



2006 to 2011 Strategic Plan  
Mid-Term Review Report

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*October 2009*

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At the time of writing no report has been received from the reviewers of the India or Guyana programmes and only summarised findings have been submitted by the reviewers of the Russia, Georgia and UK programmes.

A final report shall be prepared on delivery of these reports.

## Executive Summary

In the summer of 2009 EveryChild undertook a peer review process to assess its progress against the 2006-11 strategic plan. A peer review process was selected to try and build organisational communication and knowledge sharing as well as to provide status reports and recommendations on programmes. There is a natural trade-off in using such an approach. As one of the reviewers fed back on the process:

“External experts could make the review at the different level and more professional. Peer review gave an opportunity to get country representatives to get involved in the work of the organisation as one unit and was a good training in assessment of the programmes.”

The reviews may therefore lack the consistency of approach that a single external reviewer may have delivered and the depth of analysis is variable between reports. Some of the reviewers commented on the completely different culture to their own country and the difficulty in applying the knowledge and skills they had developed in their own programme to a significantly different political, social, economic and technological environment. However, colleagues’ working together in a different cultural environment has provided many opportunities for innovative thinking, created a greater sense of ownership of the process and enabled more effective future follow up and discussion, integration into strategy development and support between countries.

Above all the process should be viewed as a learning exercise both for the individuals involved and the organisation itself.

In view of the dual objectives of the process the summary report is divided into two parts, the first summarising the key findings of the country reviews and the second focussing on the process and the learning feedback received from reviewers and reviewed offices.

### Part 1 –The Reviews

Contained within part 1 of the report is a summary of each country’s review report to highlight what each country is doing well, the challenges they face and recommendations for future actions. There is a summary of each of the global strategic directions with a summary of progress and finally some considerations for development of the next strategic plan.

The reviews are highly positive about the clearer focus of the organisation’s programme. There is an appreciation that the focus on separation has provided a more targeted and coordinated framework for programmes than the disparate project base inherited from ECT and CCF.

All the country strategies are reported as being in alignment with the global strategy, although there are questions raised in a couple of countries over the targeting of beneficiary groups and whether children without parental care are separately addressed from the generally vulnerable population. The development and recent issue of a Conceptual Framework for the organisation has been unanimously welcomed and is expected to provide a clear mechanism for future alignment of activities with strategic objectives.

The programmes divide into two clear groups largely defined by the political context in which they are operating. The Former Soviet Union countries tend to work very closely with national and local government to affect legislative and policy change due to the high level of state involvement in delivery of services, whereas the African, Asian and South American countries tend to work more at a community level, where the absence of strong state interventions leave NGOs to provide much of the grass-roots support. These different approaches to programming were emphasised in organisational thinking at the beginning of the strategic period by the regional structure of strategy planning and management.

While the political and cultural environments are vital in planning appropriate and effective activities they should not be considered as alternative models of working and there are of course many complexities within each country's context. The most significant change in strategic programming targeted by this 5-year plan was to a rights based approach, where the linkage of community level work and empowerment, advocacy on national legislative and policy frameworks and critically the broad engagement of civil society were fundamental to programme design and delivery. At a more fundamental level there is a shift from a project implementing organisation to a development organisation.

Although many of the country reviews report progress and in some cases achievement of a rights based approach, the regional contexts noted above has led to emphasis on either community or state, to a degree working within the system rather than affecting change in the system. None of the countries have as yet managed to fully combine effective working at state and community level where an evidence-base is developed to inform authorities of better means of service provision, and all appear to have found the broader civil society engagement particularly difficult. A number of the reviews do illustrate participation in various forums and links with larger institutions such as Unicef, but few clearly identify the means by which the most marginalised sections of society have been identified, represented and involved in programme development. The move to a rights based approach is a fundamental change in organisational approach and positioning for which further guidance on its implementation is required to ensure the conversion from guiding principle to practical action.

The reviews commented on what appear to be resource intensive interventions whose replication more widely could prove difficult, and others where anecdotally extremely effective actions were achieved at comparatively low cost. A common problem for all countries is how to measure the comparative impact of these activities and convert the anecdotal impression into objective conclusions. For example the support to community social workers in the Ukraine was seen as a far more efficient action than a labour intensive specialised unit for mothers and babies. This raises two key issues in determining approach:

- Some actions, such as the impact on prevention of institutionalisation from the Mother and Baby Unit, are far easier to track after the project than secondary benefits such as those from services provided by trained social workers. Over-reliance on smart, and particularly measurable indicators could favour projects where data is more easily attainable.
- Cost-benefit of interventions is of course not the only determinant of value to the programme or organisation. Effective programming will always be a balance of planned activities that provide both immediate results and development of new models of working. The perception of effectiveness and impact should not therefore be purely an assessment of volume and investment, but it does require effective communication in both upward and downward accountability to articulate the aim, reasoning and result of those activities.

While there is a generally accepted need to be able to assess the impact of the organisation, or at least to define how it will determine success or failure, there is no clear method or framework for how this will be achieved. This is considered a key requirement of the next strategic plan along with implementation of the Effective Programmes Framework.

A number of the reviews raised concerns regarding the localisation process. This is understandable as the consequences are significant for those affected. The balancing of priorities in leaving sustainable local organisations while ensuring EveryChild itself has a critical mass of programming going forward has been a significant challenge for the organisation, exacerbated by the global financial crisis reducing the level of available general funds. The decisions taken to balance past, present and future obligations of the organisation have by necessity reduced the originally anticipated level of funding available to localising countries and this has raised concerns in some countries about the timeframe and level of support to localisation.

Consideration of the development of an alliance structure was beyond the scope of this review, however a number of the reviews noted that progress and clarity on the issue is critical to future planning. There is of course more immediate interest for localising countries as participation will influence their independent positioning, branding and support mechanisms.

The review recommends greater clarity on the organisations approach and classification of working with partners. In a broad context there is the strategic approach of expanding the organisation's influence through working with established national and international institutions and organisations. However, the means by which this is operationalised, whether through direct relationship from London, via in-country branches or liaison offices, or consultancies with no general fund allocation, and the benefits to programming and presence achieved through these models is less clear. EveryChild's capacity and systems to manage those relationships effectively, to fully evaluate and learn from those projects and ensure that partnership working contributes to EveryChild's profile and presence should be considered. There is general agreement that working through partners is an effective strategy but to make the most of those relationships the means of working together should ensure EveryChild obtains best value and result.

A further consideration arising from a move to a partnership way of working is whether there will need to be the level of central corporate service as is currently required to support an implementing branch network.

There has been major progress on advocacy and the recent Global Advocacy Strategy is warmly welcomed. There is a concern that some parts of the organisation were not represented in the Group and should be brought on board as soon as possible, however it should be noted that the review took place shortly after the strategy was finalised and communication has been taking place since.

There are a number of cases where strengths in some parts of the organisation could be shared with others. An example is the strong communications and awareness building capacity in Moldova and Ukraine. There is a general feeling that to date there have been limited organisational knowledge sharing opportunities, but it is hoped that the intranet will assist in overcoming this.

A clear message from the reviews is the organisation's reliance on its human resource. The benefit of stable teams is clearly noted, but equally the negative effect of high turnover in the UK with the consequent loss of institutional memory was a concern in the first half of the period that should be addressed in the remainder. The introduction of a Performance Management System was broadly welcomed, although the time demands of applying best-practice was a concern to some.

The key organisational actions recommended for the remainder of the strategic period are:

- Further guidance and training on the rights based approach is needed to firmly establish the organisational approach and measures should be implemented to ensure programme and project planning incorporates this approach.
- Finalisation of the Effective Programmes Framework including the development of impact assessment and M&E methodologies and guidance. This should be rolled-out with a capacity building programme.
- Clarity on the future structure of the organisation, and a decision on the alliance model, would be beneficial for the future planning of programmes, particularly in the short-term for those approaching localisation.
- An assessment of the impact on localising countries, both in timeframe and resourcing, of the strategic fund allocation decisions is needed to ensure plans for localisation will be met by the end of the strategic period, however this should not be at the expense of progressing the organisation's strategy to re-focus areas of work to fit the mission..
- Clarification of the forms of partnership working in the organisation and the operational and management structures that deliver best results for the organisation would assist future planning of branch development. More detailed reviews and lesson capturing from partnership programmes such as Ethiopia are recommended.
- Consider increasing fundraising capacity support to country programmes and implemented as appropriate. More strategic support to devolved statutory fundraising is already in place with the creation of a dedicated team in the programmes department, but an assessment of the value of building capacity in-country to publicly fundraise should be undertaken to clarify the likely return on such investment.
- Ensure the voluntary income base is stabilised. The reviewers voiced concerns about the downward trend in sponsorship in recent years and welcomed the measures taken to date to reverse this trend. Further extension of this core base of support should be reviewed, but

with the understanding that competing demands for finite fundraising resource must be balanced for both short-term and long-term income growth.

- Communication of the Global Advocacy Strategy and broad engagement of the organisation in the process should be ensured.
- The role of the Child Protection and Participation Policy Group should be communicated to the organisation, particularly to clarify the continuity of earlier work in this respect.
- The intranet should be finalised and staff fully trained to utilise it.
- Consideration should be given to the board and management relationships to overcome the inherent difficulties of infrequent meetings to make strategic and operational business.
- The impact of the Performance Management System should continue to be monitored. While some simplification of the process is desired this should not be at the expense of the organisational benefits that accrue from an effective staff development process.
- Ensuring that development of the next strategic plan is conducted on a bottom-up basis, with sufficient time for full situational and participatory analysis in each country using the Conceptual and Effective Programming Frameworks as its foundation.

## **Part 2 – The process**

Reviewers unanimously voiced their appreciation of the learning opportunity provided by participation in the process, and overwhelmingly endorsed the process as a valuable personal development process. Logistical issues including the closure of the Kyrgyz branch and management changes in Cambodia, limited the number of potential participants. Therefore greater reliance was placed on some offices than would have been ideal. However, reviewers perceived great benefit from working in teams of two, particularly those managers accompanying Country Directors on their field visit.

The common concern was the time allocated for the reviews. Each team spent around 10 days with the country programme they were reviewing. The terms of reference was probably over-ambitious for this amount of time, however in most cases the reviewers did a remarkable job in covering the areas defined. The process was conducted under obvious budget constraints and the delays in confirming the reviews would take place combined with the need to deliver conclusions in time to affect the remainder of the strategy and inform the next strategy necessarily condensed the time available for planning, visits and report writing. Should a similar process take place in future the pre-visit planning and write-up time should not be under-estimated, nor the demands placed upon offices to ensure adequate back-filling of roles during the process.

There is a question whether the process worked as effectively for the UK office as it did for programme offices. There are a number of factors that may influence this, including the comparative scale and complexity of the review, the availability of programmes staff who are frequently overseas and access to overseas partner organisations implementing work on behalf of the UK office. In future consideration should be given as to whether alternative means of reviewing the UK office would be appropriate.

## **Next Steps**

A legitimate concern raised in the feedback was that the reviews would simply become an end in themselves, rather than informing the future and affecting organisational development. It is sincerely hoped that this will not be the case as the reviews should now be used in the following ways:

- Country Directors and Global Programmes Management should consider the recommendations of the reviews in the annual operating plans for 2010-11 and strategic planning beyond.
- The Strategic Planning Group and others engaged in developing the EveryChild strategy beyond 2011 should use the reviews to inform priorities and constraints noted in the reviews.
- As the organisation develops through localisation the ongoing communication and knowledge sharing between independent but like-minded organisations is likely to be one of the greatest challenges. Hopefully this process has assisted in providing many of the participants with experience of such collaboration,

There are some areas where the reviews identified updates were necessary to the Global Strategy or specific Country Strategic Plans. It is questionable whether devoting staff time to a fundamental re-write of the strategy at this point is the most effective use of resource. A more effective solution may be an update or consolidation document that captures changes since the original document was prepared. A 5-year planning period is long in any organisation, but particularly so when events such as the banking crisis of 2008/09 impact so significantly on planning. A shorter planning horizon may be desirable in the next strategic plan, but certainly more regular review and update meetings are recommended during the strategic period, for which the proposed Strategic Planning Group would be an ideal mechanism.

## **Conclusion**

The process was extremely challenging and only deliverable because of the commitment of all the participants, both reviewers and their hosts. Our thanks go to all those who took part. It has given an insight to both the things we have in common and the complete differences between programmes.

While recognising the many recommendations that arose from the reviews it is equally if not more important to recognise the achievements noted and the extra-ordinary work that is being achieved across our operations. As a community leader told our Malawi review team “Keep it up and give us support”.

## Background

### EveryChild

EveryChild is an International charitable organisation focussed on children without parental care. Its vision is to create a world that allows every child to grow and develop to its full potential, free from poverty, violence, abuse and exploitation. To realise its vision, the organisation aims to protect the most vulnerable children and gives them the chance to grow up in loving families with a safe and secure future. The organisation's programme is designed to give children the tools they need to shape their own future.

The organisation is a registered charity in the UK, where the primary fundraising activity takes place along with global advocacy, programme direction and support as well as central governance and administration. The programme is implemented through owned branches in 10 countries (Country Programmes) and relationships with independent partner organisations in other territories.

The review process coincided with the decision to suspend operations in Kyrgyzstan. In view of the necessary withdrawal procedures taking place at the time of the review it was considered inappropriate to conduct a review of the office at this time. The review also coincided with a change of management in Cambodia, but in spite of the absence of a permanent Country Director the review did take place. Therefore reviews were conducted in:

Peru  
Guyana  
Ukraine  
Moldova  
Russia  
Georgia  
Malawi  
Cambodia  
India  
UK

### Purpose of the Mid-Term Reviews

The organisation is working to a 5-year global strategy (2006-2011), within which each of its country programmes is working to its own 4-year strategy (2007-2011). The mid-term review conducted in the summer 2009 was an opportunity to ascertain progress against those plans, assess the likelihood of the organisation achieving its strategic objectives by the end of the planning period, and to learn lessons to incorporate into future strategy development.

The review therefore had a number of objectives:

- Providing each of the country programmes with a review of their progress against plan;

- Identification of common themes, successes and issues across the organisation;
- Gathering of information on impact to inform development of the next strategic plan;
- Improved communication across the organisation and sharing of knowledge; and
- Individual development of staff participating in the process.

Although all EveryChild offices work in the field of child separation they operate in very different social and political environments and often focus on different causes and solutions. It has therefore been historically difficult to provide supporters, beneficiaries and other stakeholders with a single clear report of the charity's performance and impact. A key objective of the mid-term review was to seek out areas of commonality and consistency.

As the charity considers its next strategic plan the means by which success or failure will be assessed needs to be determined. Summarising the complex and diverse activities EveryChild undertakes into a few key indicators of performance is challenging, both in terms of defining those indicators but also in identifying the availability of relevant and timely data with which to monitor regular progress.

So, as well as two levels of review (country and global) we also set out to consider both progress against the current strategic plan and lessons for the development of the next.

## Part 1: The Review

### Context

#### Geographic and programmatic focus

In the period from the creation of EveryChild to the end of 2005 the organisation was operating in 18 countries implementing projects inherited from its forebears ECT and CCF. The result of the amalgamation of territories and projects meant that there was a lack of focus to activities and a danger of over-trading. The organisation was spreading its resources too thinly compared to similar sized organisations and in danger of over-spending to meet demand.

EveryChild had to make pragmatic and difficult decisions about the countries to phase out from in both the short and long terms, and to determine the optimal size and scope of the organisation. As well as geographic focus there was also a re-definition of core work areas to target impact at a particular group of beneficiaries. The focus determined was separation with particular emphasis on HIV/AIDS and trafficking.

The strategy identified Africa, Asia and the Caucuses/Central Asia as the areas of primary interest. One in three children in sub-Saharan Africa is predicted to grow up as orphans by 2015 due to AIDS. Asia's children are particularly susceptible to trafficking and migration issues. The organisation's track record of policy reform on de-institutionalisation in the Western Former Soviet Union (FSU) provided an excellent platform for continuation of this impact to the east and into central Asia.

Pragmatic views on fundraising also played a role in determining the strategy. The British Government and individual donors have a long-established links with Africa and Asia and therefore provided greater opportunities for maximising revenues. Additionally the large administrative cost of managing geographically disparate programmes suggested a need to identify cost-effective means of regional management.

The result was a strategy of withdrawal from South East Europe in the short-term and from South America and the Western FSU in the medium term. Therefore early withdrawal from programmes in Kosovo, Albania, Bulgaria and Romania were targeted during the period, with progress made toward withdrawal from Peru, Guyana, Russia, Ukraine and Moldova.

In order to maintain a breadth of operations sufficient to maintain EveryChild's position as a credible INGO, expansion into new territories in the focus areas was planned for a phased reallocation of available resource on withdrawal from the above mentioned regions.

The impact of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) also influenced programme approach. This prompted a move from a needs-based approach to programme design and delivery to a rights-based approach. Simplistically the change in approach should result in less of a top-down distribution of aid and materials to a far more participative bottom-up planning of the longer term position of children in the community, however the implications of this change are fundamental in EveryChild's positioning as an international development NGO.

Re-alignment of the programme required a re-assessment of EveryChild's internal organisation to provide the best support for global operations.

### **Other contextual factors**

In the years preceding the strategic plan there had been a gradual decline in the numbers of sponsors and the income generated in this way. Although institutional grant income was increasing to mitigate the reduced individual giving this meant that more of the organisation's funding was restricted in its use. This meant there were less available general funds which needed to be shared between a rising demand for central capacity support from the UK and free funds to target programmatically effective interventions in operating countries.

The global financial crisis in the autumn of 2008 has had a significant impact on the organisation's planning. As well as pressurising income levels the reduction in the value of the pound on international exchange markets dramatically impacted an organisation whose funding model is primarily to raise funds in the UK for spending overseas.

The financial crisis had knock on effects on individual countries, with food and fuel prices in a number of countries escalating to put pressure on project resources. Georgia's conflict with Russia resulted in significant upheaval in that country's programme and there have been natural disasters, such as earthquake in Peru and floods in India that the programmes have had to cope with while trying to implement a focussed strategy.

### **Progress, challenges and recommendations**

The purpose of this section is to identify at a country level what is working well, what is not working so well and what could be done differently. Reviewers were asked to try and identify any practices in countries that were proving to be particularly effective means of delivery, or not as the case may be, with a view to sharing these lessons across the organisation.

The following are highly distilled summaries of each country's review. As this is presented as a learning document for the organisation there is a greater focus on what could be changed or improved. This should not be taken to mean there is a lack of progress or achievement during the first half of the review. The detailed reports appended to this summary contain a wealth of positive results from each country that are too numerous to list here.

#### **Cambodia**

##### **Progress to date**

The office operates as a liaison office, with project implementation being conducted through two large partner organisations. A change in one of the partners was required during the period causing significant disruption to the programme. The office has developed partnership guidelines.

The programme is considered to be 'generally on track', though there was considered to be a narrow focus on quite a small number of beneficiaries (children in conflict with the law),

while not addressing the annual doubling of children under 5-years old in residential care. The links of project activities to the specific focus of separation were difficult to identify.

Very little is done in the country to develop social protection. Most NGOs are focussed on direct intervention rather than the underlying social issues. There do not appear to be any organisations operating in the niche of work against institutional care.

The office is developing advocacy and accountability strategies, though both need implementing in practice. Although central government is highly autocratic the programme has developed a good reputation with local authorities.

There is a mix of funding, with a sponsorship programme as well as institutional funding.

## Challenges

High levels of staff turnover have made continuity of approach difficult. Few of the current staff had any involvement in the development of the country strategic plan.

The review questioned whether the programme office is developing expertise from these partnerships as the resource of the office does not permit sufficient time to monitor and evaluate the partners' projects. Resource limitations have also restricted any expansion to work with more partners.

Advocacy work has begun, though within a highly restrictive political system. A general scepticism of the value of advocacy was noted as with communications.

There is very little local fundraising, and no real strategy to develop it. This may be reflective of a broader legal constraint in some countries where the nature of the office and its registration with government can restrict the opportunities for local fundraising.

Community Councils were started with UNICEF as a means of monitoring child welfare, but UNICEF have withdrawn from the project, considering the councils to be a cost-inefficient and ineffective means of delivery.

## Recommendations

- The programme should re-define and focus on children at greatest risk of separation.
- The liaison office's capacity and resource to effectively monitor and evaluate partner activities should be reviewed along with its role in local fundraising.
- Encourage greater participation by communities.
- Use influence with local authorities to develop a model of social service. Malawi and India programmes could provide useful information on provision in the absence of state provision.
- Explore opportunities to learn from other parts of the organisation (particularly FSU countries) regarding alternatives to institutional care, though being mindful of the local context of control and management of such institutions.
- Develop clearer measures of progress and means of communicating them.

## Georgia

### Progress to date

The reviewers found that the programme is on track to achieve its strategic objectives with all projects in-line with global focus.

The programme has a strong profile in the country. Significant progress has been made in influencing legislative change and development of a national Child Action Plan.

The number of children in institutional care has more than halved (from 5,000 to 2,300).

Nationwide gate-keeping committees have been created involving multi-disciplinary teams. No child now enters care without a full assessment. Social worker models have been replicated across all 11 regions of the country.

The programme worked with government to replicate statutory services across all regions in the country.

As a result of the conflict with Russia a category of internally displaced children was added to the strategy, but the reviewers believe this to be in line with the overall EveryChild strategy. Issues of re-integration for adolescents leaving care were also identified and added to programme planning.

Staffing is stable and progress has been made on generating local income from links with UNICEF and other institutions.

### Challenges

Over the past 2 years the programme has benefitted from significant funding under the TACIS programme. It is difficult to assess whether many of the prevention initiatives will be maintained when this funding stops.

Local legislation does not encourage corporate giving to NGOs.

The conflict with Russia has shifted government priorities.

Due to the poor quality of the large institutions the government spends most of its budget repairing and maintaining them with little remaining to spend on prevention or alternative forms of care.

Successes in moving children from large institutions to small care homes are still based on separation rather than prevention.

Child participation is limited both in the programme and with Government.

Monitoring and evaluation systems need to be more formalised.

### Recommendations

- Develop child participation methodologies.

- Communications presence should be increased, including development of the website.
- A clearer definition of organisational structure and line management.
- Formal M&E systems should be developed.

## Guyana

Report awaited

## India

Report awaited

## Malawi

Progress to date

The programme is meeting the objectives in the country strategic plan.

The rights-based approach has been adopted across all projects although the high poverty levels mean that basic needs still have to be met before effective interventions can be made.

Strong partnerships have been built with communities.

Anecdotal feedback from community leaders indicate that school attendance has increased as a result of the provision of food aid while child abuse, discrimination, early marriages and gender violence have all reduced. Children are encouraged to speak out far more.

The programme is highly skilled at administering sponsorship, with clear reporting lines from project to country level.

Awareness meetings have shown particularly effective results in changing attitudes for little investment.

### Challenges:

The ongoing provision of aid to enable children to participate in programmes is highly resource intensive.

There is little state intervention at community level. There is an unclear plan for hand-over of responsibilities to duty-bearers.

### Recommendations:

- Develop partnerships with NGOs specialising in relief to concentrate on specialist programming.
- Identify alternative sources of funding to reduce reliance on the sponsorship programme.
- Explore the possibility of developing projects nearer to the capital (Lilongwe) in order to engage government and other key decision-makers, though not at the expense of working with the most vulnerable target groups.

- The programme should be more 'aggressive' in its representation of child rights with Government and other NGOs.
- Increase production of communication materials to raise awareness and support advocacy at national level.

## Moldova

### Progress to date:

The strategy is clear and on focus.

The programme has strong links with all levels of government, and a key influencing role. A Ministry of Social Protection has been created to consolidate government responsibilities previously held in Education Ministry.

A network of over 1,100 social assistants has been established along with the introduction of gate-keeping methodology and formation of a gate-keeping commission. Multi-disciplinary teams were found to be a highly effective means of addressing baby abandonment.

The closure of one large institutional home was a clear signal of the shift in national policy.

Communications are strong with a weekly programme on social reform being selected as radio programme of the year.

Partnerships and alliances with other NGOs to strengthen advocacy have been developed.

### Challenges:

Local fundraising is proving difficult, which may be an issue for localisation. Experience suggests that people want to give to tangible projects rather than policy initiatives.

A family counselling centre was created with the aim of charging fees to those who could afford to pay for consultation. This was not found to be a good fit with the state level focus of programme office activities and was therefore little used.

Working closely with government was found to result in significant delays in implementation due to the bureaucracy involved.

There is a lack of participation of communities and particularly children. It is proving difficult to link national advocacy with community level interventions.

A parent and baby unit was found to be successful but highly resource intensive for few beneficiaries. The cost involved has raised questions over the ability to replicate the model.

### Recommendations:

- A number of projects finished in the period and others began. The CSP should be updated to reflect this.
- Greater engagement with communities should be pursued to promote a 'bottom-up' approach.

- Children's voices should be incorporated into advocacy initiatives.
- There needs to be greater clarity on and support for the localisation process.

## Peru

### Progress to date:

The programme is on focus with global strategy.

The rights-based approach has been adopted in all projects, although some of the interactions with duty-bearers such as the police do not always reflect these rights.

There is a high degree of participation of children, parents and communities in the programme. Children participate in the municipal budget setting process, which has achieved much in raising their voices.

There is a targeted focus on violence towards children, and the comprehensive approach to this particular issue has enabled the programme to reach more beneficiaries.

The programme is withdrawing from the sponsorship programme.

### Challenges

A lot of commendable advocacy has been achieved at local level but it has proven difficult to engage policy and legislation at a higher state or national level.

There is little engagement of men in the programme.

The production of training materials for schools has not been completed, which is delaying programme results.

Withdrawal from the Huancayo project has proven difficult with the need for technical assistance to continue to prevent loss of the achievements made.

Development of a business plan for localisation has taken longer than expected and the period to localise is now considered too short.

Localisation is highly dependent on identifying alternative sources of income to the historic sponsorship programme. The loss of the EveryChild name and its associated profile may reduce these opportunities further.

The ability of the programme to retain its human resource post-localisation is a concern.

### Recommendations:

- Violence and separation indicators need to be better defined, along with means of tracking them through an M&E process.
- There should be clearer linkage of the practical community level action with the higher level building of constituencies and influencing decision-makers.
- A comprehensive capacity building model is needed if community based organisations are to be sustainable after EveryChild's withdrawal.

- The programme should engage in national fundraising initiative and seek out sector support bodies in Peru as well as seeking capacity building support from the UK. A period of co-branding post localisation should be considered until the organisation has built its local reputation.
- EvC Peru has a strong profile in many networks and should use these to mobilise advocacy towards national policy and legislative change. EveryChild's evidence base should be used to raise issues and the organisations profile with universities, NGOs and national government.
- The programme should advocate inclusion of violence prevention on the national school curriculum. Teachers engaged in the programme could be encouraged to support such an initiative.
- Child participation should be ingrained as a process rather than illustrated through events.

## Russia

Note these findings are based on preliminary feedback from one reviewer, not on a detailed report.

Progress to date:

The programme is aligned with organisational strategy and the projects are on focus with strategy.

Projects have adopted the rights-based approach of programming.

The programme has a unique niche position dealing with families and children in the country.

There is a clear linkage between learning on smaller projects being translated into larger programmes of work.

The programme has developed tools for assessment that have significantly improved social work practice. It has persuaded Government to adopt these methodologies.

A detailed advocacy strategy is in place. The programme has developed strong partnerships.

Challenges:

There appeared to be a lack of response to root causes of separation and cultural context.

There is a lack of community and child participation in programme development, so the interventions are seen as quite 'top-down'.

The reviewers felt the programme was designed to fit with the existing government ways of working and did not pursue innovative alternate ways of working. This could reduce the sustainable long-term impact of programmes if government policy changes but there are no grass-roots structures in place.

The tools created for assessment are comprehensive but considered by some practitioners to be cumbersome and time consuming. It is unclear how monitoring of their continued use will be achieved.

The targets in the strategic plan were thought to be set too low and could have been revised.

There is no identifiable child protection policy in place throughout the programme.

Most of the projects have been developed with an urban focus. It is questionable how transferrable these are to a rural context.

#### Recommendations:

- CSP targets should be re-appraised.
- A monitoring framework should be implemented.
- The programme should seek out means of developing closer links with communities.
- Project design should incorporate transfer of models from urban to rural contexts and more broadly review composition of the target groups.
- It is crucial to put a child protection policy in place.

### Ukraine

#### Progress to date:

The programme is on focus with global strategy.

EveryChild is one of the few NGOs that work at all levels of government. Integration and rationalisation of state provision has been a significant achievement. A recruitment policy of attracting former government employees has contributed to this position.

Village councils have more power delegated to them from the state.

An assessment tool and gate-keeping methodology have been developed.

Social workers have been trained and are beginning to own the process.

Village and particularly school social workers were identified as a particularly effective means of prevention.

The programme has been successful in attracting institutional funding.

There is an effective communications function.

#### Challenges:

The focus of the programme is in the Kiev region. It is not clear how replicable the models developed are to the rest of the country.

The TACIS funding helped to develop projects in the Kiev region, but it is questionable how replicable these will be without similar levels of grant funding.

The prevention strategy could be more closely linked to the underlying causes of alcoholism, unemployment and increasing divorce rate.

There is a strong state preference for foster care, and therefore most available funds are directed at this rather than support to biological families.

Some of the specialist facilities are both expensive to run for few beneficiaries and not accessible to the wider community due to bureaucracy, e.g. baby home has 156 staff for 54 babies.

There are questions regarding the cost-effectiveness of some re-integration initiatives, and whether greater impact could be achieved by concentrating on prevention.

There is limited participation of children in the programme design. Project interventions are perceived as quite 'top-down'.

The government believes the methodology is too complex.

There is a high turnover in social workers, due to low pay, which could reduce the effectiveness of the capacity building efforts.

Poor documentation is a major time-drain on social workers and a limitation for families accessing services.

The team is good at institutional fundraising, but need support with alternative forms of giving.

The value of the brand is high in the Ukraine and should be considered in the localisation process.

It is challenging for the programme to try and raise its focus to a national level from the Kiev regional level at the time it is going through a localisation process.

#### Recommendations:

- Advocacy at the national level should be strengthened and alliances with other NGOs built.
- Advocacy effort should focus on state support addressing root causes of separation and financial support to vulnerable families, and on state support for children leaving care.
- Lobby the state to conduct an independent assessment of the effectiveness of projects in the Kiev region for consideration of nationwide replication.
- Encourage social workers to engage in the advocacy process.
- Resources could be more effectively targeted at social workers at the village level.
- Implement life-skills training at an earlier age to better prepare leavers from care for re-integration.
- Specialist units should be converted to community based services to enable greater access.
- Enhance participation of children and communities.
- Fundraising capacity needs to be developed with greater country or regional staffing.
- The training centre being constructed could be extended to provide a post-localisation programme office – though it should be noted that this has been considered previously at an organisational level and was not approved for allocation of general funds nor as a precedent to be set for infra-structural capital investment.

## U.K.

### Progress to date:

All programmatic work has been realigned to focus on separation work. This has led to an improved ability to speak on focus issues. All countries have strategic plans that link operational activities to the global objectives.

The Conceptual Framework is widely perceived as a major step forward in informing future programme development. It is hoped the same will be true of the Effective Programming Framework as this is implemented through the remainder of the strategic period

De-restriction of sponsorship has provided greater flexibility of funding and the creation of sponsorship hubs should provide a more cost-effective means of management, although there does remain a risk of some loss in the withdrawal from current programmes in the remainder of this strategic period.

The Performance Management System is being delivered across the programmes and a structured approach to staff development is welcomed.

All country exits planned for this strategic period have been achieved, with Romania in its final year of funding currently taking place.

Communication activities have intensified and gained a strategic approach. It is evident that EveryChild has gained a lot of confidence in its ability to engage the media, as highlighted by the Madonna and Elton John adoption stories. There is potentially greater impact to be made in public affairs and influencing of Government and EU.

The development of a global advocacy strategy and working group is a positive development to promoting key themes.

The integration of institutional fundraising into programme planning is a positive move that should contribute to a more strategic approach to programme funding.

### Challenges:

Although the rights-based approach has been adopted across the organisation there could be more training on its practical implementation.

Some initiatives were believed to have started but lapsed and have then been re-started with consequent additional resource to regain knowledge. Some people quoted the Child Participation and Protection Group as an example, however as this group has continued work started earlier the concern may highlight a communication issue rather than loss of knowledge.

High staff turnover can undermine institutional memory. Changes in senior management are believed by some to have contributed to perceived changes in organisational priorities, particularly toward localisation, rather than senior management being aware of the history but reviewing priorities in the light of changing circumstances. Frequent re-structuring can

be costly as well as disruptive. The reasoning for re-structuring has not always been communicated well or fully consulted upon.

The decision to hibernate the Kyrgyz branch appeared to be at odds with the organisational strategy for Central Asia. Although it proved to be one of the essential cuts in general funding as a result of the financial crisis the longer term strategic implications and planning for re-engagement in Central Asia should be considered in the next strategic planning process.

The definitions of and approaches to partnership working are not clear throughout the organisation, leading to some confusion of the aims and purpose of different approaches. There is consensus that partnership working is the way ahead, though expectations of different models' contribution to the programme focus and ideals of EveryChild is in some cases misunderstood. A concern was raised that in some cases there is a risk of EveryChild being considered a financial broker rather than a true partner, although this may in some cases be the very purpose of the relationship.

Increased working through partners may have implications for the level of central service required to support branch offices.

The experience of the localised Bulgaria entity highlighted the importance of the organisational development training she received, the support from a local Board and the seed funding carried over from historic sponsorship projects. The equivalent support mechanism for future localisations has been reduced due to the necessary reduction of general fund expenditure across the organisation.

The financial crisis has put a great deal of strain on the organisation's resources. This is forcing difficult judgements to be made regarding funding priorities and has heightened the issues of limited general funds.

The balance of localisation and expansion is creating tension in some parts of the organisation. Even though the financial pressures and requisite adjustments to planned expenditure were presented to Country Directors there remains a perception in some quarters that priorities in the UK have moved from creating sustainable local entities to exit and relocation. Some commented that commitment to localisation has been lost. By definition the review included the views of countries from which the organisation has a strategy plans to withdraw but did not include countries yet to be determined for new interventions.

There is lack of clarity in the organisation about impact reporting, its meaning and implementation.

The nature of UK charity law means that even though the organisation has a far more qualified Board than previously they are heavily reliant on management for guidance before decisions can be made. This can lead to delays in decisions and perceived lack of direction due to the infrequent Board meetings.

## Recommendations:

- Mechanisms to preserve institutional memory should be implemented to reduce the impact of the departure of individual members of staff.
- Continued progress of the organisation to a rights-based approach should be encouraged by a capacity building programme linked to implementation of the Conceptual and Effective Programmes Frameworks.
- The Advocacy Strategy should continue to be communicated throughout the organisation and understanding verified. The steering group should meet quarterly to ensure the advocacy strategy is and remains at the top of the organisational agenda.
- To avoid losing local knowledge and relationships in central Asia contacts should be maintained with the newly formed local entities arising from EveryChild's hibernation of the Kyrgyz branch.
- Different forms of partnership working should be clarified and effective means of operating in different models of partnership established.
- The balance of priorities and consequent allocation of funding to localising and expansion countries should be considered and clearly communicated to the organisation.
- The impact of decisions on exit and expansion will have implications for the level of support required in the UK, which should be considered in planning central services.
- To assist in identifying the key success factors in localisation a final evaluation and learning report of the Bulgaria localisation experience could be commissioned. A budget had been planned for this purpose in 2009 but was one of the cuts required due to the financial pressures.
- Localising countries would benefit from business planning assistance as well as support to develop local fundraising. While appreciating the competing demands for funds there may be pro-bono support services available.
- There is unanimous support for an alliance type network to extend the organisation's reach and to address the power balance inherent in a donor-recipient relationship.
- The priorities of fundraising between protecting UK income and developing in-country funding should be reviewed, balancing the short-term return on investment and long-term capacity of countries to grow a sustainable long-term base of support..
- The change in fundraising director could prove unsettling, it is recommended that the Chief Executive take close involvement in the process to retain key staff.
- The impact of the Performance Management System should continue to be monitored. While some simplification of the process would be desirable to reduce the time commitment required to implement this should not be at the expense of the organisational benefits derived from a well-structured staff development approach..
- Continue efforts to build relationships with media partners.
- Consider proposing the creation of a Child Rights Working Group outside of DfID control to enable it to both extend its remit and provide an independent viewpoint.
- The Board should take measures to reduce the high staff turnover, particularly high-level management changes.
- The mid-term reviews were an excellent opportunity for organisational learning. To facilitate further opportunities the development of the intranet should be continued and

complimented with a capacity building roll-out process. The secondment programme should be promoted and more general knowledge sharing methods developed and means of capturing organisational knowledge identified.

- The role of the Child Protection and Participation Policy Group should be communicated to the organisation, particularly to clarify the continuation of work previously undertaken in this area..
- Accountability to children, families and communities should continue to be emphasised within the framework. EveryChild should develop an approach to impact reporting and M&E as part of the next strategic plan to be integrated with the Effective Programmes Framework. A workshop should be organised for key programmatic staff to consider the approach in EveryChild's context.

## Strategic Directions

This section summarises the organisations progress against the 6 strategic directions set in the 2006-11 Global Strategy.

### SD 1 – Programming

**Overall objective: Focus and target our programmes for increased effectiveness and impact by 2011**

**Objective 1.1 - We will ensure all our programmes are focused on children who are, or risk being, separated from their family.**

All of the country programmes’ strategies were assessed as being on focus with the organisational objective. The original plan for all regional strategies also being aligned, while achieved is no longer relevant to the structure of EveryChild’s organisation.

In some cases however it was less clear whether the beneficiaries had been clearly targeted. In Cambodia and Malawi it was not clear whether separated children were being assisted specifically rather than being included along with the general population. Initiatives such as walk-in centres may be used by the general poor community. It was also not clear if the nature of transient workers, who cross the border each day for work, were actually a higher risk group for separation.

The former Soviet Union states tend to work commonly on issues relating to institutionalisation. The other countries have a broader range of focus areas.

Those reviews which identified the underlying root causes tended to report similar themes. Poverty, unemployment and the increasing impact of HIV/AIDS were unsurprisingly issues across the programme, alcohol and drug abuse and the cultural attitudes to state provision were key themes in the FSU states, and economic migration was noted in a few countries.

**Objective 1.2 - Our work will ensure that at least 250,000 children who are, or risk being separated, the opportunity to grow up in safe and secure families or communities.**

Many countries have struggled to articulate the objective into a measurable target let alone indicators of achievement.

The CSP’s contained the following targets, shown in the following table against the achievements noted in the reviews. These are not presented to provide a measure of achievement, but rather to emphasise the difficulty of applying objective quantifiable measures to the complex activities and effect the organisation is trying to achieve.

Country	Target	Achievement at mid-point
Bulgaria	No plans available.	Not included in review
Cambodia:	xx number of children at risk of violence protected. 20% of children in conflict with the law	No figures available
Ethiopia:	At least 10,000	Not included in review
Georgia:	At least 2500 children	2,700

Guyana:	2500 children over the strategic period.	o/s
India:	XXXX children in Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Orissa	o/s
Kyrgyz:	At least 600 children	Not included in review
Malawi:	At least 30,000 children	17,000
Moldova:	At least 4000 children	1,839
Peru:	Assure that 58,000 of NNA grow in a safety	7,873 children trained 625 cases dealt with by disciplinary teams
Romania:	No plans available.	Not included in review
Russia	600 children directly prevented from entering institutional care	No figures yet available – though the reviewers do note the targets seem low.
Ukraine	At least x children. decrease at 60% the number of placements in baby homes reach that 30% of children currently in institutional care is reintegrated into family environments	33 mothers helped

Of course in addition to these numbers there are the partnerships and consultancies undertaken in countries such as Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan that contribute to the numbers impacted upon.

The reviews highlight that the organisation's assessment of its success or failure, and perhaps more importantly its external communication of that performance, remains highly subjective. The difficulty in generating meaningful information from this analysis raises significant questions over our measurement of success in numbers. A few of the review teams noted problems in documentation, but if Georgia and Malawi are able to provide measures why shouldn't this be possible more widely?

The bigger question is whether such targets are an effective means of measuring our success or failure. Setting a target, which is subsequently immeasurable, may in fact be more damaging than not having a finite number in the first place. It was noted in the Ukraine review that the mother and baby centres, where numbers are easily measurable, was perceived as a potentially inefficient means of intervention, whereas the training of community social workers was considered to be having an enormous effect recognised by everyone, but for which the identification of a number of beneficiaries is almost impossible. Neither view is necessarily correct, and an effective programme will be a balance of planned activities. The issue is the lack of an approach to establish and communicate the respective aims, purposes and expected and actual results.

The strategic issue for EveryChild would appear to be whether it should focus on short-term specific measurables, requiring investment in monitoring tools to try to identify beneficiaries, or to identify more general long-term social trends to assess the scale of issues and therefore indirect impact, or to target a balance of the two.

A couple of the reviews identified the lack of follow up as an issue. The Russia review referred to the assessment and gate-keeping tools endorsed by the Government. However, it was not clear how it would be checked if those tools continued to be used efficiently when it is known that practitioners considered them time-consuming.

**Objective 1.3a - Ensure that all our programmes are delivered through strong local partners and branch offices.**

The reviews are generally positive about the capacity of partners and branches to deliver. The issues raised relate to the ability of localising programmes to continue to provide those services and the nature of relationships with totally independent partners.

The prioritisation of localisation as opposed to exit is common throughout the reviews. Many offices are concerned about fundraising capacity in the lead-up to localisation and their ability to hold together their teams during the process.

The review raises some questions about the benefits of partnership working more generally. The Cambodia review highlighted the resource issues of a liaison office trying to both take an advocacy stance and monitor and evaluate the success of partners' work, while receiving little direct funding itself to conduct this purpose. The reviewers felt this meant the programme was failing to capture lessons from the projects and analyse the effectiveness of results. There was a concern raised that partnership working was reducing, or at least not enabling, community and child participation.

The UK reviewers raised the issue of whether the partners implementing programmes in countries where there is no EveryChild presence were adding value to the organisation's learning and profile. In some cases it was never an intention to deliver value to EveryChild's profile, and the organisation has and will take opportunities where they arise to extend the level of work achieved on its core aims. However, the expectations of different forms of partnership need clarifying and the means of capturing learning and sharing knowledge need to be formalised.

Although some local issues of partner capacity have been reported it is not the capacity of these organisations that is really questioned, but rather the strategic position they have in furthering EveryChild's own strategy.

The relationship of partners with EveryChild is a key component of the alliance model currently being debated. It is suggested that there is both a need to review the strategic benefit of partnership working and the operational effectiveness of such an approach by analysing more closely the Cambodia and Ethiopia models.

**Objective 1.3b - Continue to develop our inclusive approach, ensuring that partners and beneficiaries, especially children who are, or risk being, separated from their family, are included in the design and delivery of all our programmes.**

The organisation appears to be split into two camps. The Former Soviet Union countries tend to have very close working relationships with, and work very collaboratively at all levels of government. The other countries in general work more effectively at community level with greater levels of child

participation. It almost appears an either/or situation with all programmes finding it difficult to work with both stakeholder groups effectively.

To a degree the approaches reflect the political systems in those countries, where there are lesser and greater degrees of state control over regional and local authorities, although there are greater levels of complexity in each country. The larger issue is whether the rights based approach has been fully adopted and ingrained in programme development and implementation. Although the breadth of engagement has increased it is still questionable whether the most marginalised groups are being represented.

**Objective 1.3c - Encourage and support local, national and international governments to fulfil their commitments to uphold child rights.**

There has been major progress in the Former Soviet Union countries on rights to family where not only legislative changes have been made but new ministries have been created with EveryChild's advocacy. The focus is now moving to enforcement of that legislation. Progress on rights to participation is less clear at this point. In the other regions it has proven more difficult to engage with national governments, which are more autocratic or which have less clear decision-making processes, though progress has been made to get child rights on the agenda particularly at the local level.

The reviews have clearly shown that a single model of working is not appropriate to all contexts, and there is no suggestion here that what works well in one place can automatically be replicated to others. There may be specific ideas, such as use of radio stations to galvanise opinion, that can be transferred, and the sharing of knowledge between very different cultures may generate innovative ideas for interventions, but the a number of the reviews highlighted the inapplicability of transference of approach.

**Objective 1.4 - We will support our programmes in South America and Western FSU to become independent and sustainable over the next ten years and maintain our long-term presence in Africa, Asia and the Caucuses/Central Asia.**

The first phase of the localisation process has been completed, with Romania completing the final year of EveryChild's withdrawal. There is a major concern throughout South America and Western FSU countries regarding the next phase and the balance of localisation and exit.

The main issues arising are:

- The human resource support in respect of developing business plans for the new entities and in particular fundraising support.
- The ring-fencing of funds for use in the post-localised entities.

Both issues have been exacerbated by the financial crisis. UK fundraising staff are targeted with maximising, and in times of recession protecting, overall income for the organisation. Re-allocation of that resource to capacity building would naturally reduce the effort in UK fundraising. The alternative of employing external consultants would itself be a call on general funds and therefore reduce the overall funding available to the organisation.

Similarly, putting aside the legalities of using unspent restricted fund balances after localisation, any allocation of funds to the localising countries for their post-independence use will require a corresponding reduction in the funds available for EveryChild's own charitable activities.

The feedback from Bulgaria on their localisation process suggests that the support, both human and financial, were vital components of a successful transition.

There are thus strong arguments on both sides for investment in localisation. However, it is apparent from the reviews that there is a feeling that the organisation is not meeting its objective to support country programmes through the process.

The Peru review also provides feedback that the time taken to develop localisation plans is far longer than planned. This should inform planning for the next phase of localisation.

A number of reviews queried a perceived emphasis on expansion, both if this was taking precedence over localisation and if new country presence was preferred to expansion in existing operating countries. The argument for expansion is that as well as fulfilling its objective to focus on identified territories EveryChild needs to maintain a presence in a sufficiently broad range of countries to maintain its presence as an INGO advocating on global issues. Were the organisation to contract to 4 or 5 operating countries this could have significant implications for fundraising and advocacy impact.

It is difficult to separate this issue from plans for an alliance structure, which is beyond the scope of this review, although the consensus support for such a structure should be noted.

## **SD 2 – Profile**

### **Objective: Establish a strong UK profile by 2011**

While the review of the UK office reports that communication activities have intensified and gained a more strategic approach, it is surprising given the given the concerns raised elsewhere in this report regarding the decline in general giving that most countries do not consider this strategic direction to be relevant to their local objectives. Any increase in UK profile will be dependent on the evidence base of operational activities and an effective method of cascading pertinent information through the organisation.

Great efforts to establish and strengthen relationships with media partners in the UK are noted. Awareness raising events such as Chances 4 Childhood have led to increased visibility of the organisation. There has also been a notable increase in EveryChild's voice in relation to current events such as the Madonna and Elton John adoption stories.

It was noted however that neither Malawi nor Ukraine (the countries where the adoption cases had arisen) had taken advantage of the publicity locally.

Some countries (Moldova and Ukraine) have developed strong communications presence and there is surely an opportunity for them to share their experience with other programmes. Moldova has

won awards for their radio presence, a medium that reviewers in other countries identified as a cost-effective means of awareness building.

### **SD 3 – Campaigning**

**Objective: We will advocate and influence local, national, regional and international policy and practice to ensure greater numbers of children who are, or risk being, separated, have the opportunity to grow up in safe and secure families or communities.**

Advocacy is obviously seen throughout the organisation as critical to achieving long-term change. Most countries have made progress in developing advocacy strategies and are working effectively in networks of local NGOs to influence legislative and policy change. It should be noted that most donors continue to want to fund tangible output dominated projects and that therefore much of the organisation's advocacy effort is supported from general funds, which are under most pressure from the economic crisis.

EveryChild has been actively involved in the development of guidelines for appropriate use and conditions of alternative care for children. The participation of EveryChild in the DfID Child Rights Working Group is another example of increasing awareness of the organisation with other sector bodies.

The Former Soviet Union states have far closer links with national and regional government than other countries. This is in large part a reflection of the political systems operating in those countries, where central policy has a far more direct impact on local communities.

In each of the FSU countries positive changes to legislation have been achieved. The Ukraine has proven more difficult due to the Government's predilection for foster care as a solution rather than support to natural families. The challenge for the second half of the strategic period for these countries appears to be the transition of those gains in legislation into practical application at community level.

In Africa, Asia and South America the state influence at grass roots level is far less. Cambodia and Malawi both operate in environments where much of the local activity is left to NGOs. In spite of this the reviewers of those countries felt greater effort could be made to influence at the state level and use communications more effectively to build awareness of issues.

The Global Advocacy Strategy and working group were widely welcomed. There is a concern that countries not involved in the development of objectives could feel excluded and that it was therefore important that they be engaged in the process at the earliest opportunity.

The reviews of Peru and Ukraine both highlighted the opportunity to engage groups worked with on projects to support the advocacy effort. In the Ukraine's case social workers could be encouraged to support devolution of provision to the village level, and in Peru teachers could be engaged in amendment of the national curriculum. A number of countries also identified that children's voices were rarely heard in advocacy initiatives. A challenge for the organisation in increasing the level of child participation generally is to include that involvement in the advocacy strategy.

## SD 4 – Fundraising

**Objective: We will diversify and optimise our fundraising strategy, using new channels and methods, to deliver a balanced portfolio of income.**

Mid way through EveryChild’s 5-year plan it has become clear that the anticipated financial growth from extra investment in supporter acquisition has not materialised. Growth in institutional fundraising has masked underlying problems in voluntary income decline.

It should be noted that since the original strategy was developed the fundraising strategy has been revised.

Traditionally sponsorship has been a major strength of the organisation. There is an immediate need to stabilise voluntary income, for which the consolidation of sponsorship programmes in hubs is generally supported. The reviewers believe that the measures being taken are in the right direction, though recommend that longer term future operational plans should be developed.

Placing the institutional fundraising position in programmes is seen as a positive move, and one that would have been welcomed earlier. A concern was raised that there was not sufficient forward planning for replacement of institutional funding coming to an end. This is perceived as one reason for the discontinuance of activities in Kyrgyzstan.

The Ukraine review highlighted the difficulty of extending the impact of initiatives begun with high levels of funding without further institutional funding. Georgia is likely to face similar issues when the TACIS funding finishes there. Each of those countries have made considerable strides in developing institutional funding sources, but generally the development of local income streams is proving far harder than envisaged. There should be an opportunity for the more successful grant bidding countries to share their knowledge with others.

In most countries there is not a culture of individual giving, and in a number the local legislation actively discourages corporate giving. As previously noted this is a critical concern for localising countries, for which capacity support is broadly recommended. The value of significant investment in local public fundraising should be weighed against the potential return in the foreseeable future.

There is obvious concern that the imminent departure of the global fundraising director will result in both disruption to the UK department and initiatives that are not yet complete.

## SD 5 – Capacity

**Objective: We will work with all staff, promoting diversity, capitalising on expertise and increasing learning by developing a competent and diverse workforce that works in an integrated way – across all programmes and offices – and takes full advantage of every opportunity to learn from each other. We will develop adequate and fully functional systems and processes – across all**

**programmes and offices – that deliver the most impact with the least resources. We will communicate clearly and succinctly about EveryChild and our work**

The Performance Management System has been broadly welcomed in the reviews as a systematic approach to staff development and the method of roll-out with capacity building support was commended. There were some concerns that the process is complex and some felt it would prove an additional administrative burden.

There is a significant difference between country staff teams where there is generally a large degree of stability, with the notable exception of Cambodia and the UK where staff turnover has been significantly higher than desired. The reorganisation of the support functions since the strategy was written has led to a re-articulation of the Global HR strategy. The overall global strategy could be updated to ensure there is no confusion regarding the defined objectives and reporting of delivery against them in quarterly reporting. .

Unanimously the mid-term review process was welcomed as an information and knowledge sharing opportunity. However, it was felt that there had been few other opportunities to develop cross-organisational learning. Opportunities have been provided for secondments, study visits and working group participation, which should continue to be promoted through the organisation. The intranet has been developed to capture organisational knowledge and share information and is recognised as a significant potential resource. Much work has already been done to establish the intranet through the organisation, which should be continued along with a capacity building programme in the second half of the strategic period.

The Child Protection and Participation Policy group has been created to develop the organisation's approach to child protection. The reviews raised concerns that such a group had existed previously and there was a risk of duplication. The continuity of the process and role of the current group should be clarified and communicated to the rest of the organisation.

## **SD 6 – Governance**

**Objective: We will practice good governance and accountability towards children, communities, donors and all other stakeholders. We will maximise networking and diversity in all our governance and leadership by ensuring our Board of Trustees.**

As noted under objective 1.2 the monitoring and evaluation systems in the organisation are currently not designed to collate overall quantitative measures of our impact. While most of the reviews highlighted the need for improved indicators there is little consensus or clarity on a process for achieving this across the organisation. It was recognised that some of our anecdotally effective activities have an indirect impact, such as the training of social workers in the Ukraine. The organisation therefore needs to be careful that in endeavouring to develop measurable and reportable impacts it does not focus on those activities that can be recorded but are actually less effective. The Malawi reviewers noted that improved information could be obtained by applying a

form of case-worker files to record and track interventions, although the resource implications of such methods would have to be considered.

The reviewers recommend that before the next strategic plan is prepared an impact framework is developed, and that organisational groups work to build capacity to implement such a strategy.

There are some initiatives to engage communities and children in the planning process throughout the organisation. Though it is felt this is predominantly at the design phase and currently lacks feedback on implementation and results.

The reviewers recognise the strengthening of the Board of Trustees, though there is recognition that the nature of governance of UK charities means that the Board are highly reliant on management to inform their decision making. There is a concern that on topics as fundamental to the organisation's future as the alliance model the Board have not enough time to fully appreciate all the factors involved and that this could delay decisions critical to short and medium term planning in country programmes approaching localisation.

The internal audit function was perceived as a valuable resource for the organisation, and it is recommended that it be continued in some format.

## **Informing the design of the next global and country strategic planning framework**

Each of the reviews was asked to conduct a discussion with programme staff regarding future strategy development, particularly with regard to how success or failure of the programme would be assessed and what measures of impact would be available to them.

The Conceptual Framework was universally recognised as a major step forward in identifying and articulating organisational priorities. This should provide the foundation for programmatic planning of the next strategy.

All the discussions appear to have appreciated the need for means of assessing the programme's impact, including those countries planning to localise before the next EveryChild strategic period. A number of programmes were clear about the focus of their work going forward. However, all found it difficult to identify means of setting baselines, indicators and targets. In many cases a lot of research is necessary first to identify the size of the problem. For example in Malawi a lot of research is necessary to identify the potential impact on institutional care of both HIV and migration.

It is recommended that an impact framework be developed alongside the Effective Programming framework and be debated broadly across the organisation before the new strategy is finalised.

The next strategy should be developed from a down-top approach, enabling the programme offices to a proper situational and participatory analysis before defining priorities. The strategy should be broadly defined, without trying to fix detailed operational activities for a 5-year period. It was also

questioned whether a 5-year plan was a realistic time-frame within which to work or if a shorter or rolling strategy would be more effective and manageable.

## Next Steps

This report has been presented in draft form. There are two full and two partial reports still awaited and most reports are awaiting verification by the relevant country director to confirm the accuracy of content and to correct any misunderstandings.

The review has identified a number of changes since the original strategy was prepared both at the global level and the country level.

It is questionable whether it is the most appropriate use of resource to conduct a full revision of the strategy at this stage. Rather it is recommended that these reviews be used to inform the development of operational plans for the remainder of the strategic period.

The key organisational actions recommended for the remainder of the strategic period are:

- Agreement on the future structure of the organisation, and a decision on the alliance model.
- Clarity on the localisation process, both in timeframe and resourcing.
- Fundraising capacity support to country programmes should be considered and implemented as appropriate.
- Voluntary income should be stabilised.
- Finalisation of the Effective Programmes Framework with extension to include impact assessment and M&E guidance. This needs to be rolled-out with a capacity building programme.
- Countries not yet engaged in the Global Advocacy Strategy need to be fully informed and engaged in the process.
- The role of the Child Protection Policy Group should be communicated to the organisation.
- The intranet should be finalised and staff fully trained to utilise it.
- The impact of the Performance Management System should be monitored and if possible simplified.
- Ensuring that development of the next strategic plan is conducted on a down-up basis, with sufficient time for full situational analysis in each country using the Conceptual Framework as its foundation.

Should the Board feel it appropriate a management response or action plan could be requested from management.

The Programmes Support Department, and particularly the Assistant Programmes Directors should review the country reports with the appropriate country director to consider impact on the next annual operating plan.

The proposed Strategic Planning Steering Group should take the recommendations contained in this document into consideration in designing the process for the next strategic plan.



## Part 2: The Process

### Peer Reviews

One of the outcomes of EveryChild's global meeting held in October, 2008 was the adoption of peer-review as an approach to conducting reviews and evaluations of EveryChild country programmes across the globe. The meeting observed that Peer Review Mechanism (PRM) as an approach would provide a space for the organisation not only to learn about how programmes have performed against a backdrop of our respective country programmes strategic plans, policies and other strategic papers but also use it as a platform for sharing good practices of child separation focussed interventions across the organisation. It would also allow the cross-fertilisation of the ideas of how best to deliver our business at country and global levels.

Although the use of external reviewers may have brought greater rigour and experience to the process, it was felt that greater benefit to organisational development could be achieved from the experience gained by key EveryChild staff as well as an increased sense of cross-organisation ownership of the global strategy.

Although not the primary driver of the decision to use a peer-review process there was a cost implication as well. An external review process would have cost roughly double<sup>1</sup> the allocated £45,000 budget for the process.

### Participants

Peer review teams were constituted from those that volunteered to take part in the exercise. Two people conducted each review, at least one of which was from a programme implementation background. Wherever possible we endeavoured to assign reviewers to programmes outside their immediate region. The reason for this was to avoid possible conflict arising from cooperation of the reviewers in the development of regional strategies influencing the country plans of those they were reviewing, but also to try and maximise the knowledge development and cross-over between different socio-economic and cultural environments.

The UK programmes department were not included in the review teams. The reason for this was that they have the responsibility for both coordination and overall delivery of the strategic directions and for line management of the Country Directors.

Logistical issues were encountered both in obtaining visas for staff travelling between country programmes<sup>2</sup> and in covering urgent projects in potential participants' home offices<sup>3</sup>. This resulted

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<sup>1</sup> Based on assumption of consultant fees of £500 per day for 10 days in each of 10 countries.

<sup>2</sup> For example it proved impossible for some staff from Guyana to obtain Eastern Europe visas without travelling to Brazil.

in our placing greater reliance on some countries' staff than others, and relying on UK staff to fill gaps in teams at short notice. In part these difficulties were a result of delays in confirming the project (as the planning coincided with the global banking crisis pressurising general funds), which condensed the time available for planning and implementing the reviews but it does highlight the need for extended notice should the process be repeated in future.

While the peer reviewers were ultimately responsible for reporting conclusions and recommendations, wherever possible they facilitated self-assessment of the programme the staff and incorporate those views in their report. To meet the criteria of credibility, integrity and professionalism, peer reviews were conducted in a non-adversarial manner, relying on mutual trust and understanding between the host country programme and the review teams.

## Terms of Reference

A global terms of reference (see appendix 1) was prepared by the Steering Committee along with guidance notes for the conduct of reviews. Included within the terms of reference was a prescribed reporting format to more easily facilitate the preparation of this consolidated summary and ensure that each of the aims of the review were considered and reported.

The prescribed format was as follows:

- Preamble (Maximum 2 pages)
- Summary
- Country Specific Review Findings
  - a. Progress to date – in this strategy period:
  - b. Learning – what have the programme team/partners/stakeholders learned from the experience of what has been done?
  - c. Effectiveness and efficiency
  - d. Conclusions of country performance to date
  - e. Future developments
- Strategic Directions
- Cross Cutting Issues
- Informing the design of the next global and country strategic planning framework.
- Other ideas or recommendations for improving the next strategic planning framework.

Some of the teams found this requirement restrictive, and a consistent lesson across the reviews was the time required to write the final report. Each review team was requested to hold a meeting with the Country Director at the end of their visit to capture key findings. We under-estimated the difficulty of writing the final report once reviewers had returned to their home countries and own programme responsibilities. In future it would be advisable to set aside time specifically for this purpose<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Bid preparation responsibilities prevented some staff from participating.

<sup>4</sup> We set a target date of 30 September for report completion, but some were not received until the end of October.

Country programmes were asked to send briefing documents to the reviewers in advance of the visit, on the basis of which reviewers prepared specific terms of reference for that programme. This enabled the identification of project sites to visit and stakeholders to meet. The time available for review was kept to around 10 days. This meant that in countries with a number of project sites not all could be visited. Most reviewers felt the time was too short for review, however we were conscious of the need to back-fill the workload in the reviewers own offices and therefore took a view that there would be a diminishing return to be obtained from longer field visits.

## Feedback

Each of the reviewers was asked to complete feedback forms on their experience as were the Country Directors of the programmes visited. Due to the size and departmentalisation of the UK office a wider range of participants in the UK review were asked to provide feedback. Each of the reviewed country teams were also asked to provide feedback on their perception of the process.

### Reviewer Feedback

The results below are the amalgamated feedback from 15 reviewers<sup>5</sup>. Ratings are the averages of those submitted. Not all questions requesting comments were completed by all reviewers. To retain anonymity of feedback any reference to particular countries or people has been amended.

#### 1.Objectives

*Scale is degree of success %*

1.1 Do you feel you identified the most significant things the country programme was doing well and those it was not doing so well?	91
1.2 Were you able to identify any good practices it would be beneficial to share with the broader organisation?	86
1.3 Was it possible to obtain a clear understanding of the programme's approach to child participation, empowerment and accountability?	76
1.4 Were you able to identify means of establishing baselines, benchmarks and indicators to measure the programme's future impact?	59
1.5 Did the review enable self-assessment by the programme's own staff?	91

1.6 If you have ideas on whether the process failed to achieve the objectives or ideas of how achievement of the objectives could have been improved, please provide brief details:

- Reviews should include feedback from those who are meant to receive the services, hence the reviewing teams should have included recipients of the services
- The summer holiday was one of the main challenges for the review process. Almost all staff was on leave. Children from institutions were on vacation as well.
- I think the reporting format was detailed but quite difficult to follow, the actual review did not follow the format and so the write up was difficult as I felt we were squeezing information into different sections. It was particularly difficult to assess impact and measurability now and in the future. It was useful to get a broad overview and a general sense of success with specific case studies but not necessarily KPI's etc.
- I believe more time was needed for preparation and planning of the actual review process. Despite learning the background materials, it was difficult to identify in advance the best tactics for undertaking the review in terms of where to go and who to talk to and how to talk to stakeholders and partners.

<sup>5</sup> 18 reviewers were involved in the process in total.

- Sometimes the discussions were so interesting that we went too much into small detail forgetting that it was a strategic review. In future, much as deep reflections are important, we should endeavour to concentrate on strategic areas of focus for the country programme.
- Challenge to get the whole understanding of the program in short time and to articulate the different projects into CSP. To settle time to review all documentation in advance properly to think about an appropriate plan and methodology. I must mention that the door to get the support from the steering committee was open from the very beginning.  
I wonder how many of us (MTR reviewers) came to the committee to get support, taking into account that we all have our own responsibilities and it was a demanding time previous to the departure to prepare appropriately for the MTR.  
In conclusion, I can think now that it would be convenient to fix 2 Skype meetings: one with the country team and MTR review peer and the 2nd with the support committee in order to facilitate a good understanding. Even though it was a great experience and were able to raise proper information and understand the relevance of the country program.

## 2. Preparatory and country arrangement stage

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

- 2.1 Were the background materials sent relevant and sufficient enough to provide a detailed contextual background to the country programme you reviewed? 85
- 2.2 Did you receive the documents in adequate time to read and analyse them? 83
- 2.3 Was it easy to interact and liaise with the in-country liaison team? 81
- 2.4 Were there other documents that would have been useful to include as key documents?
- External sources indicating the scale of the problem of children without parental care, foe ex. Government or UNICEF or other donors' reports.
  - PR materials, baselines, external reports
  - Evaluations /researches in the field carried out by other organisation
  - Annual finance reports to verify budget v/s actual expenses and reasons for variance.
  - Government strategy papers, UNICEF country strategy and specific sectoral strategy papers
  - Baseline studies (done before the CSP), HR Policy/Manual, Finance Policy/Manual
  - Document describing the links of the projects with the CSP
  - Key reports and Documents were in Spanish, it would have been helpful if this was available in English, HR policies & finance manual
  - Newsletters
  - Business plan for localisation
- 2.5 Additional suggestions for improving the preparatory and country arrangement stage:
- For me more communication with the country director or programme director and co-reviewer was necessary to know the details and it would be more helpful to have a programme prior to the visit.
  - It could have been clearer indications and format on country team self-assessment.
  - Documents should be named and structured properly
  - I found preparing with the country team very easy, however co-ordinating with my co-reviewer was difficult. My co-reviewer was clearly very busy in their country which meant they couldn't find much time to communicate with me or the country. We were unable to complete a detailed TOR for the visit, and had no time to prepare how we would approach the review. Also we had no time in country before we started the review to organise out approaches – I feel this would have been very useful.
  - There was almost too much information! And in the end we only needed a basic overview before attending as we learnt so much when we got there from the actual team. Possibly as

reviewers we should have agreed a more robust process at the beginning for recording what we learned rather than both taking lots of notes and then deciding later how to write the report.

- Some institutional memory/knowledge of the context is extremely useful in steering the review process. A new “kid on the block” will not be able to do the deep and most meaningful job. It takes time to get your head around the issues and grasp what-is-what.
- More time needs to be spent on understanding the TORs, thrashing out any issues before the teams start the review. All documents need to be given to the review teams
- Orientation to reviewers – next time we should plan an online discussion or training for the reviewers. We need to plan better with the country team and also amongst the reviewers. Need to dedicate specific time for the review process from work plans
- Need for understanding the Country Governance structure .
- Do not arrange holidays for key staff during mid-term review
- For me it would be important to get more detail program (agenda) for the visit with proper name of organisations and people we met.

### 3. The Assessment Stage

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

3.1 Were you able to consult with a range of stakeholders? 83

3.2 Did you meet and consult with children? 75

3.3 Which meetings/visits/consultations were particularly useful? What was it that made them useful?

- Visiting the CBOs where we were able to ask the people on their participation in the project, to understand the outcomes and impact of the projects.
- All the meetings were useful, especially useful were the meetings with children, families and communities, as well as meeting other international organisations like UNICEF
- All meeting held were useful, discussion with government, local government and professionals, were particularly useful as it gave us the opportunity to understand the context in which the services were developed, the scope of sustainability and transference of skills, the critical need for the interventions and the buy in to the main duty bearers. Interaction with children clarity children’s opinions of the services and the changes it has created for them.
- Project site visits were useful because you can match theory with practice and feel the real impact of the organisation work
- Meetings with communities proved the most useful. They allowed us to understand how integrated the programmes are.
- Meetings with the Ministry; the meeting helped to ascertain at macro level the work the dept. is doing in collaboration with EvC in the country
- Visit the local people, local social workers was useful as they were delivering services on the ground and were able to highlight their needs. Meeting other NGO’s was also informative. Visiting the ‘problem’ an institution itself was helpful in contextualising what we are doing, possibly should have spent more time with children as it was very formal and ‘top down’ review process.
- Meetings with the representatives of CBOs, central government.
- Meeting children from TV and Radio programmes. It made us understand the child participation as an approach better. Meetings with children who participate in Participatory Budget Making process. It made us understand the child participation as an approach better. Meeting with school teachers, women defenders groups. It made us understand violence prevention strategy/programme better.

- Discussions with partners were useful. It helped to get an external perspective on the organisation and its work within the sector.
- Meetings with Mayor of the district & ministries were very useful to understand the role of EveryChild in the country. Meetings with children in the project locations helped to understand the level of child participation. Meetings with judicial bodies and police officials were useful to understand the effectiveness of the programme. It helped to understand the challenges involved in the localization and sustainability of the organization
- Projects where we saw children in foster care and small group home where children receive emotional support and also are well integrated in the neighbourhood
- Responses to questionnaire from the staff were very useful. Analysis from program staff and CD.
- The most useful was meeting the team of EveryChild because I was able to clarify all the questions which I had after reading all project documents
- Most of the meetings in the communities were useful especially with the leaders of community organisations.

#### 3.4 Which meetings/visits/consultations were not useful? Why were they not useful?

- All the meetings were useful and contributed to understanding of the work done by the team. May be only in UNICEF and in the government it was better to have a different format of the meetings to get wider view of what is going on in the country and the clearer picture of position of EvC in the child protection system. But the meetings were organised on the request of the reviewers and the team didn't have enough time to organise these meetings.
- Meetings with representatives of local authorities were useful, but it felt that they were not very much into the project work and very often their agenda felt to be influenced by the agenda of NGOs they are working with.
- Often we taken to various communities and partners who were all examples of one particular type of intervention. We could have saved time by only seeing one example of it
- Meeting with community in municipal Centre; too noise and not able to capture the content
- We met numerous groups from various areas, although the work in each one was very important, the same issues were raised and so by the end of the review we felt we were not necessarily adding value to our report by meeting them.
- Meeting with children in some settings – it was difficult to overcome a so called “guest syndrome” when everyone wanted to be nice and the language barrier made it difficult to engage in a deeper, more fruitful and meaningful conversations.
- Field visit encountering government officials where did not show much commitment of what are they doing for child protection
- There were a lot of meetings with beneficiaries (families with children). Actually all of them repeated the answers on my questions
- I think that it was strange for me when we had too many people at the meeting especially at the one with village council. Though, I understand that this could be culturally and traditional differences. I did not get useful information at this meeting. Though, from the other side it demonstrated respect and acknowledgement of EveryChild work at this community.

#### 3.5 Which tools/methodologies did you find to be most effective? Why was this?

- Awareness meetings, capacity building of CBOs, introduction of different forms of child participation (children's corners, children's parliament), training the volunteers and caregivers. - Interventions that directly address the need of vulnerable children are very important for, often, children's survival.
- Group discussions and individual interviews (semi-structured) have been used and seemed to be effective. It gives lots of flexibility to get to the core of the issues, asking additional

questions.

- Focus groups discussions were most useful, it provided an opportunity for more qualitative discussions on the interventions/projects in the local context which resulted in much learning. Interviewees share on their personal involvement/commitment, challenges and success and interviewers shared their approaches on similar experiences.
- Interviews, group discussion. I felt that discussions are more challenging. EvC staff recognised that they had no time to think more deeply on different aspects of their work
- Partners had carried out a self assessment and presented it to us was the most useful. Because they had prepared before we arrived and looked at impact year on year we could get a real sense of progress
- Meetings with the stakeholders including children; with this we were able to collect first hand information on the program
- Interviews in small groups, one-to-one conversations.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). One to One interviews/Key informants interviews with key partners
- Discussions with individuals – country staff, partners, govt. officials...it was powerful to hear their own voices and links to programme,
- Focus groups with the communities & stake holders
- Field visits where we had the chance to see and understand how child protection system operates, indeed thanks to CD and PM explanation during and after the field visits.
- Questionnaires for the staff. Analysis on strength and weakness with the staff.
- Semi structured interviews with stakeholders, staff discussion.
- For instance semi structured interview helped to check the information and staff discussion to validate the results and conclusions.
- Frankly speaking due to long distances and travel we did not use variety of tools. The most common were presentations and interviews with different stakeholders.

### 3.6 Which tools and methodologies were least effective? Why was this?

- From the document review – the most difficult was to consult the quarterly reports. They didn't provide a holistic understanding over the progress of the country programme.
- I don't think any methodologies were ineffective in themselves; however I think we were sometimes underprepared. The schedule was so crammed we didn't have much spare time to prepare for meetings.
- Large group meetings. Seemed rather formal and tokenistic in a way.
- Sometimes focus group discussions had too many participants; hence they were not very focussed.
- We should have specifically planned for focus group with children.
- Too many Discussions, Could have avoided repetitive meetings.
- Questionnaires, we did not have the opportunity to prepare one that can be tailored made for the particularly programme since it was the first time to visit the project
- Family visits and observation. The visits were less informative and time consuming

### 3.7 Any suggestions for improving the assessment stage in future?

- Self-assessment tools would bring an additional value.
- Plan in time to review each day and prepare for the next.
- There was a huge volume of information, almost overwhelming. Possibly we should have highlighted the absolute essential points we needed to gather. Sometime I felt like I was reiterating what was already in the country strategic plan and annual report.

- It would be good for a reviewer to suggest the schedule and meetings on the basis of the materials read.
- Prior arrangements need to be put in place, with clear instructions, prior to the interviews/discussions.
- Need for all key documentations and reports to be translated in to English.
- A week for preparation meeting in the field together with programme staff in which reviewers can validate and adjust tools and methodologies before using it in the field.
- Previous meetings with country team.
- To decrease to the minimum number of visits to beneficiaries
- I would probably say to have less visits to the communities, but from the other side I think it was important for in-country team – usually it builds reputation and demonstrate professionalism in work. From our own experience when we have independent evaluators it is very possible for our beneficiaries as they understand that we did ourselves things which we teach them.

#### 4. Operational and Management Framework

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 4.1 Did you identify the framework by which the country actually operates and manages its programme (if different from the global strategic directions framework)?  | 84 |
| 4.2 Were you able to assess the country's level of progress and achievement against this framework?   | 83 |
| 4.3 Were guidance questions produced by the steering team for review of the Strategic Directions useful?  | 85 |
| 4.4 Was any part of this assessment particularly insightful/useful? If so please give details:  |    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talks to the chiefs of CBOs, families, children as well as talks to the team</li> <li>• The particularly useful and successful component of the assessment is reviewing interventions that are not common in your own programme. Foster care is an emerging issue in our local context and is now being developed. We are fortunate to have participated in the assessment at the time we were developing the pilot on foster care in our own programme. It was also very useful to visit a programme that has a wider reach both nationally and regionally as this was quite inspiring and motivational for future development particularly at the time of localizing. Assessing partners was also very useful as this has been both an advantageous and disadvantageous component of our programme, the learning will result in the strengthening of this in our programme.</li> <li>• It was useful to see how strategic directions had changed from the original plan as a pragmatic response to changing organisation needs.</li> <li>• They have a very 'top down' approach and it differs massively from the community/grassroots approach. We felt it was almost incomparable! We were also surprised that it all focused on prevention as opposed to the 3 types of intervention.</li> <li>• The whole review was extremely useful exercise</li> <li>• The stage of assessing the approaches and strategies the country programme is using was very insightful as it helped us understand how they deliver their programme work including the way they interface with their clients.</li> <li>• Discussions with SMT was useful – it gave a clear picture of the organisation and programme</li> <li>• Initial meetings with the SMT towards understanding CSP and country specific issues.</li> <li>• That the Programme is crating change in child protection from bottom up and top down strategy and building is capacity as a technical advisor in the country.</li> <li>• I guess I was able to look at their programme as outsider and the same time as insider. Therefore I have identified quite quickly main gaps and areas for consideration.</li> </ul> |    |

- For me personally very insightful was to meet real grassroots community organisation and see their work – it gave me proper understanding what it is community development and why it does not work at home where the context is totally different.

#### 4.5 Was any part of this assessment particularly difficult? If so please give details:

- It was difficult to overcome stereotypes connected with my own work in the programme and in the environment of my own country.
- For me sometimes it was quite difficult to get an answer, often we would get different answers from different stakeholders involved in the project. The lack of common understanding between the stakeholders made the assessment sometimes difficult.
- Not having all staff involved in the process is difficult to argue the progress achieved under each strategic direction.
- Measuring progress. The original framework didn't always have set goals for achievements.
- The write up, it was very hard to prioritise this once we had returned home.
- Verification of the quantitative indicators was difficult and we're not completely sure how accurate these numbers are
- Trying to draw a link between separate projects and overall programme design and its links with the CSP was challenging
- Not having the chance to speak with other staff members since most of them were on holidays in order to receive their views and comments about what they are doing and how do they feel in implementing the strategy and things they consider as achievements.
- The country was very different from my country in all aspects so sometime it was difficult to understand their intervention, however with the support of the local team we have overcome this obstacle.
- The most difficult part was translation – we did not have proper understanding what people were talking to us. I think it would be more useful if we could have an interpreter who work with us for the whole period as sometimes we did not know who is will be translating.

#### 4.6 Suggestions for how they could be improved:

- Sometimes the guidelines produced by the steering team were not quite clear, for example the challenge for us was the balance between the review of the projects and the review of the country programme as a whole.
- Questions have to be taken in context of the programme and stakeholders who should have a voice on questions produced. Generally stakeholders want to see tangible changes.
- Let's analyse the results i.e. reports and see what did the review teams find difficult
- We need to be strict in terms of minimum time required to do the review
- Continue being encouraging, demanding and challenging
- The guidance questions were very useful, but we managed to focus only on SD 1 and SD 3 when visiting and meeting with partners and stakeholders.

## 5. Future Development Stage

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

5.1 Was the purpose of this part of the review clear to you?	81
5.2 How "easy" was it to have this discussion?	73
5.3 Did you feel this part of the review had a clear result that could be acted upon?	69
5.4 Were the guidance questions produced by the steering team useful?	79
5.5 Suggestions for how these questions could be improved or how this stage could better be managed/handled	

- It is quite difficult to have this kind of discussions without a common organisation vision,

understanding and procedures in place with regard to monitoring and measuring the impact of our work

- We did establish some ‘blue sky’ ideas on where they could go next or where there were gaps in the country as a whole. But these felt quite conceptual rather than a proper plan for implementation – the country is dominated by their localisation plans, which take precedence over everything else, I think this is important to note as many conversations led back to this point.
- The guidance need to be flexible so that the review can contextualise the guidelines. For instance the country is localising hence it was difficult to debate on the impact framework that could contribute to EveryChild global business.
- If we can improve tools to collect effective data
- We did not have time to discuss future development plan but the information gather from the localization plan and the analysis from the team (and other partners) allow to have a good understanding of future stages.
- Everything was very professional prepared. Well done to those who was involved
- I think that due to time limits we have concentrated more on reviewing achievements under different strategic goals and spend less time thinking about future planning and development. Probably separate discussion could be organised on this issue with senior managers from all the countries.

## 6. Report writing and feedback stage

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

6.1 Was the “summing up” meeting held with the country director (and SMT) successful? 89

6.2 Did you find it easy to analyse the data you had collected? 71

6.3 Do you think you chose the most useful components of the programme to review? 87

6.4 Were any of the research tools used particularly effective for providing clear data, if so which, and which if any were not particularly effective?

- Structured interviews
- Research tools to measure very specific impact could not have been employed and some factors responsible for this are the timing of the MTR, the total amount of time allotted to the activity.
- Desk review
- The only tools we used were our own note taking, which inevitably is a little unreliable.
- The data was transcribed along pre-determined themes e.g. child participation, RBA, Good practices.
- Focus groups and interviews were useful for qualitative information however questionnaires needed validation
- I think that semi structured interviews with key stakeholders were very effective
- Interviews with partner organisations and desk study of documents were the most useful.

6.5 Did you collect too much or too little data?

Would you do anything differently next time to ensure you collected the most appropriate data?

- Have more time for preparatory work identifying what kind of data you’d like to get from the meetings and restricting myself by certain frames. The more you are absorbed by the theme the more information you want to get.
- Just right
- Adequate data was collected, it would be ideal to conduct reviews when the main recipients (children) are available.
- Not to go on vacation time
- Too Little: We collected a lot of information, but not always the most useful for showing

progress over time. I think partners could have been asked before our meetings to prepare examples of progress over time against objectives – instead we often had an overview of their work.

- Too much, very difficult to condense.
- Too Little. Allocate more time to the whole exercise
- Too much. We learnt a lot hence would improve next time.
- Too much
- Too little. Organize data in an appropriate way
- I think I have collected enough data however I was not able to process them in country. Thus next time I would allocate more time in country in order to write report in country and validate data

#### 6.6 What would you choose to review next time differently, if anything?

- The format for the report was quite confusing. It would be interesting to learn from how the reviewers presented the report.
- I would choose to review less (we had multiple examples of the same thing), and therefore free up time for better preparation and review.
- More interaction with the issues and the children.
- Documents and reports of other stakeholders i.e. government and donors
- Nothing
- Scheduling the programme is very essential. Too many field visits of same situations can be minimised.

### 7. Steering Group / General

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| 7.1 Did the steering group fulfil their roles and responsibilities?   | 88 |
| 7.2 Was Terms of Reference provided by the steering group useful?   | 88 |
| 7.3 Was the timescale for the review adequate?  | 74 |
| 7.4 Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the functioning of the steering group?  |    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It would have been useful to have a fairer representation of the global programme staff in the review rather than 5 persons from one programme and some programme one had one rep, one of the objective of peer review is the sharing and learning to good practices.</li><li>• The group should represent all regions and development levels of countries</li><li>• If there were enough resources it would be important to have a one day briefing session of all the reviewers to put everyone on equal footing. Just by reading the TORs/guidance not everyone understood the assignment at the same level.</li><li>• I would not imagine that this work be completed without the Steering Group.</li></ul> |    |
| 7.5 Suggestions for improving the terms of reference:   |    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Help with tools and methodology techniques for each country programme</li></ul>   |    |
| 7.6 Suggestions for improving the timescale:  |    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To plan time for writing a report as after returning back to the office there was no single time but at nights to work on the report.</li><li>• We agreed on a peer review process but did not address the issues of time which is of real essence in a global programme review.</li><li>• I think we would have benefitted from a day in-country before the review to prepare, and slightly longer time to do the review in country.</li><li>• it was difficult to write the report but left any longer and we would have forgotten it all</li></ul>   |    |

- Much more time and much more active interaction is needed to plan a meaningful review mission.
- More time need to allocated to the review
- Field work preparation before visiting collecting data
- I think the timescale was adequate but for me it was difficult to manage everything on time due to other commitment and very tight schedule for other visits
- Timescale was ok, but as it usually happens there are a lot of other interrupting things that occur and draw you from writing the report.

- **Organisation and personal benefit**

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

8.1 Do you feel the peer method of conducting the reviews was a more effective method than an external review? 87

8.2 Was working as a two person team an effective way of conducting the review? 95

8.3 Did you find the process and the visit a good learning opportunity? 97

8.4 Were there things you learned from the visit that may benefit you when you return to work? 93

8.5 Do you have any further comments on the overall approach?

- External experts could make the review at the different level and more professional. Peer review gave an opportunity to get country representatives to get involved in the work of the organisation as one unit and was a good training in assessment of the programmes.
- Combining people from different regions and different development level is a best way for learning. On the other hand it is quite difficult for people that are working at community level providing direct services to understand in several days the complexity of work at national level, technical assistance.
- I feel I benefitted hugely on a personal development level. However this was not the objective of the review! I think it would be hard for countries to share learning as their approaches are so completely different however the CD's may think differently. The review may not have been as methodical or objective because we are peers. I also felt that because the country is localising that this was a major part of the conversations, this is important but it slightly hinders any 'future development' conversations. I did not feel like we were assessing baselines and exact impact figures. There was too much to grasp in 10 days to enable us to do this, so it was more a general sense of achievements, progress and gaps. I would predict that inevitably with any review process like this the challenge is to keep it living and breathing after the reports are done. We all enjoyed the discussions whilst there and had lots of ideas and learning but as with anything you need the impetus to follow through with them.
- The fact that we came from the same organisation gave us the advantage of knowing some history of the organisation and knowledge of intricacies of e.g. fundraising, HR, etc
- The approach need to be continued but take into the points for improvement above.
- Peer review process will also promote cross learning opportunities along with the review. it also helps to develop a larger perspective
- I think both are complementary since it is a way for building capacities to more effectively M&E results from inside.
- Yes peer method is very effective but time consuming method
- Peer review is an excellent method if to think about benefits for organisation and inter-country learning. Probably we lack very critical view and discipline in report writing which we could get from external expert. But I think that it was very right choice for mid-term review.

8.6 Suggestions for improvements in team working:

- Preparation could have included discussions with steering team.
- Proactive engagement for the review process is essential between the reviewers. Proper communication, planning, discussion should be done before the review visit. Choice of reviewers should be based on specific experience/skill sets which should be matched with the country programme and dynamics
- Find more time for preparation before going to field work
- My view is that it was right to work in pairs and I was very pleased with my colleague.

#### 8.7 Any feedback on learning from the process:

- For me it would be easier and more useful to make the review of the programme which is delivered approximately at the same level as in my country.
- It was incredibly useful to gain a fuller understanding of our programme in India. I can see many ways in which I can better communicate our work to our supporters.
- Child Participation approaches: TV, Radio and budgeting
- The peer review process should outline a formal process for sharing the learning with own country team
- How effective the programme can get financial support from other sources
- The only thing is probably for the future to think about distances to minimize travel expenses.

### 9. General Feedback

#### 9.1 Were there any unexpected outcomes from taking part in the peer review?

- Gaining an “on the ground” understanding of different cultures. Recognising that EvC is a global family and that commitment is a core value that we have adopted across the programme
- Huge personal professional growth and learning of the context that the country programme reviewed operates in.
- Visa processes were a bit complicated as usually

#### 9.2 Were there any parts of the process that worked particularly well?

- Possibility to work with another reviewer and also learn from discussions and using different approaches and techniques, exchanging the opinions. The TOR prepared by the steering group and additional questions.
- Working as a team of two on the ground and meeting stakeholders was particularly useful
- We had an agreed plan/schedule with the programme team and every effort was made to facilitate this schedule. The team prepared well in advance, we practically needed to turn up to the meetings and projects, which was all on time
- Being escorted by CD and PM from the local team meant they were able to help us understand how the partners’ work fitted with the EveryChild strategy.
- Initial meeting with EvC team worked well
- 2 reviewers from very different backgrounds worked well.
- The review team of 2 is a very good set-up.
- Sharing the review work with another EvC colleague was a good experience. Discussions about own country programme, local issues, strategies and challenges was a worthwhile experience.
- Communication between country programme staff and reviewers, hospitality was great, opportunities to explain in extend about the strategy and time to know about the culture of the country
- Discussions about own country programme, approaches, issues, strategies and challenges was a worthwhile experience.

- It was very good idea to have the combinations of different people from different countries with different background. I think it worked very well.
- Meetings with communities were great to see.

#### 9. What didn't work?

- There were no general regulations for all the reviewers concerning the travel allowances, payments which could be reimbursed, amount reasonable for air tickets.
- The feed-back meeting without a country director didn't work very well. The team was not willing to react on our feed-back.
- The schedule – needed extra time.
- What we had planned before departure
- Nothing to say from me. As for me it worked
- Sometimes there were difficulties with translation.

#### 9.4 What would be your most important feedback on the review process?

- I enjoyed the process greatly though it was very difficult and time consuming. I met a lot of dedicated and efficient people. It was a possibility to have a broader view of the organisation. I would love to thank everybody who made decisions concerning the process, the steering group, the team of the hosting country and the review team. And my personal gratitude to my review partner.
- It is a very useful exercise which helps the country teams to self-assess the progress and see external to the programme people's opinions. This helps the country programmes to adjust their priorities, activities for the remaining period of the current cycle and start preparation for the next one. If well organised it provides lots of opportunities to learn and share experience between the countries.
- The profile of EveryChild in the country programmes are very strong, the relationships with governments are very pronounced, the changes in the delivery of services to children nationally and regionally and public opinion on the rights of children is overwhelming. The work of EveryChild is positively changing children's lives.
- Learning and sharing information
- Allow more time to prepare!
- It was a learning and sharing experience, some of the best practices (Training and follow ups translated to down the line) could be replicated
- Possibly limit the reports to key points. The format and expectations possibly meant we collected too much and missed the salient points. Maybe simplify the report format and more training before you go.
- The actual missions need more time for planning and reporting. I feel that I wasn't prepared enough and when in country I was wishing I had asked for meetings to be arranged in advance with variety of stakeholders, which would provide such a useful insight and feedback on many issues. We were unable to speak with these people because we realised we wanted to do so too late.
- Make sure that the reviewers have really understood their assignment before they go the host country.
- The whole process helps to build relationships between 3 countries and provides an opportunities to share and learn from each other.
- That this programme has the technical and financial condition for sustainability and provide technical support for child protection system.
- That there are similar structures and mainly due to the RBA which take a good time to reflect on our own program while doing the analysis for the peer program.

- I think it was very good learning exercise and good platform for capitalising experience and knowledge
- It was great experience and learning opportunity for all – reviewers and hosting teams. Just as idea for the future (probably for final evaluation of the Strategy): to have an independent (external) expert (or 2) who will travel to all countries and the other person to be from EveryChild staff. The reviewers team will be writing report and as additional task for independent expert would be to write up in details the most successful model from each country which could be used for publication. Thanks for such opportunities! And apologies for delay with report.
- From the moment i heard about the MTR i thought that we were doing a great thing. This particularly because not many NGOs take so seriously the idea of investing time, energies and resources in learning from their own work, achievements and challenges. Therefore, although i knew very little at that point about the MTR, i strongly supported its idea and objectives.

### Reviewed Countries' Feedback

Feedback was received from 6 of the 10 countries reviewed. It was not feasible to seek input from every person or stakeholder group engaged in the process, therefore the Country Directors were asked to respond in general regarding the review conducted in their country.

#### • Objectives

*Scale is low - not successful to high-successful %*

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 1.1 Do you feel the reviewers were able to obtain a full understanding of your programme?  | 73 |
| 1.2 Did the review identify any changes in approach that you may be able to put into practice?                                     | 57 |
| 1.3 Did you feel the review enabled you and the programme staff to self-appraise your achievements?                                | 73 |
| 1.4 Do you feel the review was a fair representation of the progress of the programme?   | 73 |
| 1.5 Were you able to identify means of establishing baselines, benchmarks and indicators to measure the programme's future impact? | 70 |

#### • Preparatory and country arrangement stage

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

- |  |    |
|--|----|
| 2.1 Was the process of hosting the reviewers too time consuming / too resource intensive?  | 43 |
| 2.2 Did you have sufficient time to prepare fully between receiving the reviewer's Terms of Reference (ToR) and the reviewers arriving in country? | 80 |
| 2.3 Did you have adequate time to arrange field visits, meetings etc. and to send any additionally requested documentation?                        | 87 |
| 2.4 Were most stakeholders willing to take part in the review?   | 60 |
| 2.5 Do you think the reviewer's ToR included the most useful components of the programme to review?  | 83 |
| 2.6 What could have been done differently?   |    |

- During the summer children are on holidays and most offices had reduced HR support as a result of summer vacation.
- The Minister of Human Services and Social Security was on leave subsequent to her getting married. The Director of the Child Care and Protection Agency within the Ministry represented the work done through this partnership. The Minister of Education was also unavailable due to an overseas engagement. However, this fostered a new relationship with the Minister within

the Ministry of Education.

- The TOR is very broad and it would have been helpful for the reviewers having, received supporting documentation in advance to have highlighted the key areas they wish to explore further in a face to face meeting so that the presentations could have been more targeted.

- **The Assessment Stage (field visits, meetings, consultations etc.)**

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

3.1 In your opinion were the field visits, meetings, consultations etc. useful? **83**

3.2 Could anything have been done to improve this stage?

- Had there been more time allotted to the evaluation, field visits could have allowed for observations of work in progress, e.g. counsellors working with groups of children and parenting workshops
- Giving more time to the discussions with key partners
- Since the country is geographically big in size, spending more time would have helped to visit all our projects areas.

- **Feedback Stage**

4.1 Did the “summing up” meeting held with the reviewers reflect your expectations of their visit? **80**

4.2 Comments on the feedback stage:

- Review could not come up with recommendations due to time constraint

- **Steering Group / General**

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

5.1 Did the steering group fulfil their roles and responsibilities? **88**

5.2 Was Terms of Reference provided by the steering group useful? **88**

5.3 Was the timescale for the review adequate? **76**

5.4 Do you have any suggestions for improvements in the functioning of the steering group?

- It is worth considering that in future a one day briefing session for reviewers e.g. through video conferencing would make a big difference
- The TOR was quite a formidable document and perhaps could have been simplified. The recommended format for the reports was slightly confusing and seemed to lend itself to quite a lot of repetition.
- A review of this nature should have a longer period for evaluating the impact of the entire programme.
- The timescale should be flexible as well as scope of country programmes differs.
- The scheduling of the visits could be timed so that MTR take place across a wider period of time to avoid a flurry of activity in a small space of time. I also would expect that the evaluation should look at the skills of the reviewers so that we can ensure that the quality of the reviews is consistent across all parts of the organisation and that the information is collected objectively.
- Making sure documents are available in common language(English)

- **Organisation and personal benefit**

*Scale is low - not at all to high-completely %*

6.1 Do you feel the peer method of conducting the reviews was successful? **88**

6.2 Did you find the process and the visit a good learning opportunity? **96**

6.3 Do you have any further comments on the overall approach?

- Tools for the evaluation could have included structured questions agreed between the host country and the reviewers. M&E officers having the relevant experience right within the country offices would have been ideal for the evaluation.

- More time need to be spent on understanding the TORs.
  - The reviewers met with EvC staff, authorities and community leaders and had their views about how child protection system is being build and the technical contribution that EvC is doing in this process.
  - I know FR&C Managers who participated got a lot out of this, personally, and professionally: firstly, participating in a programme review of work out of their functional expertise; second, working alongside Programme colleagues in conducting the review. Good for understanding of programme; building personal relationships; expressing to them their organisational role beyond their functional team.
  - The reviewers whilst very professional and open – did at time seem to explore areas outside the TOR. Perhaps a more advance notice of areas of exploration would avoid this in future.
  - More sharing on areas of similarities across the programme could have been generated
  - Low learning score, only because review was general about FR&C; reviewers reasonably satisfied and impressed, and they lacked expertise to challenge. Excellent process for reflection on strategy, explaining it etc
  - Having not seen the final report I am unable to comment on specifics – perhaps ensuring that the timetable for delivery of reports is maintained so that we can evaluate the process with sight of the information that we need to make an informed opinion
  - A good opportunity to share experiences that helped to improve what are we doing
  - We need to define what is successful that will help to rate better.
  - Learning process needs to be institutionalised and transfer the learning to developing new strategic planning process
- **General**

#### 7.1 Were there any unexpected outcomes from taking part in the peer review?

- The need to work on specific indicators to measure the issue of sexual, physical and psychological violence.

#### 7.2 Were there any parts of the process that worked particularly well?

- Initial meeting between the country team and reviewers (to set up the scene) worked well. Also we felt that the field visits, meeting with stakeholders worked well.
- Reviewers engaged well with children in the project. The right questions were asked by the reviewers during meetings with the different groups of stakeholders particularly with the programme's team.
- The field visits were very good.
- Team work between reviewers and staff as well as between authorities and community leaders
- It enabled the team to focus on some key areas of delivery and present these to CD's undertaking the review knowing that this would be reflected and communicated across all parts of the organisation. It was an opportunity to share and get some feedback on ongoing initiatives and previous strategy implementation.
- Combining a senior programmes person with a non programmes person was a great idea
- Sharing of learning from three different countries together. Opportunity for the stake holders to share their views (Negative and /or positive)

#### 7.3 What didn't work?

- There was definitely a language barrier.
- The TORs were not detailed hence did not capture some of the important areas.
- The Corporate Strategy is not used in the same way in the UK office as it is in other offices.

This creates inconsistency. We need to all be following the same processes

- Country specific TOR (some countries didn't have specific TOR. At most they had only program schedule. Some place key informants were missing )

#### 7.4 What would be your most important feedback on the review process?

- It should become a regular process within EvC.
- The idea of having the peer review was quite innovative and could increase the sharing of information and learning across the organisation. The review strengthened relationships with the reviewers and the country office. The feedback and suggestions on localisation was quite useful and will help us explore more options for funding.
- Time spent by the reviewers was very short to the extent that some critical areas were not discussed.
- That the programme has staff how are committed with what they are doing, has good technical skills on the issue that is working.
- Value to managers of participating. Valuable contribution to organisational "gel".
- Schedule the timing and recognise the time commitment required to deliver this so that we can fully implement the process.
- Non-programmes staff may have benefited from more support in terms of preparation. Perhaps a workshop to go over TOR.
- We need to involve more people from programmatic co-ordinator /manager level

## Conclusions

Overall there is a very positive response on the staff development aspect of the process. Participants valued the opportunity to learn both from each other and the programmes visited.

The feedback stresses the value obtained from meeting communities, particularly children, although limitations on these interactions were noted both in the logistics and the formality in meetings when they were possible.

Less clear is the organisational benefit from improving strategic direction with the offices visited giving generally less positive feedback than the reviewers. Reservations were expressed on the comparative evaluation skills that could have been achieved from an externally facilitated process and on the future use of the reviews.

Reviewers appeared to find it most difficult to address the impact indicators section of the review. This is hardly surprising as it is an area that most sector organisations find difficult to articulate.

There was divided feedback on the level of detail the reviews were able to go into, with almost equal numbers stating they had collected too much data as those who felt they obtained too little. A key difficulty for a number of the reviews appears to have been balancing the level of review between the operational and the strategic.

Similarly there was divided opinion as to the level of direction required in the terms of reference and whether training of reviewers should have taken place prior to visits.

Another area with no clear response was whether reviewers should have visited programmes with greater similarity to their own work. Some appear to have benefitted greatly from the differences to their 'home' programme, while others felt greater benefit would have been derived from the similarities.

An area of obvious unanimity was the constraint on time to conduct the reviews. Almost every feedback form in some way referred to a desire to spend more time on the review, whether that is pre-visit preparation, time in the field or in report write up. Some reviewers noted that there was potentially duplication in project visits and stakeholder meetings, where greater attention to pre-planning may have made the visits more effective.

Other logistical issues were noted, including absences of key staff and timing of visits coinciding with school holidays. If such a process is repeated scheduling of visits will need greater consideration to ensure maximum value is obtained from the visits.

There was quite a different view of the process in the UK to the programme offices. The value of peer-reviewing appears to have been less clear for the UK office, although the benefit to reviewing participants from the UK was similar to those from programme offices. This may in part be a result of the specialist nature of the UK departments and its role in overseeing global strategy, but also that the strategy is not articulated into an operating plan in the way it is in programme offices. This raises a question of whether this process is as applicable to the UK as it is to the branch offices.