises.

Personal initiative is the motive for updating and engaging in further training and is a general behavior among the SSID team members. They attend workshops and give lectures to other organizations. The SSID does not have training and updating programs for its staff.

Sometimes, because of the minimum bonus they receive, promoters leave the SSID to work with other organizations. However, most of the promoters remain, in spite of the bonus.

An important aspect to ensure the participation of women is the motivation and monitoring of their work by the regional team. They are increasingly holding directive positions in their community's social organizations and other.

- ### *Mature Communities Abandoning the SSID*

The behavioral changes and the welfare state achieved by the poorest communities with which the SSID has been working for two decades, prove that the work processes applied are valid and recognized. We consider some communities are ready to move on without the SSID support; the withdrawal must be done by mutual agreement with the communities. It is necessary to think about training replacement personnel, since some of the promoters and leaders are elderly.

The promoters working with the SSID are a valuable resource when the time comes for a community to move on. They are important to keep in touch after and because they could become a team to replicate and disseminate the SSID proposal.

- ### *Emergency Attention*

Taking into account the national and bi-national experience in emergency attention, we suggest identifying the best practices and the lessons learned in order to define an institutional policy and design a program that incorporates the systematization of the processes and procedures to prevent the risks, attend emergencies and offer post-crisis support.

- ### *Participation Spaces*

The 2006-2010 SP did not include strategies regarding participation spaces; however, the performance during the five-year period lets us conclude that the SSID is acting in spaces aligned with its mission, spaces in which the Churches —working for community development and emergency attention— take part, trying to make a difference for the most vulnerable populations.

- ### *SSID must Covey its Position*

The SSID acts independently, is under no pressures, belongs to no political party and —at a national and international scale— people expect it to express its position regarding the fulfillment of the rights and responsibilities of the country's vulnerable population. The idea is not to assume a political partisan position but to pose questions about poverty, resource distribution, land ownership, etc. to the government and decision-makers. In other words, the SSID must inform its position to the Dominican and international society.

Defining that position is the responsibility of the Churches that make up the SSID's Assembly. Defining it makes possible to assume a role in society and contributes to reinforce the connection between the community needs and the work done at a national level.

It is important to share with the donor agencies and national/international partners that position and the changes done to the SSID's work proposal.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- ***Turning the SSID's Proposal into a Model***

The community work proposal should become a model that allows the development of a cycle, with its corresponding processes and procedures, aimed at defining where to begin, how to advance, and when to let go, apart from guaranteeing the quality of the results. The model would: facilitate its repetition and adaptation to specific contexts, while maintaining the main features —such as the Christ-centered principles and values; answer to the agendas of community organizations and contribute to a joint planning. The facilitator role of the SSID team —not providing program contents— supports itself in the relations network for community training and updates. Development and permanence time. Community self-management and management, and the importance of the SSID's team as a complement for community management.

The model construction has to start from a systematization of the work experiences of each regional office; that job could be done with the help of the community leaders.

The SSID's model would help establish the level and status of the basic needs of the communities, define the necessary work plan and the necessary time to reach the level of development expected by SSID.

Defining the model would also allow keeping the topics and contents updated according to the community agendas and the country's situation; transcending the health, pre-school education and agricultural production topics and advance towards the development of community management and prevention capabilities. Therefore, it will be of great importance to bear in mind, in future training programs, topics such as rights, governance, gender, domestic violence, adolescence and childhood, negotiation, teamwork and personal communication.

The model will also help donors and communities understand the proposal's cycle and features: the "starting point" and "expected changes" in each case; it is not enough that the SSID's personnel understand it.

- ***Partnership and relation's Network***

The SSID could help to train the organized communities to establish temporary provincial networks as a means to raise funds and solve common needs, as well as influence the decision of the national government in the fulfillment of the population's rights.

In order to reinforce the work connection and guarantee mutual support between the local and national levels, we suggest keeping a permanent communication between the national and the regional and local levels of the Churches and communities through radio and virtual communication media.

The sustainable transforming development approach has promoted the creation of local organizations that need to join efforts and establish networks to facilitate their work at the regional, national and international levels. Therefore, the community organizations must be strengthen and it is necessary to promote solidarity —based on Christian/Christ-centered principles and values—, with the management and risk prevention contents as its core.

- ***Reinforcing the Internal Capacity to Act***

Given the SSID's nature and mission, we recommend checking on the management and inclusion of the spiritual content, the transmission of the Christ-centered principles and values associated to the work done, and the rights and responsibilities of every citizen, as well as motivating and promoting the equitable representation of men and women in the diverse programs.

The institutional training policies and strategy should be explicitly stated —in the Strategic Plan 2011–2015—, including the aspects of sustainable transforming development STD and community capabilities, emergency prevention and attention, and partnerships.

In order to guarantee the appropriation of the proposal by everyone at the SSID (Assembly, Board of Directors, work teams, promoters and volunteer leaders), we suggest including in the next strategic plan the training of SSID's personnel on the STD approach, institutional policies and work strategies, processes and procedures in community work, network participation and fund-raising.

The Executive Director is overloaded with work and needs people to support him in his institutional leadership role, reinforcing the connections between the work of the regional offices and the team at the Headquarters. Therefore, it is very important to fill the vacancies: appoint a bilingual person for the Communications post, and a bilingual professional to support the Operative Manager.

Ask the international partners for help with the personnel's capacity and performance assessments in order to define the training and updating needs, and revise the workload and work conditions.

Fulfilling the work agreements with partners reinforces their trust and commitment. Presenting reports, work plans, timely and top-quality written

and spoken answers, must be features of the work done by the SSID team at all levels.

- ### *Development of Community Abilities*

We suggest going further into the understanding of community self-management and management and the sustainable transforming development approach, as well as into the way of materializing them in each program.

We suggest identifying the best practices and lessons received so that the teams can learn from experience, exchange information among the regional offices, and give and receive feedback.

The process of changing the work approach requires new incentives to keep the personnel's motivation. SSID should acknowledge its staff's efforts; the team must know the human resource's policies and work must be done to train reinforcement or replacement personnel.

We suggest analyzing the experiences of the national and international platforms —i.e. Dominican-Haitian Talks— to adjust accordingly the institutional and regional offices' work.

We suggest checking the recording of names of people and institutions working with the Northwest and East Regional Offices, in order to use them in their work.

In the budget, rendering of accounts and comparisons, we suggest differentiating the cash and in-kind resources, defining the percentage spent in programs and administration in each office, and comparing the results in each regional office to establish the cost-benefit of the work done.

There are differences in the fund-raising processes and results: some regional offices have enough resources and some don´t because of the individual management. We suggest studying the management at each office in order to identify the best practices and draw up a plan to achieve a synergy in institutional fund-raising and avoid imbalances in the regional work.

- ### *Stating Clearly the Work Policies and Strategies*

State clearly the SSID's proposal, its principles and values, mission and vision, policies and strategies, as well as its scope, in order to define its role and connections between the community, provincial, national and international development levels.

- ### *Emergencies*

Emergency attention —the common thread in SSID's work— must be redefined starting from the recent experiences. It should not be a reactive work —when the emergency occurs— but an integral part of the SSID Strategic Plan.

Taking into account the national and bi-national experience in emergency attention, we suggest identifying the best practices and the lessons learned in order to define an institutional policy and design a program that incorporates the systematization of the processes and procedures to prevent risks, attend emergencies and offer post-crisis support.

SSID has new opportunities with ACT Alliance, therefore, the next strategic plan should state clearly the policies regarding emergency prevention and attention, the design of a program including geographical coverage, topics, installed capacity, available resources, response process and procedure systematization, training plan for risk management —incorporating international standards and the sustainable transforming development process—, and partnerships. SSID could ask its allies for help in the development of these policies.

- *Gender*

Taking into account the SSID's leadership, and to avoid contradictions between teachings and acts, the principle of equality among men and women must be reflected in the diverse teams that conform its institutional structure (Assembly, Board of Directors, Executive Management, Coordinators, Program Directors, support teams and volunteers). This might require a revision of the Articles of the institution.

It is necessary to involve the women working in all the offices in technical and managerial work and let them take part in the diverse national and international networks. Regional offices must promote a gender balance, including men in the health and education programs, and women in the agriculture programs. We also suggest hiring Haitian descendants for the teams.

- *Youth*

It would be convenient to take advantage of the interest of young people in receiving training as health and education leaders; they could teach several topics, the way to apply them and where to do it. They could support the work done by the health promoters, pre-school and education facilitators, and community leaders.

- *Program Contents*

Revising the training topics and contents to transcend the health, pre-school education and agricultural production topics and advance towards the development of community management and prevention capabilities. Therefore, in future training programs, it will be of great importance to bear in mind topics such as rights, governance, gender, domestic violence, adolescence and childhood, negotiation, teamwork and personal communication.

- ***Communication for Action***

The SSID needs more communication. It must transmit what it does with the communities and take advantage of radio and virtual media to share its work and gather support.

- ***Concentration, Focusing towards Action***

The SSID has a great working potential with its current and previous national and international partners. However, some of them sense there is program dispersion, that the personnel is wearing out and the costs are too high. To obtain better results, they suggest focusing geographically and topic-wise — doing what you really know how to do—, and prioritizing the topics according to the capacity and availability of resources.

The SSID must bear in mind that AIN/NCA has defined as its institutional policy for 2011 – 2015 to focus in the Haitian border and Haiti itself. The relevant topics for both countries are environment (water and new energy sources) and climate change. They are willing to work with new organizations in both countries.

Haiti is priority for the national and international allies and that must be seen as an opportunity for the SSID. Therefore, it must define and transmit its work policies, strategies and programs for the next five years so that the allies can draw up working plans with the SSID.

- ***Diversifying the Financial Sources***

Ask for advice to design a fund-raising plan, define strategies and learn to deal with donors from other sectors (private companies). The fund-raising role of the regional coordinators must be defined, as well as the processes and procedures necessary to strengthen the institutional image and proposal in order to achieve budget stability in all the offices.

- ***National and International Partnerships***

The next Strategic Plan must incorporate the institutional policy regarding the SSID's participation in national and international alliances with Churches, social organizations, national government, political parties and cooperation agencies, in order to define a strategy to guide the five regional offices, the headquarters team and the Board of Directors on their role to contribute to the achievement of the institutional purposes. Those definitions will draw an institutional action program to avoid centralizing in one or two people and participating inefficiently. It would also reinforce the connection between the local, provincial and national levels and the international sphere, creating a synergy to favor the basic rights of the vulnerable population of the country and region.

The Northwest Regional Office, in Dajabón, has experience in carrying out bi-national projects to promote a peaceful coexistence, reconciliation and

dialogue. Those experiences could serve as an example for the other regional offices and as material for the previously mentioned definitions.

- ***Research***

We suggest doing —together with Dominican universities— some community comparative studies (communities with SSID support in health and education).

8. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The aims and objectives of the 2006 – 2010 Strategic Plan were achieved and the Sustainable Transforming Development —STD— proposal is effective since it develops abilities to make sustainable the SSID work.

The change in the habits and behaviors of the communities is confirmed by the sustainable results regarding children's health, pre-school education, agricultural production and community organization. The process takes many years and centers on building trust and confidence, mutual respect, equality, verifiable results, follow up and accompaniment. Long-term processes are expensive, and demand perseverance, accompaniment, exchanges and permanent work between the SSID team and its allies.

The SSID's proposal answers the basic needs and priorities of its subject population —beneficiaries—, and is consistent with the United Nations Millennium Goals, the government plans, and the policies and programs of cooperation agencies and partner organizations.

The community organizations and actions to solve the common needs proof the sustainability of the SSID's proposal and, therefore, the possibility of reaching an end to the support given to certain communities in order to expand the experience to new communities, with the help of the same leaders.

The management work of the regional offices was an important contribution — in cash and in-kind— to achieve the objectives and goals of the five-year period. There was a decrease and delay in the resources received from cooperation agencies and other donors, as well as unforeseen expenses due to the national and Haitian emergencies. The allied cooperation agencies partially financed the emergencies. The team had to make an extra effort to cover the gap and fulfill its goals and obligations towards the communities. Therefore, the program expenses justify the results achieved in the five-year period.

The available information does not allow doing a result analysis that takes into account the regional and national income and expenses. That would let us determine the efficiency of the work done in each region. The sustainable results lead us to conclude there is an important cost-benefit and cost-efficiency relation.

Finally, the SSID must continue advancing and examining in greater detail the sustainable transforming development —STD— approach and keep, as interdependent pillars, the development of community fund-raising and basic

need fulfillment capabilities, the prevention of climatic risks and emergency attention, and the national and international partnerships to influence the fulfillment of the basic rights of the vulnerable population.