Endline report – Liberia, REFOUND MFS II country evaluations

Capacity of Southern Partner Organisations (5C) component

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This report presents the findings of the endline of the evaluation of the organisational capacity component of the MFS II country evaluations. The focus of this report is Liberia, REFOUND. The format is based on the requirements by the synthesis team and NWO/WOTRO. The endline was carried out in 2014. The baseline was carried out in 2012.

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Acknowledgements

We are grateful to all the people that have contributed to this report. We particularly would like to thank the Southern Partner Organisation, Rural Empowerment Foundation (REFOUND) and the Co-Financing Agency (ICCO) for their endless patience and support during this challenging task of collecting the endline data. We hope that this endline report will provide useful insights to REFOUND, ICCO, consortia, the synthesis team, IOB and NWO/Wotro and other interested parties.

The Liberia 5C evaluation team

List of abbreviations and acronyms

5 C	Capacity development model which focuses on 5 core capabilities
Causal map	Map with cause-effect relationships. See also 'detailed causal map'.
Causal mechanisms	The combination of parts that ultimately explains an outcome. Each part of the mechanism is an individually insufficient but necessary factor in a whole mechanism, which together produce the outcome
CDI	Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen UR, the Netherlands
CFA	Co-Financing Agency
CRC	Constitutional Review Committee
CSDF	County Social Development Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
Detailed causal map	Also 'model of change'. the representation of all possible explanations – causal pathways for a change/ outcome. These pathways are that of the intervention, rival pathways and pathways that combine parts of the intervention pathway with that of others. This also depicts the reciprocity of various events influencing each other and impacting the overall change. In the 5C evaluation identified key organisational capacity changes and underlying reasons for change (causal mechanisms) are traced through process tracing (for attribution question).
EVD	Ebola Virus Disease
FED-cluster	Fair Economic Development-Cluster (part of the LCDGP)
General causal map	Causal map with key organisational capacity changes and underlying reasons for change (causal mechanisms), based on SPO perception.
ICCO	Dutch Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation
ICCO-ROWA	ICCO Regional Office West Africa
LCDGP	Liberian Community Development and Governance Programme
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MFS	Dutch co-financing system
MIS	Management Information System
NARDA	New African Research and Development Agency
NEC	National Elections Commission
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OD	Organisational Development
PMC	Programme Management Committee
PME	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
Process tracing	Theory-based approach to trace causal mechanisms
REFOUND	Rural Empowerment Foundation
SDI	Sustainable Development Initiative
SPO	Southern Partner Organisation
ToC	Theory of Change
Wageningen UR	Wageningen University & Research centre

1 Introduction & summary

1.1 Purpose and outline of the report

The Netherlands has a long tradition of public support for civil bi-lateral development cooperation, going back to the 1960s. The Co-Financing System (*Medefinancieringsstelsel*, or 'MFS') is its most recent expression. MFS II is the 2011-2015 grant framework for Co-Financing Agencies (CFAs), which is directed at achieving a sustainable reduction in poverty. A total of 20 consortia of Dutch CFAs have been awarded €1.9 billion in MFS II grants by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).

The overall aim of MFS II is to help strengthen civil society in the South as a building block for structural poverty reduction. CFAs receiving MFS II funding work through strategic partnerships with Southern Partner Organisations.

The MFS II framework stipulates that each consortium is required to carry out independent external evaluations to be able to make valid, evaluative statements about the effective use of the available funding. On behalf of Dutch consortia receiving MFS II funding, NWO-WOTRO has issued three calls for proposals. Call deals with joint MFS II evaluations of development interventions at country level. Evaluations must comprise a baseline assessment in 2012 and a follow-up assessment in 2014 and should be arranged according to three categories of priority result areas as defined by MoFA:

Achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) & themes;

Capacity development of Southern partner organisations (SPO) (5 c study);

Efforts to strengthen civil society.

This report focuses on the assessment of capacity development of southern partner organisations. This evaluation of the organisational capacity development of the SPOs is organised around **four key evaluation questions**:

- What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?
- To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
- Were the efforts of the MFS II consortia efficient?
- What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

The purpose of this report is to provide endline information on one of the SPOs involved in the evaluation: REFOUND, in Liberia. The baseline report is described in a separate document.

Chapter 2 describes general information about the Southern Partner Organisation (SPO). Here you can find general information about the SPO, the context in which the SPO operates, contracting details and background to the SPO. In chapter 3 a brief overview of the methodological approach is described. You can find a more detailed description of the methodological approach in appendix 1.Chapter 4 describes the results of the 5c endline study. It provides an overview of capacity development interventions of the SPO that have been supported by MFS II. It also describes what changes in organisational capacity have taken place since the baseline and why (evaluation question is 1 and 4). This is described as a summary of the indicators per capability as well as a general causal map that provides an overview of the key organisational capacity changes since the baseline, as experienced by the SPO. The complete overview of descriptions per indicator, and how these have changed since the baseline is described in appendix 3. The complete visual and narrative for the key organisational capacity changes that have taken place since the baseline according to the SPO staff present at the endline workshop is presented in appendix 4.

Chapter 5 presents a discussion on the findings and methodology and a conclusion on the different evaluation questions.

The overall methodology for the endline study of capacity of southern partner organisations is coordinated between the 8 countries: Bangladesh (Centre for Development Studies, University of Bath; INTRAC); DRC (Disaster Studies, Wageningen UR); Ethiopia (CDI, Wageningen UR); India (CDI, Wageningen UR: Indonesia (CDI, Wageningen UR); Liberia (CDI, Wageningen UR); Pakistan (IDS; MetaMeta); (Uganda (ETC). Specific methodological variations to the approach carried out per country where CDI is involved are also described in this document.

This report is sent to the Co-Financing Agency (CFA) and the Southern Partner Organisation (SPO) for correcting factual errors and for final validation of the report.

1.2 Brief summary of analysis and findings

This report contains the organisational capacity component of the MFS II endline study in Liberia, concerning the Rural Empowerment Foundation (REFOUND). The endline discovered that REFOUND has had limited improvements in organisational capacity since the baseline. Within the capability to act and commit, very little change was seen: in the areas of leadership, staff capacity, funding possibilities, little progress has been made and the fragility of the staff situation and incentives make this even more uncertain. The capability to adapt and self-renew has not changed. Slight deterioration was witnessed within the capability to deliver on development objectives because it was unclear how cost-effectively resources were monitored and how programme outputs were implemented. Some improvement was seen in the capability to relate, as networking within Bong County has increased and some small projects have come forth through these attempts. The capability to achieve coherence was slightly improved through the drafting of a new strategic direction.

The evaluators considered it important to note down the SPO's perspective on what they experienced as the most important changes in the organisation since the baseline. SPO staff members noted key changes at the organisation to be that staff capacity was worked on (but challenges are there), the development of a new strategic direction and programmatic approach, and active networking in Bong County. A key driving factor that influenced many changes at REFOUND was noted to be that decreasing funding from ICCO has impacted the organisation heavily. A high staff turnover was seen as a main negative result of that. The new ICCO-funded LCDGP coalition has meant that less funding is available, but some trainings and learning sessions have been organised that have led to more attention to staff capacity. A need to find other projects followed from active networking in Bong County and engagements with other smaller projects in the area. These new projects have influenced the development of a new strategic direction for REFOUND. As such, the MFSII funded interventions were present, but less influential in the current organisational changes.

It should be noted that this endline assessment was carried out just before the Ebola virus epidemic and crisis hit Liberia as of July 2014. The effects of the epidemic have heavily impacted the staff and operations of all assessed organisations, and will likely continue to do so in the near future. As such the evaluation team acknowledges that the assessment described in this endline may not fully resemble the current situation in early 2015.

2 Context and General Information about the SPO – REFOUND

2.1 General information about the Southern Partner Organisation (SPO)

Country	Liberia
Consortium	ICCO Alliance
Responsible Dutch NGO	ICCO
Project (if applicable)	Strengthening Rural Women Capacity Towards Self-Reliance
Southern partner organisation	Rural Empowerment Foundation (REFOUND)

The project/partner is part of the sample for the following evaluation components:

Achievement of MDGs and themes	
Capacity development of Southern partner organisations	x
Efforts to strengthen civil society	

2.2 The socio-economic, cultural and political context in which the partner operates

The history of Liberia is a turbulent history. Settled by freed slaves from the United States around 1822, the newly formed state proclaimed independence in 1846. The Liberian state slowly expanded from the coast into the hinterlands and, though the state was founded on principles of freed slaves, the upholding of settler rights increasingly led to the suppression of indigenous peoples. In 1980 a coup d'état took place which ended the more than 100 year rule of the settler party (Pajibo, 2012; Richards et al., 2005). The military government, led by former sergeant Samuel K. Doe, suspended the constitution and instituted a repressive political system. In 1989 the invasion of Charles Taylor triggered the civil war in Liberia which lasted on and off between 1989 and 2003. The war, which was characterized by great terror and gruesome atrocities, counted many different fighting groups and changing alliances. Eventually the war ended with the departure of Charles Taylor, the institution of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in 2003 and the election of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2006 (Pugel, 2009). After the war ended in 2003, with the intervention of a 15,000 man UN force, a peace-building process started and is still ongoing (Richards et al., 2005).

Since the end of the civil war, the Liberian government has formulated the 'Agenda for Transformation' (AfT) as a five-year development strategy from 2012 to 2017. It followed the three–year (2008-2011) Lift Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS), which transitioned Liberia from post-conflict emergency reconstruction to economic recovery. The AfT was considered a first step toward achieving the goals set out in Liberia RISING 2030, Liberia's long-term vision of socio-economic transformation and development. The AfT articulates precise goals and objectives and corresponding interventions that should move Liberia closer toward structural economic transformation, prosperity and inclusive growth.

Perhaps one of the most critical achievements, of both the Liberian government and UNMIL, has been the maintenance of peace and security. Though Liberia continues to rely on the support the United Nations peacekeepers, it is hoped that the government will gradually assume full responsibility for maintenance of security for the coming years. This fragile peace has allowed Liberians to return to their farms, start businesses, return to their country from abroad, and witness an increase in flows of Foreign Direct Investment to Liberia. To revitalize the economy, the three-pronged economic strategy of the PRS focused on (i) rebuilding critical infrastructure; (ii) reviving traditional resource sectors; and (iii) establishing a competitive business environment.

The challenges Liberia is facing are daunting however. Starting from a state of post-conflict instability, extremely weak state institutions, and an economy left in shambles by nearly two decades of violence, further issues relate to minimal reconciliation efforts, high unemployment levels, low levels of education and limited access to healthcare. Within the field of governance and justice Liberia has much work to do. In the post-conflict period reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts have mostly been steered by international initiatives and forces such as the United Nations (Pajibo, 2012). The Truth and Reconciliation Committee, instituted to move on the path towards reconciliation rather than justice, has noted that those who committed war crimes in the civil war should be held accountable. This has not been the case, and the current political establishment has not acted on this view. The security and police sector are currently undergoing training and reform to take over the role of maintaining peace in the country. This is a difficult process, as for instance the police are often considered as predators rather than protectors. Access to justice is limited and trails often take long as only a limited number of cases are concluded each year (Human Rights Watch Liberia country chapters 2014).

Liberia is currently still receiving large amounts of international aid and budget support, and the transition to strengthen the main productive sector, agriculture, is still very much in a preliminary stage (Solà-Martin, 2012). According to the African Economic Outlook 2014, more than 70% of households in Liberia are engaged in rice production. However, since 1980 yields have not increased substantially and more than half of the country's rice is imported. Economic growth has thus far been heavily dependent on the natural resource sector, including goods such as ores, lumber, rubber and palm oil exports. In recent years the services sector has also been growing significantly, even though it is noted that the slow withdrawal of the UNMIL forces in 2015 will affect the demand for these services. It was reported that the informal economy, which reflects a large proportion of Liberian economic activity, has grown even though this has not translated into a decrease in poverty (African Economic Outlook 2014).

Major economic constraining factors include the lack of electricity and basic infrastructure. Until now infrastructure and basic services saw more than US$500 million of direct investment, with key components of infrastructure (including airports, seaports, and roads) renovated or reconstructed. Plans are made to build a large hydropower dam to improve access to electricity. However, these investments alone will not be sufficient to diversify the Liberian economy, nor create jobs for the roughly 500,000 Liberians who will graduate from secondary and post secondary institutions in the next 5 to 10 years. The Liberian government has worked out a plan to establish a competitive business environment for firms in Liberia. It has reformed the Tax Code and the Investment Code, making them more competitive and beneficial to growth. It has streamlined business registration processes; established a one-stop-shop for customs clearing; and started implementing proactive industrial policies as a way of facilitating the growth of local micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMES). The Government also made it a priority to achieve a stable macroeconomic environment, which is necessary for growth. Further, it maintained a cash-based balanced budget; significantly increased government revenue; moved toward multi-year financial planning; and achieved US$4.9 billion of cumulative debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. These and follow-up actions are creating the right incentives for further growth in employment, GDP, and public and private investment.

Ebola outbreak

West Africa is currently experiencing the largest outbreak of Ebola ever recorded. In Liberia, the disease was reported in Lofa and Nimba counties in late March 2014. In July, the health ministry implemented measures to improve the country's response. On 27 July, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the Liberian president, announced that Liberia would close its borders, with the exception of a few crossing points such as the airport, where screening centres would be established. Public gatherings were banned, schools and universities were closed, and the worst affected areas in the country were placed under quarantine.

In August, President Sirleaf declared a national state of emergency, noting that it might require the "suspensions of certain rights and privileges". The National Elections Commission announced that it would be unable to conduct the scheduled October 2014 senatorial election and requested postponement, one week after the leaders of various opposition parties had publicly taken different sides on the issue. In late August, Liberia's Port Authority cancelled all "shore passes" for sailors from

ships coming into the country's four seaports. As of 8 September, Ebola had been identified in 14 of Liberia's 15 counties.

Besides the enormous and tragic loss of human life, the Ebola epidemic is having devastating effects on West African economies in a variety of essential sectors by abruptly halting trade, agricultural productivity, and scaring investors away from the sub region for the foreseeable future. UN agencies such as the World Bank and international NGOs like Plan International, etc., have begun thinking post-Ebola, and have, therefore, embarked on conducting research and studies on the impact of Ebola on communities and the country, resilience of communities and the health care system, weaknesses in the health care system, etc.

As of January 2015 the Ebola epidemic seemed to be stabilising in Liberia. According to Medecins sans Frontieres the count is now around 8,157 cases and 3,496 deaths registered during the entire epidemic in Liberia (MSF Ebola crisis update 13-01-2015). This stabilisation means that the amount of new cases coming in has decreased significantly to around one case per week in Monrovia, but it is essential to not let the epidemic resurge. Not only Ebola patients have faced difficult times: the crisis has meant that general access to healthcare is even worse than before, As the Special Representative of the UN Secretariat in Liberia noted: rebuilding the country after the Ebola crisis will mean that the factors that caused the virus to spread so quickly need to be urgently addressed. This includes weak trust among the Liberian people, badly functioning basic services such as healthcare and education, lack of accountability and an over-centralized government (UN Special Representative Karen Landgren, 20-01-2015).

As it is with all sectors of Liberian society, this Ebola outbreak is testing the resilience of the SPOs to the highest limits. The SPOs are responding by readjusting their regular programmes by designing new strategies and realigning their resources to join the fight against the deadly Ebola virus disease. This is coming in the forms of Ebola awareness campaigns, psychosocial support for victims and survivors, provision of support to community care centres (CCCs), and procurement and distribution of sanitizing supplies to communities.

REFOUND

The deadly Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) outbreak that started in Liberia back in February of this year and which has engulfed the entire country, has posed a lot of hindrances and constraints on the operations of the organisation. Besides the enormous and tragic loss of human life, the Ebola epidemic is having devastating effects on West African economies in a variety of essential sectors by abruptly halting trade, agricultural productivity, and scaring investors away from the sub region for the foreseeable future.

REFOUND is a presently in a devastating situation due to the Ebola outbreak. Donors are holding back funding and scaling down operations in Liberia. REFOUND depends solely on grant funding for its operation, therefore, the organisation cannot operate effectively in the midst of the current Ebola outbreak.

During the baseline in 2012, REFOUND operated in a more healthy and effective work environment with no disruption. The organisation was funded primarily and fully by ICCO unlike the situation of the end line where is there is lack of funding and a situation of Ebola Virus Disease that has caused a wreck in the socio-economic, cultural, and political context of Liberia.

As a result of the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in Liberia REFOUND is jointly working with community based organisations and the Bong County Ebola task force within Bong County on a voluntary basis to carryout awareness on the Ebola virus.

The Ebola virus outbreak has greatly affected the capacity of the organisation. Currently, there is no source of funding for REFOUND, previous projects have been halted and ICCO has announced in June to withdraw further funds from Liberia. REFOUND, Development Education Network of Liberia (DEN-L), Foundation for International Dignity (FIND), Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), Centre for Justice and Peace Studies (CJPS), Bong County Youth Association, Bong County YMCA amongst other local organisations have pulled up non-financial resources and expertise to carry out awareness in Bong County on the Ebola Virus Disease.

After the outbreak of the Ebola Virus Disease in Liberia REFOUND has a plan of diverting its focus to working on community empowerment programmes, governance and health issues, food security and livelihood.

2.3   Contracting details

When did cooperation with this partner start: 2005

What is the MFS II contracting period: 2012-2014

Did cooperation with this partner end? NO

If yes, when did it finish? N/A

What is the reason for ending the cooperation with this partner: N/A

If not, is there an expected end date for the collaboration? 2015

2.4   Background to the Southern Partner Organisation

History
REFOUND first started in Gbarnga, Bong County in 2002 to address the plight of street children. The name of the organisation was initially Rural Endowment Foundation in 2002 at the inception but later in 2003 it was changed to Rural Empowerment Foundation. This change was because they wanted to move from the aspect of children to the larger community. The idea was to move from helping only street kids to helping the wider community, for instance, widows. Since then the vision and mission has changed further.

Vision
The vision of REFOUND is to promote community-based peace and conflict management and reconciliation activities to enhance peaceful co-existence.

Mission
The mission of REFOUND is to "empower local communities through sustainable economic initiatives". The focus areas of REFOUND were: promoting peace and conflict-resolution activities; and self-help initiatives for economic development of women and youth to reduce poverty. From 2005, REFOUND, with support from ICCO, has engaged women's groups in Suakoko and Zota districts in the area of agricultural production.

Strategies
REFOUND seeks to develop and empower young people and local communities as a basis for promoting self-initiatives through training, peace building and poverty reduction. In the baseline it was unclear what strategies REFOUND was using to address the vision and mission. Currently a new strategic plan is under development stating that REFOUND, in an effort to align its programs with the National Government development agenda, has formulated the strategic plan focusing on three thematic areas or priorities:

1. Economic Empowerment and Food Security for rural women
2. Policy analysis, Assessment and documentation
3. Good Governance and Democratic Empowerment

3 Methodological approach and reflection

3.1 Overall methodological approach and reflection

This chapter describes the methodological design and challenges for the assessment of capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), also called the '5C study'. This 5C study is organised around **four key evaluation questions**:

1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?
2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
3. Were the efforts of the MFS II consortia efficient?
4. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

It has been agreed that the question (3) around efficiency cannot be addressed for this 5C study. The methodological approach for the other three questions is described below. At the end, a methodological reflection is provided.

Note: this methodological approach is applied to 4 countries that the Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre is involved in in terms of the 5C study (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia). The overall approach has been agreed with all the 8 countries selected for this MFS II evaluation. The 5C country teams have been trained and coached on this methodological approach during the evaluation process. Details specific to the SPO are described in chapter 5.1 of the SPO report A detailed overview of the approach is described in appendix 1.

The first (changes in organisational capacity) and the fourth evaluation question are addressed together through:

- **Changes in the 5C indicators since the baseline:** standard indicators have been agreed upon for each of the five capabilities of the five capabilities framework (see appendix 2) and changes between the baseline, and the endline situation have been described. For data collection a mix of data collection methods has been used, including self-assessments by SPO staff; interviews with SPO staff and externals; document review; observation. For data analysis, the Nvivo software program for qualitative data analysis has been used. Final descriptions per indicator and per capability with corresponding scores have been provided.
- **Key organisational capacity changes – 'general causal map':** during the endline workshop a brainstorm has been facilitated to generate the key organisational capacity changes as perceived by the SPO since the baseline, with related underlying causes. For this purpose, a visual as well as a narrative causal map have been described.

In terms of the attribution question (2 and 4), **'process tracing'** is used. This is a theory-based approach that has been applied to a selected number of SPOs since it is a very intensive and costly methodology, although it provides rich information and can generate a lot of learning within the organisations. This approach was presented and agreed-upon during the synthesis workshop on 17-18 June 2013 by the 5C teams for the eight countries of the MFS II evaluation. A more detailed description of the approach was presented during the synthesis workshop in February 2014. The synthesis team, NWO-WOTRO, the country project leaders and the MFS II organisations present at the workshop have accepted this approach. It was agreed that this approach can only be used for a selected number of SPOs since it is a very intensive and costly methodology. Key organisational capacity changes/ outcomes of the SPO were identified, based on their relationship to the two selected capabilities, the capability to act and commit the capability to adapt and self-renew, and an expected relationship with CFA supported capacity development interventions (MFS II funding). It was agreed to

focus on these two capabilities, since these are the most targeted capabilities by the CFAs, as established during the baseline process.

Please find below an explanation of how the above-mentioned evaluation questions have been addressed in the 5C evaluation.

At the end of this appendix a brief methodological reflection is provided.

3.2 Assessing changes in organisational capacity and reasons for change - evaluation question 1 and 4

This section describes the data collection and analysis methodology for answering the first evaluation question: **What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?** And the fourth evaluation question: **"What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?"**

In order to explain the changes in organisational capacity development between baseline and endline (evaluation question 1) the CDI and in-country evaluation teams needed to review the indicators and how they have changed between baseline and endline and what reasons have been provided for this. This is explained below. It has been difficult to find detailed explanations for changes in each of the separate 5c indicators, but the 'general causal map' has provided some ideas about some of the key underlying factors actors and interventions that influence the key organisational capacity changes, as perceived by the SPO staff.

The evaluators considered it important to also note down a consolidated SPO story and this would also provide more information about what the SPO considered to be important in terms of organisational capacity changes since the baseline and how they perceived these key changes to have come about. Whilst this information has not been validated with sources other than SPO staff, it was considered important to understand how the SPOs has perceived changes in the organisation since the baseline.

For those SPOs that are selected for process tracing (evaluation question 2), more in-depth information is provided for the identified key organisational capacity changes and how MFS II supported capacity development interventions as well as other actors, factors and interventions have influenced these changes. This is integrated in the next session on the evaluation question on attribution, as described below and in the appendix 1.

How information was collected and analysed for addressing evaluation question 1 and 4, in terms of description of changes in indicators per capability as well as in terms of the general causal map, based on key organisational capacity changes as perceived by the SPO staff, is further described below.

During the baseline in 2012 information has been collected on each of the 33 agreed upon indicators for organisational capacity. For each of the five capabilities of the 5C framework indicators have been developed as can be seen in Appendix 2. During this 5C baseline, a summary description has been provided for each of these indicators, based on document review and the information provided by staff, the Co-financing Agency (CFA) and other external stakeholders. Also a summary description has been provided for each capability. The results of these can be read in the baseline reports.

The description of indicators for the baseline in 2012 served as the basis for comparison during the endline in 2014. In practice this meant that largely the same categories of respondents (preferably the same respondents as during the baseline) were requested to review the descriptions per indicator and indicate whether and how the endline situation (2014) is different from the described situation in 2012[1].

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[1] The same categories were used as during the baseline (except beneficiaries, other funders): staff categories including management, programme staff, project staff, monitoring and evaluation staff, field staff, administration staff; stakeholder categories including co-financing agency (CFA), consultants, partners.

Per indicator they could indicate whether there was an improvement or deterioration or no change and also describe these changes. Furthermore, per indicator the interviewee could indicate what interventions, actors and other factors explain this change compared to the baseline situation. See below the specific questions that are asked for each of the indicators. Per category of interviewees there is a different list of indicators to be looked at. For example, staff members were presented with a list of all the indicators, whilst external people, for example partners, are presented with a select number of indicators, relevant to the stakeholder.

The information on the indicators was collected in different ways:

1. **Endline workshop at the SPO - self-assessment and 'general causal map'**: similar to data collection during the baseline, different categories of staff (as much as possible the same people as during the baseline) were brought together in a workshop and requested to respond, in their staff category, to the list of questions for each of the indicators (self-assessment sheet). Prior to carrying out the self-assessments, a brainstorming sessions was facilitated to develop a 'general causal map', based on the key organisational capacity changes since the baseline as perceived by SPO staff. Whilst this general causal map is not validated with additional information, it provides a sequential narrative, based on organisational capacity changes as perceived by SPO staff;
2. **Interviews with staff members**: additional to the endline workshop, interviews were held with SPO staff, either to provide more in-depth information on the information provided on the self-assessment formats during the workshop, or as a separate interview for staff members that were not present during the endline workshop;
3. **Interviews with externals**: different formats were developed for different types of external respondents, especially the co-financing agency (CFA), but also partner agencies, and organisational development consultants where possible. These externals were interviewed, either face-to-face or by phone/Skype. The interview sheets were sent to the respondents and if they wanted, these could be filled in digitally and followed up on during the interview;
4. **Document review**: similar to the baseline in 2012, relevant documents were reviewed so as to get information on each indicator. Documents to be reviewed included progress reports, evaluation reports, training reports, etc. (see below) since the baseline in 2012, so as to identify changes in each of the indicators;
5. **Observation**: similar to what was done in 2012, also in 2014 the evaluation team had a list with observable indicators which were to be used for observation during the visit to the SPO.

Below the key steps to assess changes in indicators are described.

Key steps to assess changes in indicators are described

1. Provide the description of indicators in the relevant formats – CDI team
2. Review the descriptions per indicator – in-country team & CDI team
3. Send the formats adapted to the SPO to CFA and SPO – in-country team (formats for SPO) and CDI team (formats for CFA)
4. Collect, upload & code the documents from CFA and SPO in NVivo – CDI team
5. Organise the field visit to the SPO – in-country team
6. Interview the CFA – CDI team
7. Run the endline workshop with the SPO – in-country team
8. Interview SPO staff – in-country team
9. Fill-in observation sheets – in-country team
10. Interview externals – in-country team
11. Upload and auto-code all the formats collected by in-country team and CDI team in NVivo – CDI team
12. Provide to the overview of information per 5c indicator to in-country team – CDI team
13. Analyse data and develop a draft description of the findings per indicator and for the general questions – in-country team
14. Analyse data and develop a final description of the findings per indicator and per capability and for the general questions – CDI team
15. Analyse the information in the general causal map –in-country team and CDI-team

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Note: the CDI team include the Dutch 5c country coordinator as well as the overall 5c coordinator for the four countries (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia). The 5c country report is based on the separate SPO reports.

Please see appendix 1 for a description of the detailed process and steps.

3.3 Attributing changes in organisational capacity - evaluation question 2 and 4

This section describes the data collection and analysis methodology for answering the second evaluation question: **To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to (capacity) development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?** and the fourth evaluation question: **"What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?"**

In terms of the attribution question (2), 'process tracing' is used. This is a theory-based approach that has been applied to a selected number of SPOs since it is a very intensive and costly methodology, although it provides rich information and can generate a lot of learning within the organisations. Key organisational capacity changes/ outcomes of the SPO were identified, based on their relationship to the two selected capabilities, the capability to act and commit the capability to adapt and self-renew, and an expected relationship with CFA supported capacity development interventions (MFS II funding). It was agreed to focus on these two capabilities, since these are the most targeted capabilities by the CFAs, as established during the baseline process.

Below, the selection of SPOs for process tracing as well as the different steps involved for process tracing in the selected SPOs, are further explained.

3.3.1 Selection of SPOs for 5C process tracing

Process tracing is a very intensive methodology that is very time and resource consuming (for development and analysis of one final detailed causal map, it takes about 1-2 weeks in total, for different members of the evaluation team). It has been agreed upon during the synthesis workshop on 17-18 June 2013 that only a selected number of SPOs will take part in this process tracing for the purpose of understanding the attribution question. The selection of SPOs is based on the following criteria:

- MFS II support to the SPO has not ended before 2014 (since this would leave us with too small a time difference between intervention and outcome);
- Focus is on the 1-2 capabilities that are targeted most by CFAs in a particular country;
- Both the SPO and the CFA are targeting the same capability, and preferably aim for similar outcomes;
- Maximum one SPO per CFA per country will be included in the process tracing.

The intention was to focus on about 30-50% of the SPOs involved. Please see the tables below for a selection of SPOs per country. Per country, a first table shows the extent to which a CFA targets the five capabilities, which is used to select the capabilities to focus on. A second table presents which SPO is selected, and takes into consideration the selection criteria as mentioned above.

For the detailed results of this selection, in the four countries that CDI is involved in, please see appendix 1. The following SPOs were selected for process tracing:

- Ethiopia: AMREF, ECFA, FSCE, HUNDEE (4/9)
- India: BVHA, COUNT, FFID, SMILE, VTRC (5/10)
- Indonesia: ASB, ECPAT, PtPPMA, YPI, YRBI (5/12)
- Liberia: BSC, RHRAP (2/5).

3.3.2 Key steps in process tracing for the 5C study

In the box below you will find the key steps developed for the 5C process tracing methodology. These steps will be further explained here. Only key staff of the SPO is involved in this process: management; programme/ project staff; and monitoring and evaluation staff, and other staff that could provide information relevant to the identified outcome area/key organisational capacity change. Those SPOs selected for process tracing had a separate endline workshop, in addition to the ' general endline workshop. This workshop was carried out after the initial endline workshop and the interviews during the field visit to the SPO. Where possible, the general and process tracing endline workshop

have been held consecutively, but where possible these workshops were held at different points in time, due to the complex design of the process. Below the detailed steps for the purpose of process tracing are further explained. More information can be found in Appendix 1.

Key steps in process tracing for the 5C study

1. Identify the planned MFS II supported capacity development interventions within the selected capabilities (capability to act and commit and capability to adapt and self-renew) – CDI team
2. Identify the implemented MFS II supported capacity development interventions within the selected capabilities (capability to act and commit and capability to adapt and self-renew) – CDI team
3. Identify initial changes/ outcome areas in these two capabilities – CDI team & in-country team
4. Construct the detailed, initial causal map (theoretical model of change) – CDI team & in-country team
5. Identify types of evidence needed to verify or discard different causal relationships in the model of change – in-country teams, with support from CDI team
6. Collect data to verify or discard causal mechanisms and construct workshop based, detailed causal map (model of change) – in-country team
7. Assess the quality of data and analyse data and develop final detailed causal map (model of change) – in-country team with CDI team
8. Analyse and conclude on findings– CDI team, in collaboration with in-country team

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3.3.3 Methodological reflection

Below a few methodological reflections are made by the 5C evaluation team. These can also be found in appendix 1.

Use of the 5 core capabilities framework and qualitative approach: this has proven to a be very useful framework to assess organisational capacity. The five core capabilities provide a comprehensive picture of the capacity of an organisation. The capabilities are interlinked, which was also reflected in the description of standard indicators, that have been developed for the purpose of this 5C evaluation and agreed upon for the eight countries. Using this framework with a mainly qualitative approach has provided rich information for the SPOs and CFAs, and many have indicated this was a useful learning exercise.

Using standard indicators and scores: using standard indicators is useful for comparison purposes. However, the information provided per indicator is very specific to the SPO and therefore makes comparison difficult. Whilst the description of indicators has been useful for the SPO and CFA, it is questionable to what extent indicators can be compared across SPOs since they need to be seen in context, for them to make meaning. In relation to this, one can say that scores that are provided for the indicators, are only relative and cannot show the richness of information as provided in the indicator description. Furthermore, it must be noted that organisations are continuously changing and scores are just a snapshot in time. There cannot be perfect score for this. In hindsight, having rubrics would have been more useful than scores.

General causal map: whilst this general causal map, which is based on key organisational capacity changes and related causes, as perceived by the SPO staff present at the endline workshop, has not been validated with other sources of information except SPO feedback, the 5C evaluation team considers this information important, since it provides the SPO story about how and which changes in the organisation since the baseline, are perceived as being important, and how these changes have come about. This will provide information additional to the information that has been validated when analysing and describing the indicators as well as the information provided through process tracing (selected SPOs). This has proven to be a learning experience for many SPOs.

Using process tracing for dealing with the attribution question: this theory-based and mainly qualitative approach has been chosen to deal with the attribution question, on how the organisational capacity changes in the organisations have come about and what the relationship is with MFS II supported capacity development interventions and other factors. This has proven to be a very useful process, that provided a lot of very rich information. Many SPOs and CFAs have already indicated that they appreciated the richness of information which provided a story about how identified

organisational capacity changes have come about. Whilst this process was intensive for SPOs during the process tracing workshops, many appreciated this to be a learning process that provided useful information on how the organisation can further develop itself. For the evaluation team, this has also been an intensive and time-consuming process, but since it provided rich information in a learning process, the effort was worth it, if SPOs and CFAs find this process and findings useful.

A few remarks need to be made:

- Outcome explaining process tracing is used for this purpose, but has been adapted to the situation since the issues being looked at were very complex in nature.
- Difficulty of verifying each and every single change and causal relationship:
  - Intensity of the process and problems with recall: often the process tracing workshop was done straight after the general endline workshop that has been done for all the SPOs.In some cases, the process tracing endline workshop has been done at a different point in time, which was better for staff involved in this process, since process tracing asks people to think back about changes and how these changes have come about. The word difficulties with recalling some of these changes and how they have come about. See also the next paragraph.
  - Difficulty of assessing changes in knowledge and behaviour: training questionnaire is have been developed, based on Kirkpatrick's model and were specifically tailored to identify not only the interest but also the change in knowledge and skills, behaviour as well as organisational changes as a result of a particular training. The retention ability of individuals, irrespective of their position in the organisation, is often unstable. The 5C evaluation team experienced that it was difficult for people to recall specific trainings, and what they learned from those trainings. Often a change in knowledge, skills and behaviour is a result brought about by a combination of different factors , rather than being traceable to one particular event. The detailed causal maps that have been established, also clearly pointed this. There are many factors at play that make people change their behaviour, and this is not just dependent on training but also internal/personal (motivational) factors as well as factors within the organisation, that stimulate or hinder a person to change behaviour. Understanding how behaviour change works is important when trying to really understand the extent to which behaviour has changed as a result of different factors, actors and interventions. Organisations change because people change and therefore understanding when and how these individuals change behaviour is crucial. Also attrition and change in key organisational positions can contribute considerably to the outcome.

Utilisation of the evaluation
The 5C evaluation team considers it important to also discuss issues around utility of this evaluation. We want to mention just a few.

Design: mainly externally driven and with a focus on accountability and standard indicators and approaches within a limited time frame, and limited budget: this MFS II evaluation is originally based on a design that has been decided by IOB (the independent evaluation office of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and to some extent MFS II organisations. The evaluators have had no influence on the overall design and sampling for the 5C study. In terms of learning, one may question whether the most useful cases have been selected in this sampling process. The focus was very much on a rigorous evaluation carried out by an independent evaluation team. Indicators had to be streamlined across countries. The 5C team was requested to collaborate with the other 5C country teams (Bangladesh, Congo, Pakistan, Uganda) to streamline the methodological approach across the eight sampled countries. Whilst this may have its purpose in terms of synthesising results, the 5C evaluation team has also experienced the difficulty of tailoring the approach to the specific SPOs. The overall evaluation has been mainly accountability driven and was less focused on enhancing learning for improvement. Furthermore, the timeframe has been very small to compare baseline information (2012) with endline information (2014). Changes in organisational capacity may take a long, particularly if they are related to behaviour change. Furthermore, there has been limited budget to carry out the 5C evaluation. For all the four countries (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia) that the Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre has been involved in, the budget has been overspent.

However, the 5C evaluation team has designed an endline process whereby engagement of staff, e.g. in a workshop process was considered important, not only due to the need to collect data, but also to generate learning in the organisation. Furthermore, having general causal maps and detailed causal maps generated by process tracing have provided rich information that many SPOs and CFAs have already appreciated as useful in terms of the findings as well as a learning process.

Another issue that must be mentioned is that additional requests have been added to the country teams during the process of implementation: developing a country based synthesis; questions on design, implementation, and reaching objectives of MFS II funded capacity development interventions, whilst these questions were not in line with the core evaluation questions for the 5C evaluation.

Complexity and inadequate coordination and communication: many actors, both in the Netherlands, as well as in the eight selected countries, have been involved in this evaluation and their roles and responsibilities, were often unclear. For example, 19 MFS II consortia, the internal reference group, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Partos, the Joint Evaluation Trust, NWO-Wotro, the evaluators (Netherlands and in-country), 2 external advisory committees, and the steering committee. Not to mention the SPO's and their related partners and consultants. CDI was involved in 4 countries with a total number of 38 SPOs and related CFAs. This complexity influenced communication and coordination, as well as the extent to which learning could take place. Furthermore, there was a distance between the evaluators and the CFAs, since the approach had to be synchronised across countries, and had to adhere to strict guidelines, which were mainly externally formulated and could not be negotiated or discussed for the purpose of tailoring and learning. Feedback on the final results and report had to be provided mainly in written form. In order to enhance utilisation, a final workshop at the SPO to discuss the findings and think through the use with more people than probably the one who reads the report, would have more impact on organisational learning and development. Furthermore, feedback with the CFAs has also not been institutionalised in the evaluation process in the form of learning events. And as mentioned above, the complexity of the evaluation with many actors involved did not enhance learning and thus utilization.

5C Endline process, and in particular thoroughness of process tracing often appreciated as learning process: The SPO perspective has also brought to light a new experience and technique of self-assessment and self-corrective measures for managers. Most SPOs whether part of process tracing or not, deeply appreciated the thoroughness of the methodology and its ability to capture details with robust connectivity. This is a matter of satisfaction and learning for both evaluators and SPOs. Having a process whereby SPO staff were very much engaged in the process of self-assessment and reflection has proven for many to be a learning experience for many, and therefore have enhanced utility of the 5C evaluation.

4 Results

4.1 MFS II supported capacity development interventions

Below an overview of the different MFS II supported capacity development interventions of REFOUND that have taken place since 2011 are described. The information is based on the information provided by ICCO.

Table 1

Information about MFS II supported capacity development interventions since the baseline

Title of the MFS II supported capacity development intervention	Objectives	Activities	Timing and duration	Budget
Project cycle/ Financial Software training with staff	Training in Financial management and budget	Short training provided by DEN-L consultant	2013	$750.00 Dollars
Partner/Cluster Coordination Meetings	Interaction and planning with LCDGP partners	Meetings held in Monrovia	2013-2014	$500.00 Dollars
Start-up activities FED Bridging Phase: FED-Cluster Value chain stakeholder mapping exercise	Create FED partners' awareness of value chain stakeholders in Liberia	REFOUND management attended a two-day workshop as part of the start-up phase	February 6-7, 2014	$14.600 Dollars (for entire FED-cluster start-up phase 2013-2014)
ICCO monitoring visits	Visits for monitoring and discussion purposes	Discussions on funding, sustainability, business development and organisational strengthening	Throughout 2012 and 2013 - latest in March/April 2014	

Source: CFA support to capacity sheet, REFOUND Expenditure plan 2013, LCDGP Bridging Narrative Report 2013, LCDGP Financial Report to ICCO 2013

4.2 Changes in capacity and reasons for change - evaluation question 1 and 4

Below you can find a description of the changes in each of the five core capabilities (4.2.1). This information is based on the analysis of the information per each of the indicators. This detailed information for each of the indicators describes the current situation, and how and why it has changed since the baseline. See also appendix 3. In addition to this staff present at the endline workshop were asked to indicate what were the key changes in the organisation since the baseline. The most important is key organisational capacity changes have been identified, as well as the reasons for these changes to come about. This is described in a general causal map, both as a visual as well as a narrative. The summary results are described in 4.2.2 whilst the detailed general map is described in appendix 4.

4.2.1   Changes in the five core capabilities
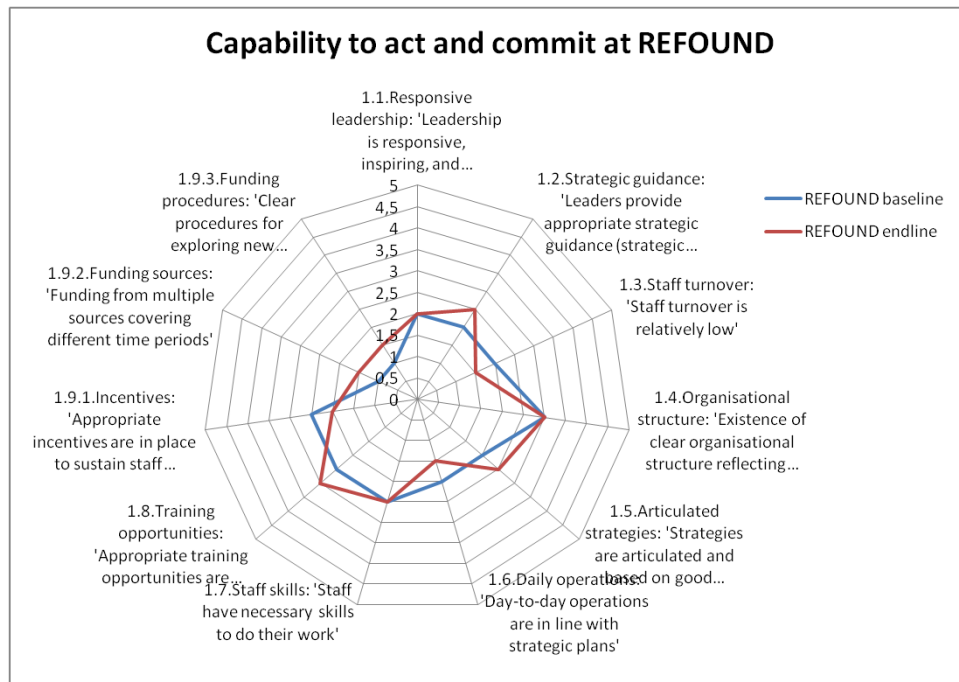
Capability to act and commit

Capability to act and commit at REFOUND

The leadership of REFOUND cannot be considered to have significantly improved its capacity since the baseline. The main changes have been that the Board, that has been reconstituted and is hoped to bring more guidance than the previous Board. A new strategic plan has been developed that tries to focus on 3 issues: gender economic development, policy advocacy, and democratic governance. Some issues were still unclear, and these related to how the organisation functions daily, how finances are monitored, and fully detailed reports were not available. This is not very different from the baseline. The main issue that is challenging REFOUND is that many staff members have left, current staff members are practically volunteering as they are paid whenever a project is on hand, which affects staff motivation. The current staff members have been engaging in limited trainings from ICCO and from organisations within the local network, though it cannot be said for sure whether performance has improved. Funding procedures could potentially be guided by the new strategic plan in the future but for now REFOUND relies on ad hoc short-term projects that come along.

Score: from 2 to 2.1 (hardly a change)

Capability to adapt and self-renew

Capability to adapt and self-renew at REFOUND

2.1.M&E application: 'M&E is effectively applied to assess activities, outputs and outcomes'

2.2.M&E competencies: 'Individual competencies for performing M&E functions are in place'

2.3.M&E for future strategies: 'M&E is effectively applied to assess the effects of delivered products and services (outcomes)...

2.4.Critical reflection: 'Management stimulates frequent critical reflection meetings that also deal with learning from...

2.5. Freedom for ideas: 'Staff feel free to come up with ideas for implementation of objectives

2.6.System for tracking environment: 'The organisation has a system for being in touch with general trends and...

2.7.Stakeholder responsiveness: 'The organisation is open and responsive to their stakeholders and the general public'

REFOUND baseline
REFOUND endline

In the years since the baseline not much has been done to improve M&E competencies or develop an M&E system. Most feedback and monitoring activities still take place through informal meetings and assessment trips. The management and board have attempted to list the strengths and weaknesses of REFOUND, but it is unclear whether critical reflection on the meaning of this analysis is actually taking place.

The networking activities of the director let the organisation stay in touch with what is happening in society, and the current role of Chair of CSO groups in Bong County allows REFOUND to join higher level meetings. Though some small and short-term projects have been taking place, partners of REFOUND still found it difficult to give information about the organisation.

Score: from 2.5 to 2.5 (no change)

Capability to deliver on development objectives

Capability to deliver on development objectives at REFOUND

3.1.Clear operational plans: 'Organisation has clear operational plans for carrying out projects which all staff fully understand'

3.2.Cost-effective resource use: 'Operations are based on cost-effective use of its resources'

3.3.Delivering planned outputs: 'Extent to which planned outputs are delivered'

3.4.Mechanisms for beneficiary needs: 'The organisation has mechanisms in place to verify that services meet beneficiary needs'

3.5.Monitoring efficiency: 'The organisation monitors its efficiency by linking outputs and related inputs (input-output ratio's)'

3.6.Balancing quality-efficiency: 'The organisation aims at balancing efficiency requirements with the quality of its work'

REFOUND baseline
REFOUND endline

REFOUND has worked on its strategic plan, and has sought to apply the programmatic way of thinking in that strategy. However, when looking at the lack of operational documentation and limited financial accountability, it can be doubted whether REFOUND has been able to deliver on its development objectives. Lack of funding is part of the issue, but the problems related to reporting and the provision general documentation show that REFOUND has trouble managing its projects coherently.

Score: from 2.4 to 2 (slight deterioration)

Capability to relate

REFOUND seems to be quite active within networks in Bong County. The election of REFOUND to be the chair of CSOs in that area has allowed the organisation to maintain and build new regional contacts. Some small projects have come out of that engagement in the past year. It is unclear how stakeholders have actively influenced the policies of REFOUND - the strategic plan does suggest that certain focus areas originate from interactions with other groups. Internally, not much seems to have changed: informal meetings with beneficiaries and with staff guide internal communication, but is the evaluation team's perception that the director seems to mostly decide on the way forward. Also lack of funding has limited the frequency of visits to beneficiaries.

Score: 2.1 to 2.3 (very slight improvement)

Capability to achieve coherence

Capability to achieve coherence at REFOUND

In many aspects the situation is the same as during the baseline. Though the strategy has now been developed it is unsure how the vision and mission statements are still fully connected to this. The strategic plan and the administrative policies guide REFOUND in a sense, but most activities are quite ad hoc. The diversity of small projects being undertaken besides activities for ICCO does not suggest that REFOUND fully knows where it is headed. Lack of funding is seriously affecting the work of REFOUND and thus the extent to which project activities can be complementary.

Score: from 2.25 to 2.5 (very slight improvement)

4.2.2   Key organisational capacity changes - general causal map -

During the endline workshop at the SPO, a discussion was held around what staff perceived as the key changes in the organisation since the baseline. This then led to a discussion on what were the key organisational capacity changes and why these changes have taken place according to staff present at the endline workshop. The discussion resulted in a 'general causal map' which is summarised below. The detailed general causal map (both as a visual and well as a narrative) is described in appendix 4. The general causal map provides a comprehensive picture of organisational capacity changes that took place since the baseline, based on the perspective of SPO staff present at the endline workshop. At the top the main organisational capacity changes are positioned (in yellow boxes). Some of their key consequences (in purple) are noted up top. Blue boxes represent factors and aspects that influence the organisational capacity changes above. These can be further traced back to interventions and activities. The contributing activities have been coloured brown. If a factor or outcome negatively impacted the organisation it has been highlighted in pink.

Most of these changes were written down by the executive director and are described below:

- The Executive Director and the finance/administrative officer underwent two trainings in program and finance in 2013.
-
- The Board was reconstituted in January 2014
- New strategic plan was developed in March 2014
- REFOUND heads CSO in Bong County
- Three staff left REFOUND in April 2013, and a fourth member, a programme officer became part of the Board.
- Administrative policy was revised in June 2014 (made available to the evaluation team)
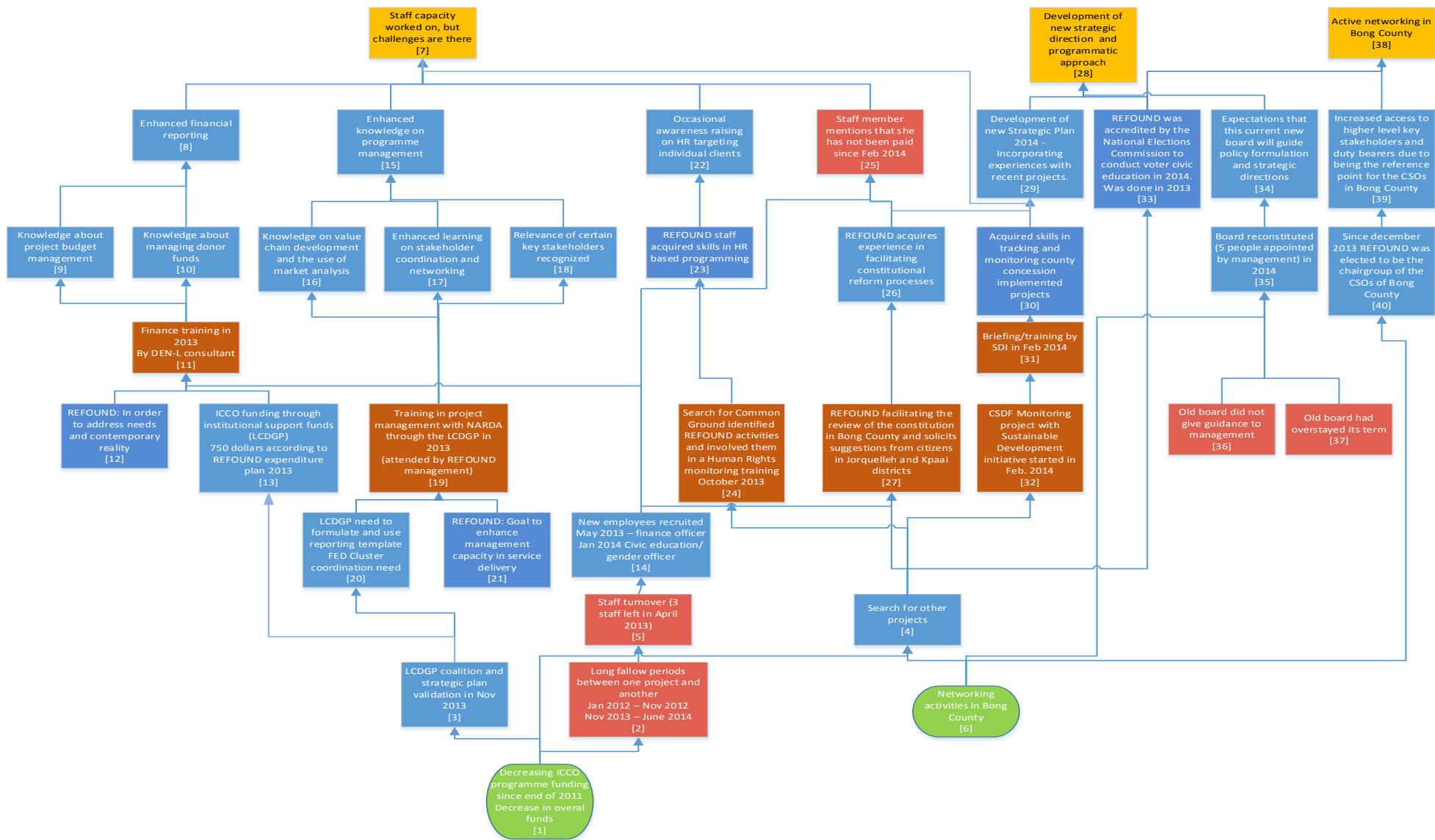- There were two audits commissioned (one was seen by the evaluation team)

- REFOUND acquires capacity to coordinate and facilitate the constitutional review process in Bong County. This was in cooperation with the Constitutional Review Committee.
- Skills were acquired in monitoring and tracking of Bong County's social development funds
- Strategic LCDGP plan validated during a series of meetings in Monrovia.
- REFOUND was accredited by NEC in 2013, to conduct 2014 voters' civic education for the 2014 midterm elections.

A key factor that has heavily influenced the organisational capacity and the activities of REFOUND since 2012 has been the decreasing level of funding from ICCO. ICCO is the main funder of REFOUND and has been supporting them since 2005 [1]. Members of REFOUND at the workshop noted that 'fallow periods' (periods in which they were not paid) in between the transformation from bilateral relations to the bridging phase (January 2012 - November 2012) [2], and now to the LCDGP (November 2013 - June 2014) led various staff to stop working at the organisation and find other means of employment. The formation of the LCDGP has been something that REFOUND seems to be struggling with, since it is mostly related to less funds being available, and funds being unpredictable [3] (according to the executive director). Due to the decreasing amount of funding, as well as subsequent delays in funding, REFOUND has been seeking additional projects and funding sources [4], but the negative effect is that 4 staff members have left the organisation [5]. Many of these projects are in the region of Bong County, where REFOUND is actively networking to get new projects [6].

During the discussions at the workshop it was difficult to agree on a number of themes or labels that would characterize the discussions. The research team divided the subjects in three categories: 'staff capacity was worked on, but challenges are there'; 'development of a new programmatic approach'; and 'networking in Bong County'.

The discussion that **staff capacity was worked on** [7] was given substance by the statements made by the finance/administrative officer and the executive director that they had improved some of their personal knowledge and skills in the past two years. They both felt that they had enhanced their financial reporting competencies [8], through enhanced knowledge of project budget management [9], and knowledge about managing donor funds [10]. On other skills and capacity gains, the director felt that he increased his knowledge on programme management [15] during a training provided by the Programme Management Committee of the LCDGP. He said that he had learned a number of approaches that helped him manage his programme. He said that in this training a number of issues were discussed: stakeholder mapping, value chains, and timely reporting. A third issue that the staff of REFOUND have been working on was the issue of human rights, and currently staff are doing occasional awareness raising of human rights issues in the communities that REFOUND is active in [22]. This is related to members of REFOUND acquiring ideas on how to incorporate human rights within their programmes [23]. Within their own target communities they tried to inform beneficiaries of their rights, to help to resolve disputes and to highlight rights violations. A question was asked in follow-up: how are you applying the knowledge from the Human Rights training in your communities? This approach is used by the organisation in some individual cases, for example in case of issues of rape. Another example that the director mentioned was a case where community members held a man prisoner. But the REFOUND staff acknowledged that they did not have a consistent approach to human rights abuses. A final additional skill that was acquired was the tracking and monitoring of County concession funds [30].

An issue that seems to impact the staff capacity at REFOUND was mentioned by a new staff member who indicated that REFOUND's management had trouble paying her wages [25]. The civic/gender officer said she was hired as a civic education and gender officer for a small project that REFOUND is taking part in: the facilitation of a Bong County Constitutional Review. This project involved soliciting suggestions from citizens in Jorquelleh and Kpaai districts. This project gave her some experience in facilitating these discussions on constitutional reform [26]. This programme had its disadvantages though: due to delays in payment from the CRC it was not possible to pay the staff working on the project at the moment, according to the director. This was a negative effect of being involved as staff member in REFOUND and this could seriously affect staff capacity of REFOUND, since other staffs have also left the organisation after working for a long time as volunteers. REFOUND has tried to get new staff [14] but these problems in paying staff members still remain.

Staff capacity worked on, but challenges are there [7]

Development of new strategic direction and programmatic approach [28]

Active networking in Bong County [38]

Enhanced financial reporting [8]

Enhanced knowledge on programme management [15]

Occasional awareness raising on HR targeting individual clients [22]

Staff member mentions that she has not been paid since Feb 2014 [25]

Development of new Strategic Plan 2014 - Incorporating experiences with recent projects. [29]

REFOUND was accredited by the National Elections Commission to conduct voter civic education in 2014. Was done in 2013 [33]

Expectations that this current new board will guide policy formulation and strategic directions [34]

Increased access to higher level key stakeholders and duty bearers due to being the reference point for the CSOs in Bong County [39]

Knowledge about project budget management [9]

Knowledge about managing donor funds [10]

Knowledge on value chain development and the use of market analysis [16]

Enhanced learning on stakeholder coordination and networking [17]

Relevance of certain key stakeholders recognized [18]

REFOUND staff acquired skills in HR based programming [23]

REFOUND acquires experience in facilitating constitutional reform processes [26]

Acquired skills in tracking and monitoring county concession implemented projects [30]

Board reconstituted (5 people appointed by management) in 2014 [35]

Since december 2013 REFOUND was elected to be the chairgroup of the CSOs of Bong County [40]

Finance training in 2013 By DEN-L consultant [11]

Briefing/training by SDI in Feb 2014 [31]

REFOUND: In order to address needs and contemporary reality [12]

ICCO funding through institutional support funds (LCDGP) 750 dollars according to REFOUND expenditure plan 2013 [13]

Training in project management with NARDA through the LCDGP in 2013 (attended by REFOUND management) [19]

Search for Common Ground identified REFOUND activities and involved them in a Human Rights monitoring training October 2013 [24]

REFOUND facilitating the review of the constitution in Bong County and solicits suggestions from citizens in Jorquelleh and Kpaai districts [27]

CSDF Monitoring project with Sustainable Development initiative started in Feb. 2014 [32]

Old board did not give guidance to management [36]

Old board had overstayed its term [37]

LCDGP need to formulate and use reporting template FED Cluster coordination need [20]

REFOUND: Goal to enhance management capacity in service delivery [21]

New employees recruited May 2013 – finance officer Jan 2014 Civic education/ gender officer [14]

Search for other projects [4]

LCDGP coalition and strategic plan validation in Nov 2013 [3]

Staff turnover (3 staff left in April 2013) [5]

Long fallow periods between one project and another Jan 2012 – Nov 2012 Nov 2013 – June 2014 [2]

Networking activities in Bong County [6]

Decreasing ICCO programme funding since end of 2011 Decrease in overal funds [1]

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The director mentioned that a key issue key issue the organisation is heading towards relates to a **new strategic direction and a new programmatic approach** [28]. He said that he had been working on the new strategic plan to develop slightly new focus areas [29]. The three new focus areas of REFOUND are: Economic development and gender; Policy advice; Democratic governance. Especially the issue within this strategic plan on democratic governance and policy advice focus of REFOUND is new. The new plan was developed in March 2014. The idea is that the directors' new strategic plan is heading for a more programmatic approach. He mentioned that he wanted to move from project planning to programme planning in order to get a new organisational direction and ensure financial sustainability. He also wanted to do this to get more structure in organisational management, especially regarding issues relating to payments and other management issues. A number of previous project experiences influenced this strategic adaptation.

An important part of the discussion in the development of the general causal map was that REFOUND is quite an **active networking organisation in Bong County** [38], and is well known as a Civil Society Organisation since 2005. REFOUND has recently become the chair of the CSOs of Bong County since December 2013 [40]. The director said that REFOUND was elected to be chair by the present CSOs. REFOUND is an active member of this network. He felt that this role was important to REFOUND, as it gave them a better presence in the community, and enabled more possibilities for networking and engaging with other donors. However, when the evaluation team sought to find partners to interview about REFOUND it was not very clear who would be considered a close partner.

5 Discussion and conclusion

5.1 Methodological issues

The Liberia 5C evaluation team conducted a two day workshop with three subgroups of REFOUND staff including management, finance, and project implementation. The Project Officer/Field supervisor was out of office at the time of the endline evaluation, on personal business in Monrovia because, according to him, "due to lack of funding REFOUND is not paying me, therefore, I have to seek other means for survival". The project officer joined the endline evaluation process when the workshop was in progress on the second day. During the workshops, the finance and project staffs of REFOUND talked less and listened more. The Executive Director dominated the discussions because he possesses all of the information, as he was the sole full time employee of REFOUND at the time of the endline evaluation. Interviews with their organization development consultant and the acting chairman of the board of directors of REFOUND were used as opportunities to clarify any issues coming out of the discussions of the workshops and the interviews with two subgroups of the staffs of REFOUND – management and projects/finance combined, respectively.

With REFOUND, the few people that participated in the workshops and interviews seemed to be new "at will" workers that did not have knowledge of the organisational capacity issues. The Executive Director in this case, the only full time employee of REFOUND, responded to all of the questions. The two major figures of REFOUND – the program development consultant and the organization development consultant at the time of the baseline in June 2012 – were absent during the workshops, but were subsequently interviewed as acting chairman of the board of directors of REFOUND and organization development consultant, respectively. Two partners of NAWOCOL were interviewed in the area of Gbargna, but neither of the two partners were able to give substantial information on REFOUND.

The Executive Director of REFOUND did not fill out and submit the Support to capacity sheet to the Liberia 5C evaluation team as requested before commencement of the endline evaluation, neither did he submit the legal and policy documents, audit report, project proposal and budget, and financial reports that the evaluation team requested repeatedly. However, due to persistent demand for the documents by the evaluation team during the workshops, he provided some of the documents and submitted a preliminary Strategic Plan.

All in all, eventually adequate information has been collected so as to carry out data analysis.

5.2 Changes in organisational capacity

In the assessment of the 5 capabilities it became clear that no significant growth in capabilities were seen at REFOUND. Some small improvement was seen in the capabilities to relate and to achieve coherence, but the capability to deliver on development objectives had slightly deteriorated (see figure next page). Within the capability to act and commit scarce change was seen: in the areas of leadership, staff capacity, funding possibilities, little progress has been made and the fragility of the staff situation and incentives make this even more uncertain. Within the indicator about leadership it was discovered that the leadership of REFOUND cannot be considered to have significantly improved its capacity since the baseline. The main changes have been that the Board has been reconstituted in order to give more guidance than the previous Board. Funding sources were sought within the context of Bong County through local networking, but at the time of the endline no solution was found to substitute the decreasing ICCO funding. Within the capability to adapt and self-renew no real changes were seen. Regarding issues related to M&E REFOUND has not especially built its systems or skills - most monitoring activities are still very informal and scarcely documented. Deterioration was

witnessed within the capability to deliver on development objectives because it was unclear how cost-effectively resources were monitored and how programme outputs were implemented. Operations regarding REFOUNDs participation in the LCDGP programme are vague, lacking funding, clear operational plans, with scarce reporting and accountability. Some improvement was seen in the capability to relate, as networking within Bong County has increased and some small projects have come forth through these attempts. The capability to achieve coherence was slightly improved through the drafting of a new strategic direction.

Average capability changes at REFOUND
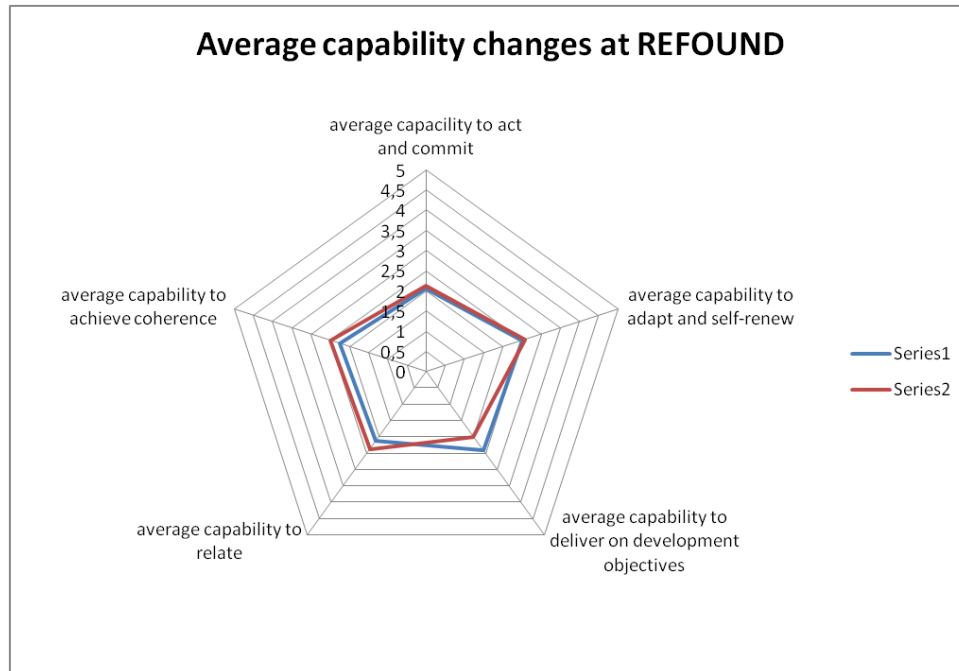
At REFOUND in the baseline it was noted that the organisation had been a partner of ICCO for a long time. In the transition from bilateral funding to the bridging phase and subsequently to the programmatic funding of the LCDGP the dependency on ICCO for funds has led to a number of problems within the organisation. In the baseline some of these issues were already present: the organisation seemed to be wrestling with the right way to formulate strategy and methods to implement those strategies. In the baseline it was also signalled that REFOUND was having trouble retaining staff members.

During the endline workshop the members of REFOUND brought forward that the key changes at the organisation were the development of staff capacity, the development of a new strategic direction, and increased networking in Bong County. The staff capacity had been worked on through some trainings done through the LCDGP partners - a training on value chain development and stakeholder mapping, and a training in financial management. This last training was planned through the provision of 3000 dollars in ICCO flexible funding for capacity building initiatives. The idea of the flexible funds was that this amount would be made available by ICCO to give some attention to capacity issues in absence of the Learning Trajectory materialization. Another training that REFOUND received was on human rights monitoring, provided by Search for Common Ground.

The strategic plan has been adapted with the idea to form a new organisational direction and to follow a more programmatic approach. This entails three relatively new focus areas and a perspective that a programmatic approach for REFOUND might ensure a new organisational direction and financial sustainability. This is in contrast with the ad hoc way the organisation is operating now, dependent on smaller temporary projects. The experiences with these small projects, such as with the Constitutional Review Committee and the Sustainable Development Initiative, have provided ideas to use for the new strategic plan. A new development that also influences the new strategic direction is the fact that the board has been reconstituted.

The most positive events that has taken place have been around networking with other local CSOs in Bong County. REFOUND has been able to engage in a number of new, smaller projects that were

slightly outside of the strategies. Also, REFOUND has become the Chair of the Bong CSOs, which means that REFOUND has access to higher level stakeholders such as members of the government of Liberia, and the UN, through being the reference point of Bong CSOs.

From the side of ICCO it was said that REFOUND has been unresponsive throughout 2013 and 2014. The CFA wrote that many aspects of the work of REFOUND were unclear and that they needed to substantiate and make accountable the claims about the measure of success of their projects. ICCO has thus had significant issues when it comes to monitoring the REFOUND projects' outcomes and impact. The formation of the LCDGP has not done much to motivate REFOUND to become more active and accountable - the decrease in funding (also having to actively search for more funding to fulfil the project objectives) and the sporadic attempts of the PMC to bring REFOUND to engage in a more collaborative and programmatic approach have yielded little apparent results. Finally, it should be noted that the Ebola outbreak has heavily impacted Bong County. This has had implications for the operations of the organisation and the environment in which it operates: the consequences are yet uncertain.

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Guidelines and formats for the 5C endline study

5c_endline_draftreport_country_SPO_26112014

Annex A_5c endline_assessment sheet_Dutch co-financing organisations_Liberia_REFOUND_ICCO

Annex B_5C endline_support to capacity development sheet_CFA perspective_Liberia_REFOUND_ICCO

Annex D_5c endline interview guide_partners_selected indicators_Liberia_REFOUND(John M. Willie)

Annex D_5c endline interview guide_partners_selected indicators_Liberia_REFOUND_Mrs Rennie

Annex F_5c endline self-assessment sheet_management_Liberia_REFOUND version 2

Annex F_5c endline self-assessment sheet_management_Liberia_REFOUND_Dumoe

Annex G_5c endline self-assessment sheet_programme staff_Liberia_REFOUND

Annex Q_5c endline observation sheet_Liberia_REFOUND Bram

Annex Q_5c endline observation sheet_Liberia_REFOUND(Sam Gotomo)

Annex Q_5c endline observation sheet_Liberia_REFOUND_Stanford

List of 5C indicator descriptions

Partner Documents

5C_baseline_report_Liberia_REFOUND_19012013_MR_CK

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES-4

Annual Update E1

BRIEFING ON LCDGP STRATEGIC PLAN VALIDATION PROCESS

CSO Assessment_Tool_FINAL pdf

Feed back on Indicators 1.4 and 1.5

Feedback to the PMC-June

FINAL- consolidated- Partners'capacity assessment report

FINAL TOR FOR PMC-Final

FINAL TOR FOR TPs- Final

Institutional Support to LCDGP Partners

LCDGP Bridging Narrative Report

LCDGP Financial Report to ICCO

LCDGP GRANT AGREEMENT 2013-2015

LCDGP Project Plan- Final

PMC FINAL REPORT

REFOUND 2012-13 Final Report

REFOUND 2012-13 Financial Report

REFOUND EXPENDITURE PLAN 2013

REFOUND STRATEGIC PLAN 2

List of Respondents

REFOUND staff:

Stephen J. Mulbah Jr.   Executive Director
Marsay Conneh   Civic/Gender Officer
Jerry Z. Koiwu   Finance/Administrative Officer
Jallah Sonneh   Programme Officer

CFA:

Lindora Diawara   ICCO ROWA Programme Officer for Liberia
Allen Lincoln   PMC coordinator of the LCDGP

Partner respondents:

G. Martin Dumoe   Acting Board Chair of REFOUND
John M. Willie   Deputy Secretary General, Liberia National Federation of Cooperative Societies
Anita K. Rennie   County Coordinator for the Ministry of Gender in Bong County

Appendix 1 Methodological approach & reflection

Introduction

This appendix describes the methodological design and challenges for the assessment of capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs), also called the '5C study'. This 5C study is organised around four key evaluation questions:

1. What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?
2. To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?
3. Were the efforts of the MFS II consortia efficient?
4. What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?

It has been agreed that the question (3) around efficiency cannot be addressed for this 5C study. The methodological approach for the other three questions is described below. At the end, a methodological reflection is provided.

In terms of the attribution question (2), 'process tracing' is used. This is a theory-based approach that has been applied to a selected number of SPOs since it is a very intensive and costly methodology, although it provides rich information and can generate a lot of learning within the organisations. This approach was presented and agreed-upon during the synthesis workshop on 17-18 June 2013 by the 5C teams for the eight countries of the MFS II evaluation. A more detailed description of the approach was presented during the synthesis workshop in February 2014. The synthesis team, NWO-WOTRO, the country project leaders and the MFS II organisations present at the workshop have accepted this approach. It was agreed that this approach can only be used for a selected number of SPOs since it is a very intensive and costly methodology. Key organisational capacity changes/ outcomes of the SPO were identified, based on their relationship to the two selected capabilities, the capability to act and commit the capability to adapt and self-renew, and an expected relationship with CFA supported capacity development interventions (MFS II funding). It was agreed to focus on these two capabilities, since these are the most targeted capabilities by the CFAs, as established during the baseline process.

Please find below an explanation of how the above-mentioned evaluation questions have been addressed in the 5C evaluation.

Note: the methodological approach is applied to 4 countries that the Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre is involved in in terms of the 5C study (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia). The overall approach has been agreed with all the 8 countries selected for this MFS II evaluation. The 5C country teams have been trained and coached on this methodological approach during the evaluation process. Details specific to the SPO are described in chapter 5.1 of the SPO report. At the end of this appendix a brief methodological reflection is provided.

Changes in partner organisation's capacity — evaluation question 1

This section describes the data collection and analysis methodology for answering the first evaluation question: **What are the changes in partner organisations' capacity during the 2012-2014 period?**

This question was mainly addressed by reviewing changes in 5c indicators, but additionally a 'general causal map' based on the SPO perspective on key organisational capacity changes since the baseline has been developed. Each of these is further explained below. The development of the general causal map is integrated in the steps for the endline workshop, as mentioned below.

During the baseline in 2012 information has been collected on each of the 33 agreed upon indicators for organisational capacity. For each of the five capabilities of the 5C framework indicators have been developed as can be seen in Appendix 2. During this 5C baseline, a summary description has been provided for each of these indicators, based on document review and the information provided by staff, the Co-financing Agency (CFA) and other external stakeholders. Also a summary description has been provided for each capability. The results of these can be read in the baseline reports.

The description of indicators for the baseline in 2012 served as the basis for comparison during the endline in 2014. In practice this meant that largely the same categories of respondents (preferably the same respondents as during the baseline) were requested to review the descriptions per indicator and indicate whether and how the endline situation (2014) is different from the described situation in 2012.[2] Per indicator they could indicate whether there was an improvement or deterioration or no change and also describe these changes. Furthermore, per indicator the interviewee could indicate what interventions, actors and other factors explain this change compared to the baseline situation. See below the specific questions that are asked for each of the indicators. Per category of interviewees there is a different list of indicators to be looked at. For example, staff members were presented with a list of all the indicators, whilst external people, for example partners, are presented with a select number of indicators, relevant to the stakeholder.

The information on the indicators was collected in different ways:

1. **Endline workshop at the SPO - self-assessment and 'general causal map'**: similar to data collection during the baseline, different categories of staff (as much as possible the same people as during the baseline) were brought together in a workshop and requested to respond, in their staff category, to the list of questions for each of the indicators (self-assessment sheet). Prior to carrying out the self-assessments, a brainstorming sessions was facilitated to develop a 'general causal map', based on the key organisational capacity changes since the baseline as perceived by SPO staff. Whilst this general causal map is not validated with additional information, it provides a sequential narrative, based on organisational capacity changes as perceived by SPO staff;
2. **Interviews with staff members**: additional to the endline workshop, interviews were held with SPO staff, either to provide more in-depth information on the information provided on the self-assessment formats during the workshop, or as a separate interview for staff members that were not present during the endline workshop;
3. **Interviews with externals**: different formats were developed for different types of external respondents, especially the co-financing agency (CFA), but also partner agencies, and organisational development consultants where possible. These externals were interviewed, either face-to-face or by phone/Skype. The interview sheets were sent to the respondents and if they wanted, these could be filled in digitally and followed up on during the interview;
4. **Document review**: similar to the baseline in 2012, relevant documents were reviewed so as to get information on each indicator. Documents to be reviewed included progress reports, evaluation reports, training reports, etc. (see below) since the baseline in 2012, so as to identify changes in each of the indicators;
5. **Observation**: similar to what was done in 2012, also in 2014 the evaluation team had a list with observable indicators which were to be used for observation during the visit to the SPO.

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[2] The same categories were used as during the baseline (except beneficiaries, other funders): staff categories including management, programme staff, project staff, monitoring and evaluation staff, field staff, administration staff; stakeholder categories including co-financing agency (CFA), consultants, partners.

Below the key steps to assess changes in indicators are described.

Key steps to assess changes in indicators are described

1. Provide the description of indicators in the relevant formats – CDI team
2. Review the descriptions per indicator – in-country team & CDI team
3. Send the formats adapted to the SPO to CFA and SPO – in-country team (formats for SPO) and CDI team (formats for CFA)
4. Collect, upload & code the documents from CFA and SPO in NVivo – CDI team
5. Organise the field visit to the SPO – in-country team
6. Interview the CFA – CDI team
7. Run the endline workshop with the SPO – in-country team
8. Interview SPO staff – in-country team
9. Fill-in observation sheets – in-country team
10. Interview externals – in-country team
11. Upload and auto-code all the formats collected by in-country team and CDI team in NVivo – CDI team
12. Provide to the overview of information per 5c indicator to in-country team – CDI team
13. Analyse data and develop a draft description of the findings per indicator and for the general questions – in-country team
14. Analyse data and develop a final description of the findings per indicator and per capability and for the general questions – CDI team
15. Analyse the information in the general causal map –in-country team and CDI-team

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Note: the CDI team include the Dutch 5c country coordinator as well as the overall 5c coordinator for the four countries (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia). The 5c country report is based on the separate SPO reports.

Below each of these steps is further explained.

*Step 1. Provide the **description of indicators** in the relevant formats – CDI team*

- These formats were to be used when collecting data from SPO staff, CFA, partners, and consultants. For each of these respondents different formats have been developed, based on the list of 5C indicators, similar to the procedure that was used during the baseline assessment. The CDI team needed to add the 2012 baseline description of each indicator. The idea was that each respondent would be requested to review each description per indicator, and indicate whether the current situation is different from the baseline situation, how this situation has changed, and what the reasons for the changes in indicators are. At the end of each format, a more general question is added that addresses how the organisation has changed its capacity since the baseline, and what possible reasons for change exist. Please see below the questions asked for each indicator as well as the more general questions at the end of the list of indicators.

General questions about key changes in the capacity of the SPO

What do you consider to be the key changes in terms of how the organisation/ SPO has developed its capacity since the baseline (2012)?

What do you consider to be the main explanatory reasons (interventions, actors or factors) for these changes?

List of questions to be asked for each of the 5C indicators (The entry point is the the description of each indicator as in the 2012 baseline report):

1. *How has the situation of this indicator changed compared to the situation during the baseline in 2012? Please tick one of the following scores:*
   o -2 = Considerable deterioration
   o -1 = A slight deterioration
   o 0 = No change occurred, the situation is the same as in 2012
   o +1 = Slight improvement
   o +2 = Considerable improvement
2. *Please describe what exactly has changed since the baseline in 2012*

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*Step 2. **Review** the descriptions per indicator – in-country team & CDI team*

Before the in-country team and the CDI team started collecting data in the field, it was important that they reviewed the description for each indicator as described in the baseline reports, and also added to the endline formats for review by respondents. These descriptions are based on document review, observation, interviews with SPO staff, CFA staff and external respondents during the baseline. It was important to explain this to respondents before they filled in the formats.

*Step 3. **Send the formats** adapted to the SPO to CFA and SPO – in-country team (formats for SPO) and CDI team (formats for CFA)*

The CDI team was responsible for collecting data from the CFA:

- 5C Endline assessment Dutch co-financing organisation;
- 5C Endline support to capacity sheet – CFA perspective.

The in-country team was responsible for collecting data from the SPO and from external respondents (except CFA). The following formats were sent before the fieldwork started:

- 5C Endline support to capacity sheet – SPO perspective.
- 5C Endline interview guides for externals: partners; OD consultants.

*Step 4. **Collect, upload & code the documents** from CFA and SPO in NVivo – CDI team*

The CDI team, in collaboration with the in-country team, collected the following documents from SPOs and CFAs:

- Project documents: project proposal, budget, contract (Note that for some SPOs there is a contract for the full MFS II period 2011-2015; for others there is a yearly or 2-yearly contract. All new contracts since the baseline in 2012 will need to be collected);
- Technical and financial progress reports since the baseline in 2012; .
- Mid-term evaluation reports;
- End of project-evaluation reports (by the SPO itself or by external evaluators);
- Contract intake forms (assessments of the SPO by the CFA) or organisational assessment scans made by the CFA that cover the 2011-2014 period;
- Consultant reports on specific inputs provided to the SPO in terms of organisational capacity development;
- Training reports (for the SPO; for alliance partners, including the SPO);
- Organisational scans/ assessments, carried out by the CFA or by the Alliance Assessments;
- Monitoring protocol reports, especially for the 5C study carried out by the MFS II Alliances;
- Annual progress reports of the CFA and of the Alliance in relation to capacity development of the SPOs in the particular country;
- Specific reports that are related to capacity development of SPOs in a particular country.

The following documents (since the baseline in 2012) were requested from SPO:

- Annual progress reports;
- Annual financial reports and audit reports;
- Organisational structure vision and mission since the baseline in 2012;
- Strategic plans;

- Business plans;
- Project/ programme planning documents;
- Annual work plan and budgets;
- Operational manuals;
- Organisational and policy documents: finance, human resource development, etc.;
- Monitoring and evaluation strategy and implementation plans;
- Evaluation reports;
- Staff training reports;
- Organisational capacity reports from development consultants.

The CDI team will coded these documents in NVivo (qualitative data analysis software program) against the 5C indicators.

Step 5. **Prepare and organise the field visit** *to the SPO – in-country team*

Meanwhile the in-country team prepared and organised the logistics for the field visit to the SPO:
- **General endline workshop** consisted about one day for the self-assessments (about ½ to ¾ of the day) and brainstorm (about 1 to 2 hours) on key organisational capacity changes since the baseline and underlying interventions, factors and actors ('general causal map'), see also explanation below. This was done with the five categories of key staff: managers; project/ programme staff; monitoring and evaluation staff; admin & HRM staff; field staff. Note: for SPOs involved in process tracing an additional 1 to 1½ day workshop (managers; program/project staff; monitoring and evaluation staff) was necessary. See also step 7;
- **Interviews with SPO staff** (roughly one day);
- **Interviews with external respondents** such as partners and organisational development consultants depending on their proximity to the SPO. These interviews coulc be scheduled after the endline workshop and interviews with SPO staff.

General causal map

During the 5C endline process, a 'general causal map' has been developed, based on key organisational capacity changes and underlying causes for these changes, as perceived by the SPO. The general causal map describes cause-effect relationships, and is described both as a visual as well as a narrative.

As much as possible the same people that were involved in the baseline were also involved in the endline workshop and interviews.

Step 6. **Interview the CFA** *– CDI team*

The CDI team was responsible for sending the sheets/ formats to the CFA and for doing a follow-up interview on the basis of the information provided so as to clarify or deepen the information provided. This relates to:

- 5C Endline assessment Dutch co-financing organisation;
- 5C Endline support to capacity sheet - CFA perspective.

Step 7. **Run the endline workshop** *with the SPO – in-country team*

This included running the endline workshop, including facilitation of the development of the general causal map, self-assessments, interviews and observations. Particularly for those SPOs that were selected for process tracing all the relevant information needed to be analysed prior to the field visit, so as to develop an initial causal map. Please see Step 6 and also the next section on process tracing (evaluation question two).

An endline workshop with the SPO was intended to:

- Explain the purpose of the fieldwork;
- Carry out in the self-assessments by SPO staff subgroups (unless these have already been filled prior to the field visits) - this may take some 3 hours.
- Facilitate a brainstorm on key organisational capacity changes since the baseline in 2012 and underlying interventions, factors and actors.

Purpose of the fieldwork: to collect data that help to provide information on what changes took place in terms of organisational capacity development of the SPO as well as reasons for these changes. The baseline that was carried out in 2012 was to be used as a point of reference.

Brainstorm on key organisational capacity changes and influencing factors: a brainstorm was facilitated on key organisational capacity changes since the baseline in 2012. In order to kick start the discussion, staff were reminded of the key findings related to the historical time line carried out in the baseline (vision, mission, strategies, funding, staff). This was then used to generate a discussion on key changes that happened in the organisation since the baseline (on cards). Then cards were selected that were related to organisational capacity changes, and organised. Then a 'general causal map' was developed, based on these key organisational capacity changes and underlying reasons for change as experienced by the SPO staff. This was documented as a visual and narrative.This general causal map was to get the story of the SPO on what they perceived as key organisational capacity changes in the organisation since the baseline, in addition to the specific details provided per indicator.

Self-assessments: respondents worked in the respective staff function groups: management; programme/ project staff; monitoring and evaluation staff; admin and HRM staff; field staff. Staff were assisted where necessary so that they could really understand what it was they were being asked to do as well as what the descriptions under each indicator meant.

Note: for those SPOs selected for process tracing an additional endline workshop was held to facilitate the development of detailed causal maps for each of the identified organisational change/ outcome areas that fall under the capability to act and commit, and under the capability to adapt and self-renew, and that are likely related to capacity development interventions by the CFA. See also the next section on process tracing (evaluation question two). It was up to the in-country team whether this workshop was held straight after the initial endline workshop or after the workshop and the follow-up interviews. It could also be held as a separate workshop at another time.

*Step 8. **Interview SPO staff** – in-country team*

After the endline workshop (developing the general causal map and carrying out self-assessments in subgroups), interviews were held with SPO staff (subgroups) to follow up on the information that was provided in the self-assessment sheets, and to interview staff that had not yet provided any information.

*Step 9. **Fill-in observation sheets** – in-country team*

During the visit at the SPO, the in-country team had to fill in two sheets based on their observation:

- 5C Endline observation sheet;
- 5C Endline observable indicators.

*Step 10. **Interview externals** – in-country team & CDI team*

The in-country team also needed to interview the partners of the SPO as well as organisational capacity development consultants that have provided support to the SPO. The CDI team interviewed the CFA.

Step 11. **Upload and auto-code all the formats** *collected by in-country team and CDI team – CDI team*

The CDI team was responsible for uploading and auto-coding (in Nvivo) of the documents that were collected by the in-country team and by the CDI team.

Step 12. Provide the **overview of information** *per 5C indicator to in-country team – CDI team*

After the analysis in NVivo, the CDI team provided a copy of all the information generated per indicator to the in-country team for initial analysis.

Step 13. **Analyse the data and develop a draft description** *of the findings per indicator and for the general questions – in-country team*

The in-country team provided a draft description of the findings per indicator, based on the information generated per indicator. The information generated under the general questions were linked to the general causal map or detailed process tracing related causal map.

Step 14. **Analyse the data and finalize the description** *of the findings per indicator, per capability and general – CDI team*

The CDI team was responsible for checking the analysis by the in-country team with the Nvivo generated data and to make suggestions for improvement and ask questions for clarification to which the in-country team responded. The CDI team then finalised the analysis and provided final descriptions and scores per indicator and also summarize these per capability and calculated the summary capability scores based on the average of all indicators by capability.

Step 15. **Analyse the information** *in the general causal map –in-country team & CDI team*

The general causal map based on key organisational capacity changes as perceived by the SPO staff present at the workshop, was further detailed by in-country team and CDI team, and based on the notes made during the workshop and where necessary additional follow up with the SPO. The visual and narrative was finalized after feedback by the SPO. During analysis of the general causal map relationships with MFS II support for capacity development and other factors and actors were identified. All the information has been reviewed by the SPO and CFA.

Attributing changes in partner organisation's capacity – evaluation question 2

This section describes the data collection and analysis methodology for answering the second evaluation question: ***To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to (capacity) development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?***

In terms of the attribution question (2), 'process tracing' is used. This is a theory-based approach that has been applied to a selected number of SPOs since it is a very intensive and costly methodology, although it provides rich information and can generate a lot of learning within the organisations. Key organisational capacity changes/ outcomes of the SPO were identified, based on their relationship to the two selected capabilities, the capability to act and commit the capability to adapt and self-renew, and an expected relationship with CFA supported capacity development interventions (MFS II funding). It was agreed to focus on these two capabilities, since these are the most targeted capabilities by the CFAs, as established during the baseline process. The box below provides some background information on process tracing.

The essence of process tracing research is that scholars want to go beyond merely identifying correlations between independent variables (Xs) and outcomes (Ys). Process tracing in social science is commonly defined by its addition to trace causal mechanisms (Bennett, 2008a, 2008b; Checkle, 2008; George & Bennett, 2005). A causal mechanism can be defined as "a complex system which produces an outcome by the interaction of a number of parts" (Glennan, 1996, p. 52). Process tracing involves "attempts to identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable" (George & Bennett, 2005, pp. 206-207).

Process tracing can be differentiated into three variants within social science: theory testing, theory building, and explaining outcome process tracing (Beach & Pedersen, 2013).

- Theory testing process tracing uses a theory from the existing literature and then tests whether evidence shows that each part of hypothesised causal mechanism is present in a given case, enabling within case inferences about whether the mechanism functioned as expected in the case and whether the mechanism as a whole was present. No claims can be made however, about whether the mechanism was the only cause of the outcome.
- Theory building process tracing seeks to build generalizable theoretical explanations from empirical evidence, inferring that a more general causal mechanism exists from the fact of a particular case.
- Finally, explaining outcome process tracing attempts to craft a minimally sufficient explanation of a puzzling outcome in a specific historical case. Here the aim is not to build or test more general theories but to craft a (minimally) sufficient explanation of the outcome of the case where the ambitions are more case centric than theory oriented.

Explaining outcome process tracing is the most suitable type of process tracing for analysing the causal mechanisms for selected key organisational capacity changes of the SPOs. This type of process tracing can be thought of as a single outcome study defined as seeking the causes of the specific outcome in a single case (Gerring, 2006; in: Beach & Pedersen, 2013). Here the ambition is to craft a minimally sufficient explanation of a particular outcome, with sufficiency defined as an explanation that accounts for all of the important aspects of an outcome with no redundant parts being present (Mackie, 1965).

Explaining outcome process tracing is an iterative research strategy that aims to trace the complex conglomerate of systematic and case specific causal mechanisms that produced the outcome in question. The explanation cannot be detached from the particular case. Explaining outcome process tracing refers to case studies whose primary ambition is to explain particular historical outcomes, although the findings of the case can also speak to other potential cases of the phenomenon. Explaining outcome process tracing is an iterative research process in which 'theories' are tested to see whether they can provide a minimally sufficient explanation of the outcome. Minimal sufficiency is defined as an explanation that accounts for an outcome, with no redundant parts. In most explaining outcome studies, existing theorisation cannot provide a sufficient explanation, resulting in a second stage in which existing theories are re-conceptualised in light of the evidence gathered in the preceding empirical analysis. The conceptualisation phase in explaining outcome process tracing is therefore an iterative research process, with initial mechanisms re-conceptualised and tested until the result is a theorised mechanism that provides a minimally sufficient explanation of the particular outcome.

Below a description is provided of how SPOs are selected for process tracing, and a description is provided on how this process tracing is to be carried out. Note that this description of process tracing provides not only information on the extent to which the changes in organisational development can be attributed to MFS II (evaluation question 2), but also provides information on other contributing factors and actors (evaluation question 4). Furthermore, it must be noted that the evaluation team has developed an adapted form of 'explaining outcome process tracing', since the data collection and analysis was an iterative process of research so as to establish the most realistic explanation for a particular outcome/ organisational capacity change. Below selection of SPOs for process tracing as well as the different steps involved for process tracing in the selected SPOs, are further explained.

Selection of SPOs for 5C process tracing
Process tracing is a very intensive methodology that is very time and resource consuming (for development and analysis of one final detailed causal map, it takes about 1-2 weeks in total, for different members of the evaluation team). It has been agreed upon during the synthesis workshop on

17-18 June 2013 that only a selected number of SPOs will take part in this process tracing for the purpose of understanding the attribution question. The selection of SPOs is based on the following criteria:

- MFS II support to the SPO has not ended before 2014 (since this would leave us with too small a time difference between intervention and outcome);
- Focus is on the 1-2 capabilities that are targeted most by CFAs in a particular country;
- Both the SPO and the CFA are targeting the same capability, and preferably aim for similar outcomes;
- Maximum one SPO per CFA per country will be included in the process tracing.

The intention was to focus on about 30-50% of the SPOs involved. Please see the tables below for a selection of SPOs per country. Per country, a first table shows the extent to which a CFA targets the five capabilities, which is used to select the capabilities to focus on. A second table presents which SPO is selected, and takes into consideration the selection criteria as mentioned above.

ETHIOPIA

For Ethiopia the capabilities that are mostly targeted by CFAs are the capability to act and commit and the capability to adapt and self-renew. See also the table below.

Table 1

The extent to which the Dutch NGO explicitly targets the following capabilities – Ethiopia

Capability to:	AMREF	CARE	ECFA	FSCE	HOA-REC	HUNDEE	NVEA	OSRA	TTCA
Act and commit	5	4	5	5	5	3	4	4	3
Deliver on development objectives	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1
Adapt and self-renew	4	2	3	4	2	5	3	3	3
Relate	3	1	2	2	3	2	1	3	1
Achieve coherence	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

Note: Number 1 stands for not targeted, 5 for intensively targeted. These scores are relative scores for the interventions by the CFA to

strengthen the capacity of the SPO. The scores are relative to each other, a higher score means that this capability gets more attention by the

CFA compared to other capabilities.

Source: country baseline report, Ethiopia.

Below you can see the table describing when the contract with the SPO is to be ended, and whether both SPO and the CFA expect to focus on these two selected capabilities (with MFS II funding). Based on the above-mentioned selection criteria the following SPOs are selected for process tracing: AMREF, ECFA, FSCE, HUNDEE. In fact, six SPOs would be suitable for process tracing. We just selected the first one per CFA following the criteria of not including more than one SPO per CFA for process tracing

Table 2

SPOs selected for process tracing – Ethiopia

Ethiopia – SPOs	End of contract	Focus on capability to act and commit— by SPO	Focus on capability to act and commit — by CFA	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew —by SPO	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew — by CFA	CFA	Selected for process tracing
AMREF	Dec 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	AMREF NL	Yes
CARE	Dec 31, 2015	Partly	Yes	Yes	Yes – slightly	CARE Netherlands	No - not fully matching
ECFA	Jan 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Child Helpline International	Yes
FSCE	Dec 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Stichting Kinderpostzegels Netherlands (SKN); Note: no info from Defence for Children – ECPAT Netherlands	Yes
HOA-REC	Sustainable Energy project (ICCO Alliance): 2014 Innovative WASH (WASH Alliance): Dec 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes - slightly	ICCO	No - not fully matching
HUNDEE	Dec 2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ICCO & IICD	Yes
NVEA	Dec 2015 (both)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Edukans Foundation (under two consortia); Stichting Kinderpostzegels Netherlands (SKN)	Suitable but SKN already involved for process tracing FSCE
OSRA	C4C Alliance project (farmers marketing): December 2014 ICCO Alliance project (zero grazing: 2014 (2nd phase)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ICCO & IICD	Suitable but ICCO & IICD already involved for process tracing - HUNDEE
TTCA	June 2015	Partly	Yes	No	Yes	Edukans Foundation	No - not fully matching

INDIA

For India the capability that is mostly targeted by CFAs is the capability to act and commit. The next one in line is the capability to adapt and self-renew. See also the table below in which a higher score means that the specific capability is more intensively targeted.

Table 3

The extent to which the Dutch NGO explicitly targets the following capabilities – India[3]

Capability to:	BVHA	COUNT	DRISTI	FFID	Jana Vikas	Samarthak Samiti	SMILE	SDS	VTRC
Act and commit	5	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	5
Deliver on development objectives	1	5	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Adapt and self-renew	2	2	1	3	1	1	4	1	4
Relate	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2
Achieve coherence	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	2

Note: Number 1 stands for not targeted, 5 for intensively targeted. These scores are relative scores for the interventions by the CFA to

strengthen the capacity of the SPO. The scores are relative to each other, a higher score means that this capability gets more attention by the

CFA compared to other capabilities.

Source: country baseline report, India.

Below you can see a table describing when the contract with the SPO is to be ended and whether SPO and the CFA both expect to focus on these two selected capabilities (with MFS II funding). Based on the above-mentioned selection criteria the following SPOs are selected for process tracing: BVHA, COUNT, FFID, SMILE and VTRC. Except for SMILE (capability to act and commit only), for the other SPOs the focus for process tracing can be on the capability to act and commit and on the capability to adapt and self-renew.

Table 4

SPOs selected for process tracing – India

India – SPOs	End of contract	Focus on capability to act and commit– by SPO	Focus on capability to act and commit – by CFA	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew –by SPO	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by CFA	CFA	Selected for process tracing
BVHA	2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Simavi	Yes; both capabilities
COUNT	2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Woord en Daad	Yes; both capabilities
DRISTI	31-03-2012	Yes	Yes	No	no	Hivos	No - closed in 2012
FFID	30-09-2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ICCO	Yes

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[3] RGVN, NEDSF and Women's Rights Forum (WRF) could not be reached timely during the baseline due to security reasons. WRF could not be reached at all. Therefore these SPOs are not included in Table 1.

India – SPOs	End of contract	Focus on capability to act and commit— by SPO	Focus on capability to act and commit — by CFA	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew –by SPO	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by CFA	CFA	Selected for process tracing
Jana Vikas	2013	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Cordaid	No - contract is and the by now; not fully matching focus
NEDSF							No – delayed baseline
RGVN							No - delayed baseline
Samarthak Samiti (SDS)	2013 possibly longer	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Hivos	No - not certain of end date and not fully matching focus
Shivi Development Society (SDS)	Dec 2013 intention 2014	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Cordaid	No - not fully matching focus
Smile	2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Wilde Ganzen	Yes; first capability only
VTRC	2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Stichting Red een Kind	Yes; both capabilities

INDONESIA

For Indonesia the capabilities that are most frequently targeted by CFAs are the capability to act and commit and the capability to adapt and self-renew. See also the table below.

Table 5

The extent to which the Dutch NGO explicitly targets the following capabilities – Indonesia

Capability to:	ASB	Daya kologi	ECPAT	GSS	Lem baga Kita	Pt. PPMA	Rifka Annisa	WIIP	Yad upa	Yayasan Kelola	YPI	YRBI
Act and commit	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	3	3	2	5	4
Deliver on development objectives	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	1
Adapt and self-renew	3	1	2	4	2	3	4	4	1	1	4	3
Relate	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	2
Achieve coherence	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1

Note: Number 1 stands for not targeted, 5 for intensively targeted. These scores are relative scores for the interventions by the CFA to strengthen the capacity of the SPO. The scores are relative to each other, a higher score means that this capability gets more attention by the CFA compared to other capabilities.

Source: country baseline report, Indonesia.

The table below describes when the contract with the SPO is to be ended and whether both SPO and the CFA expect to focus on these two selected capabilities (MFS II funding). Based on the above-mentioned selection criteria the following SPOs are selected for process tracing: ASB, ECPAT, Pt.PPMA, YPI, YRBI.

Table 6

SPOs selected for process tracing – Indonesia

Indonesia – SPOs	End of contract	Focus on capability to act and commit– by SPO	Focus on capability to act and commit – by CFA	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by SPO	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by CFA	CFA	Selected for process tracing
ASB	February 2012; extension Feb,1, 2013 – June,30, 2016	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Hivos	Yes
Dayakologi	2013; no extension	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Cordaid	No: contract ended early and not matching enough
ECPAT	August 2013; Extension Dec 2014	Yes	Yes	Yes, a bit	Yes	Free Press Unlimited - Mensen met een Missie	Yes
GSS	31 December 2012; no extension	Yes	Yes	Yes, a bit	Yes	Free Press Unlimited - Mensen met een Missie	No: contract ended early
Lembaga Kita	31 December 2012; no extension	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Free Press Unlimited - Mensen met een Missie	No - contract ended early
Pt.PPMA	May 2015	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	IUCN	Yes, capability to act and commit only
Rifka Annisa	Dec, 31 2015	No	Yes	No	Yes	Rutgers WPF	No - no match between expectations CFA and SPO
WIIP	Dec 2015	Yes	Not MFS II	Yes	Not MFS II	Red Cross	No - Capacity development interventions are not MFS II financed. Only some overhead is MFS II

Indonesia – SPOs	End of contract	Focus on capability to act and commit– by SPO	Focus on capability to act and commit – by CFA	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by SPO	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by CFA	CFA	Selected for process tracing
Yayasan Kelola	Dec 30, 2013; extension of contract being processed for two years (2014-2015)	Yes	Not really	Yes	Not really	Hivos	No - no specific capacity development interventions planned by Hivos
YPI	Dec 31, 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Rutgers WPF	Yes
YRBI	Oct, 30, 2013; YRBI end of contract from 31st Oct 2013 to 31st Dec 2013. Contract extension proposal is being proposed to MFS II, no decision yet.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ICCO	Yes
Yadupa	Under negotiation during baseline; new contract 2013 until now	Yes	Nothing committed	Yes	Nothing committed	IUCN	No, since nothing was committed by CFA

LIBERIA

For Liberia the situation is arbitrary which capabilities are targeted most CFA's. Whilst the capability to act and commit is targeted more often than the other capabilities, this is only so for two of the SPOs. The capability to adapt and self-renew and the capability to relate are almost equally targeted for the five SPOs, be it not intensively. Since the capability to act and commit and the capability to adapt and self-renew are the most targeted capabilities in Ethiopia, India and Indonesia, we choose to focus on these two capabilities for Liberia as well. This would help the synthesis team in the further analysis of these capabilities related to process tracing. See also the table below.

Table 7

The extent to which the Dutch NGO explicitly targets the following capabilities – Liberia

Capability to:	BSC	DEN-L	NAWOCOL	REFOUND	RHRAP
Act and commit	5	1	1	1	3
Deliver on development objectives	3	1	1	1	1
Adapt and self-renew	2	2	2	2	2
Relate	1	2	2	2	2
Achieve coherence	1	1	1	1	1

Note: Number 1 stands for not targeted, 5 for intensively targeted. These scores are relative scores for the interventions by the CFA to

strengthen the capacity of the SPO. The scores are relative to each other, a higher score means that this capability gets more attention by the

CFA compared to other capabilities.

Source: country baseline report, Liberia.

Below you can see the table describing when the contract with the SPO is to be ended, and whether both SPO and the CFA expect to focus on these two selected capabilities (with MFS II funding). Also, for two of the five SPOs capability to act and commit is targeted more intensively compared to the other capabilities. Based on the above-mentioned selection criteria the following SPOs are selected for process tracing: BSC and RHRAP.

Table 8

SPOs selected for process tracing – Liberia

Liberia – SPOs	End of contract	Focus on capability to act and commit– by SPO	Focus on capability to act and commit – by CFA	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by SPO	Focus on capability to adapt and self-renew – by CFA	CFA	Selected for process tracing
BSC	Dec 31, 2015	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	SPARK	Yes
DEN-L	2014	No	No	Unknown	A little	ICCO	No – not matching enough
NAWOCOL	2014	Yes	No	No	A little	ICCO	No – not matching enough
REFOUND	At least until 2013 (2015?)	Yes	No	Yes	A little	ICCO	No – not matching enough
RHRAP	At least until 2013 (2014?)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	ICCO	Yes

Key steps in process tracing for the 5C study

In the box below you will find the key steps developed for the 5C process tracing methodology. These steps will be further explained here. Only key staff of the SPO is involved in this process: management; programme/ project staff; and monitoring and evaluation staff, and other staff that could provide information relevant to the identified outcome area/key organisational capacity change. Those SPOs selected for process tracing had a separate endline workshop, in addition to the ' general endline workshop. This workshop was carried out after the initial endline workshop and the interviews during the field visit to the SPO. Where possible, the general and process tracing endline workshop have been held consecutively, but where possible these workshops were held at different points in time, due to the complex design of the process. Below the detailed steps for the purpose of process tracing are further explained.

1. Identify the planned MFS II supported capacity development interventions within the selected capabilities (capability to act and commit and capability to adapt and self-renew) – CDI team
2. Identify the implemented MFS II supported capacity development interventions within the selected capabilities (capability to act and commit and capability to adapt and self-renew) – CDI team
3. Identify initial changes/ outcome areas in these two capabilities – CDI team & in-country team
4. Construct the detailed, initial causal map (theoretical model of change) – CDI team & in-country team
5. Identify types of evidence needed to verify or discard different causal relationships in the model of change – in-country teams, with support from CDI team
6. Collect data to verify or discard causal mechanisms and construct workshop based, detailed causal map (model of change) – in-country team
7. Assess the quality of data and analyse data and develop final detailed causal map (model of change) – in-country team with CDI team
8. Analyse and conclude on findings– CDI team, in collaboration with in-country team

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Some definitions of the terminology used for this MFS II 5c evaluation

Based upon the different interpretations and connotations the use of the term causal mechanism we use the following terminology for the remainder of this paper:

-   A **detailed causal map** (or **model of change)** = the representation of all possible explanations – causal pathways for a change/ outcome. These pathways are that of the intervention, rival pathways and pathways that combine parts of the intervention pathway with that of others. This also depicts the reciprocity of various events influencing each other and impacting the overall change.
-   A **causal mechanism** = is the combination of parts that ultimately explains an outcome. Each part of the mechanism is an individually insufficient but necessary factor in a whole mechanism, which together produce the outcome (Beach and Pedersen, 2013, p. 176).
-   **Part** or **cause** = one actor with its attributes carrying out activities/ producing outputs that lead to change in other parts. The final part or cause is the change/ outcome.
-   **Attributes of the actor** = specificities of the actor that increase his chance to introduce change or not such as its position in its institutional environment.

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*Step 1. Identify the **planned MFS II supported capacity development interventions** within the selected capabilities (capability to act and commit and capability to adapt and self-renew) – CDI team*

Chapter 4.1 and 4.2 in the baseline report were reviewed. Capacity development interventions as planned by the CFA for the capability to act and commit and for the capability to adapt and self-renew were described and details inserted in the summary format. This provided an overview of the capacity development activities that were originally planned by the CFA for these two capabilities and assisted in focusing on relevant outcomes that are possibly related to the planned interventions.

*Step 2. Identify the **implemented capacity development interventions** within the selected capabilities (capability to act and commit and capability to adapt and self-renew) – CDI team*

The input from the CFA was reviewed in terms of what capacity development interventions have taken place in the MFS II period. This information was be found in the 'Support to capacity development sheet - endline - CFA perspective' for the SPO, based on details provided by the CFA and further discussed during an interview by the CDI team.

The CFA was asked to describe all the MFS II supported capacity development interventions of the SPO that took place during the period 2011 up to now. The CDI team reviewed this information, not only the interventions but also the observed changes as well as the expected long-term changes, and

then linked these interventions to relevant outcomes in one of the capabilities (capability to act and commit; and capability to adapt and self-renew).

*Step 3. Identify **initial changes/ outcome areas** in these two capabilities – by CDI team & in-country team*

The CDI team was responsible for **coding** documents received from SPO and CFA in NVivo on the following:

- **5C Indicators**: this was to identify the changes that took place between baseline and endline. This information was coded in Nvivo.
- Information related to the **capacity development interventions implemented by the CFA** (with MFS II funding) (see also Step 2) to strengthen the capacity of the SPO. For example, the training on financial management of the SPO staff could be related to any information on financial management of the SPO. This information was coded in Nvivo.

In addition, the response by the CFA to the changes in 5C indicators format, was auto-coded.

The in-country team was responsible for timely collection of information from the SPO (before the fieldwork starts). This set of information dealt with:

- MFS II supported capacity development interventions during the MFS II period (2011 until now).
- Overview of all trainings provided in relation to a particular outcome areas/organisational capacity change since the baseline.
- For each of the identified MFS II supported trainings, training questionnaires have been developed to assess these trainings in terms of the participants, interests, knowledge and skills gained, behaviour change and changes in the organisation (based on Kirkpatrick's model), one format for training participants and one for their managers. These training questionnaires were sent prior to the field visit.
- Changes expected by SPO on a long-term basis ('Support to capacity development sheet - endline - SPO perspective').

For the selection of change/ outcome areas the following criteria were important:

- The change/ outcome area is in one of the two capabilities selected for process tracing: capability to act and commit or the capability to adapt and self-renew. This was the first criteria to select upon.
- There was a likely link between the key organisational capacity change/ outcome area and the MFS II supported capacity development interventions. This also was an important criteria. This would need to be demonstrated through one or more of the following situations:
  - In the 2012 **theory of change** on organisational capacity development of the SPO a link was indicated between the outcome area and MFS II support;
  - During the baseline the CFA indicated a link between **the planned MFS II support** to organisational development and the expected short-term or long-term results in one of the selected capabilities;
  - During the endline the **CFA** indicated a link between **the implemented MFS II capacity development interventions** and observed short-term changes and expected long-term changes in the organisational capacity of the SPO in one of the selected capabilities;
  - During the endline the **SPO** indicated a link between **the implemented MFS II capacity development interventions** and observed short-term changes and expected long-term changes in the organisational capacity of the SPO in one of the selected capabilities.

Reviewing the information obtained as described in Step 1, 2, and 3 provided the basis for selecting key organisational capacity change/ outcome areas to focus on for process tracing. These areas were to be formulated as broader outcome areas, such as 'improved financial management', 'improved monitoring and evaluation' or 'improved staff competencies'.

Note: the outcome areas were to be formulated as intermediates changes. For example: an improved monitoring and evaluation system, or enhanced knowledge and skills to educate the target group on

climate change. Key outcome areas were also verified - based on document review as well as discussions with the SPO during the endline.

*Step 4. Construct the **detailed, initial causal map** (theoretical model of change) – CDI & in-country team*

A detailed initial causal map was developed by the CDI team, in collaboration with the in-country team. This was based on document review, including information provided by the CFA and SPO on MFS II supported capacity development interventions and their immediate and long-term objectives as well as observed changes. Also, the training questionnaires were reviewed before developing the initial causal map. This detailed initial causal map was to be provided by the CDI team with a visual and related narrative with related references. This initial causal map served as a reference point for further reflection with the SPO during the process tracing endline workshop, where relationships needed to be verified or new relationships established so that the second (workshop-based), detailed causal map could be developed, after which further verification was needed to come up with the final, concluding detailed causal map.

It's important to note that organisational change area/ outcome areas could be both positive and negative.

For each of the selected outcomes the team needed to make explicit the theoretical model of change. This meant finding out about the range of different actors, factors, actions, and events etc. that have contributed to a particular outcome in terms of organisational capacity of the SPO.

A model of change of good quality includes:

- The causal pathways that relate the intervention to the realised change/ outcome;
- Rival explanations for the same change/ outcome;
- Assumptions that clarify relations between different components or parts;
- Case specific and/or context specific factors or risks that might influence the causal pathway, such as for instance the socio-cultural-economic context, or a natural disaster;
- Specific attributes of the actors e.g. CFA and other funders.

A model of change (within the 5C study called a 'detailed causal map') is a complex system which produces intermediate and long-term outcomes by the interaction of other parts. It consists of parts or causes that often consist of one actor with its attributes that is implementing activities leading to change in other parts (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). A helpful way of constructing the model of change is to think in terms of actors carrying out activities that lead to other actors changing their behaviour. The model of change can be explained as a range of activities carried out by different *actors* (including the CFA and SPO under evaluation) that will ultimately lead to an outcome. Besides this, there are also '*structural*' elements, which are to be interpreted as external factors (such as economic conjuncture); and *attributes* of the actor (does the actor have the legitimacy to ask for change or not, what is its position in the sector) that should be looked at (Beach & Pedersen, 2013). In fact Beach and Pedersen, make a fine point about the subjectivity of the actor in a dynamic context. This means, in qualitative methodologies, capturing the changes in the actor, acted upon area or person/organisation, in a non sequential and non temporal format. Things which were done recently could have corrected behavioural outcomes of an organisation and at the same ime there could be processes which incrementally pushed for the same change over a period of time. Beach and Pedersen espouse this methodology because it captures change in a dynamic fashion as against the methodology of logical framework. For the MFS II evaluation it was important to make a distinction between those paths in the model of change that are the result of MFS II and rival pathways.
The construction of the model of change started with the identified key organisational capacity change/ outcome, followed by an inventory of all possible subcomponents that possibly have caused the change/ outcome in the MFS II period (2011-up to now, or since the baseline). The figure below presents an imaginary example of a model of change. The different colours indicate the different types of support to capacity development of the SPO by different actors, thereby indicating different pathways of change, leading to the key changes/ outcomes in terms of capacity development (which in this case indicates the ability to adapt and self-renew).
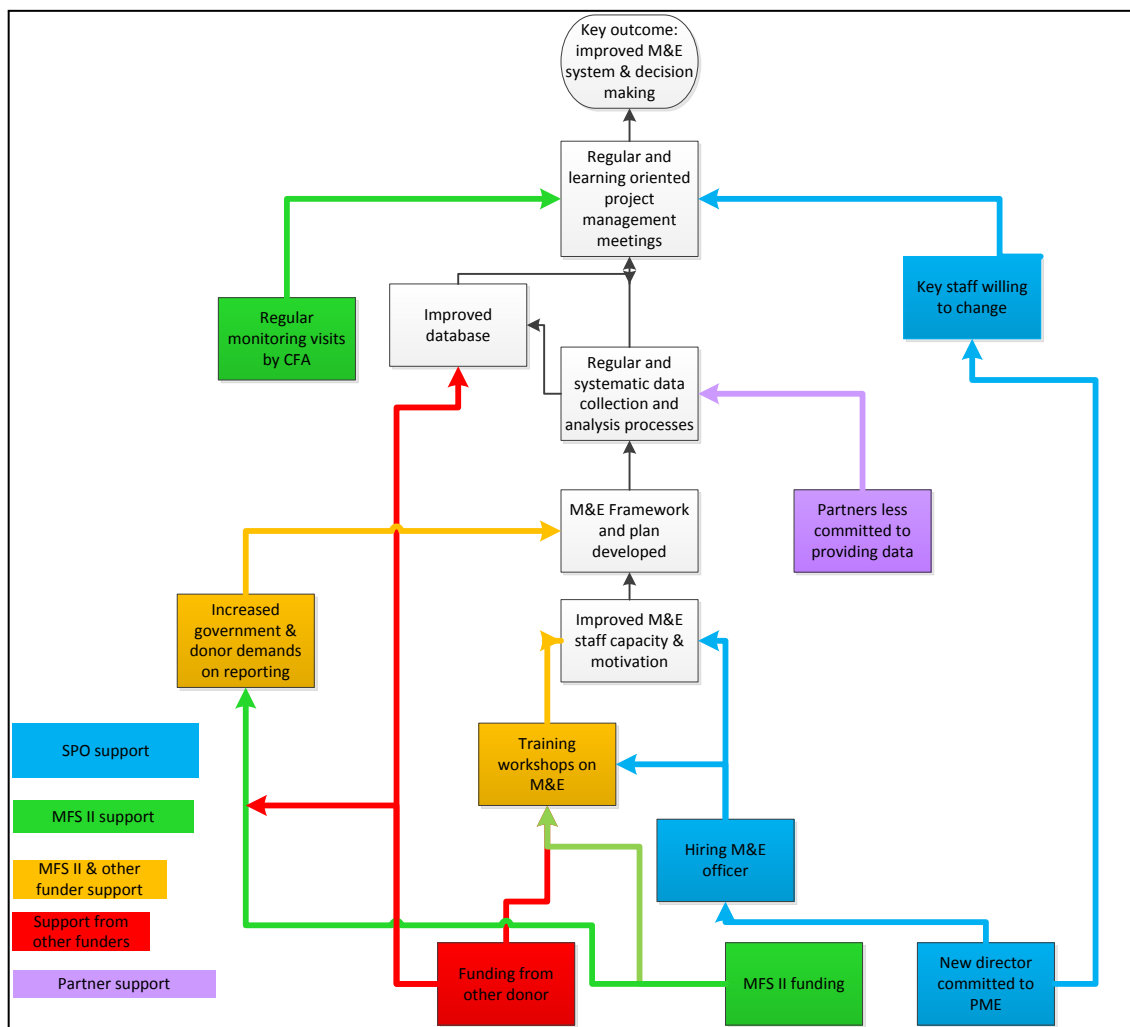
Figure 1   *An imaginary example of a model of change*

*Step 5. Identify **types of evidence** needed to verify or discard different causal relationships in the model of change – in-country teams with support from CDI team*

Once the causal mechanism at theoretical level were defined, empirical evidence was collected so as to verify or discard the different parts of this theoretical model of change, confirm or reject whether subcomponents have taken place, and to find evidence that confirm or reject the causal relations between the subcomponents.

A key question that we needed to ask ourselves was, "*What information do we need in order to confirm or reject that one subcomponent leads to another, that X causes Y?*". The evaluation team needed to agree on what information was needed that provides empirical manifestations for each part of the model of change.

There are four distinguishable types of evidence that are relevant in process tracing analysis: *pattern, sequence, trace, and account.* Please see the box below for descriptions of these types of evidence.

The evaluation team needed to agree on the types of evidence that was needed to verify or discard the manifestation of a particular part of the causal mechanism. Each one or a combination of these different types of evidence could be used to confirm or reject the different parts of the model of change. This is what is meant by robustness of evidence gathering. Since causality as a concept can bend in many ways, our methodology, provides a near scientific model for accepting and rejecting a particular type of evidence, ignoring its face value.

- **Pattern evidence** relates to predictions of statistical patterns in the evidence. For example, in testing a mechanism of racial discrimination in a case dealing with employment, statistical patterns of employment would be relevant for testing this part of the mechanism.
- **Sequence evidence** deals with the temporal and spatial chronology of events predicted by a hypothesised causal mechanism. For example, a test of the hypothesis could involve expectations of the timing of events where we might predict that if the hypothesis is valid, we should see that the event B took place after event A took place. However, if we found that event B took place before event A took place, the test would suggest that our confidence in the validity of this part of the mechanism should be reduced (disconfirmation/ falsification).
- **Trace evidence** is evidence whose mere existence provides proof that a part of a hypothesised mechanism exists. For example, the existence of the minutes of a meeting, if authentic ones, provide strong proof that the meeting took place.
- **Account evidence** deals with the content of empirical material, such as meeting minutes that detail what was discussed or an oral account of what took place in the meeting.

Source: Beach and Pedersen, 2013

Below you can find a table that provides guidelines on what to look for when identifying types of evidence that can confirm or reject causal relationships between different parts/ subcomponents of the model of change. It also provides one example of a part of a causal pathway and what type of information to look for.

Table 9
Format for identifying types of evidence for different causal relationships in the model of change (example included)

Part of the model of change	Key questions	Type of evidence needed	Source of information
Describe relationship between the subcomponents of the model of change	Describe questions you would like to answer a so as to find out whether the components in the relationship took place, when they took place, who was involved, and whether they are related	Describe the information that we need in order to answer these questions. Which type of evidence can we use in order to reject or confirm that subcomponent X causes subcomponent Y? Can we find this information by means of : Pattern evidence; Sequence evidence; Trace evidence; Account evidence?	Describe where you can find this information
Example: Training workshops on M&E provided by MFS II funding and other sources of funding	Example: What type of training workshops on M&E took place? Who was trained? When did the training take place? Who funded the training? Was the funding of training provided before the training took place? How much money was available for the training?	Example: Trace evidence: on types of training delivered, who was trained, when the training took place, budget for the training Sequence evidence on timing of funding and timing of training Content evidence: what the training was about	Example: Training report SPO Progress reports interviews with the CFA and SPO staff Financial reports SPO and CFA

Please note that for practical reasons, the 5C evaluation team decided that it was easier to integrate the specific questions in the narrative of the initial causal map. These questions would need to be addressed by the in country team during the process tracing workshop so as to discover, verify or

discard particular causal mechanisms in the detailed, initial causal map. Different types of evidence was asked for in these questions.

*Step 6. **Collect data** to verify or discard causal mechanisms and develop workshop-based, detailed causal map – in-country team*

Once it was decided by the in-country and CDI evaluation teams what information was to be collected during the interaction with the SPO, data collection took place. The initial causal maps served as a basis for discussions during the endline workshop with a particular focus on process tracing for the identified organisational capacity changes. But it was considered to be very important to understand from the perspective of the SPO how they understood the identified key organisational capacity change/outcome area has come about. A new detailed, workshop-based causal map was developed that included the information provided by SPO staff as well as based on initial document review as described in the initial detailed causal map. This information was further analysed and verified with other relevant information so as to develop a final causal map, which is described in the next step.

*Step 7. **Assess the quality** of data and **analyse data**, and develop the **final detailed causal map** (model of change) – in-country team and CDI team*

Quality assurance of the data collected and the evidence it provides for rejecting or confirming parts of causal explanations are a major concern for many authors specialised in contribution analysis and process-tracing. Stern et al. (2012), Beach and Pedersen (2013), Lemire, Nielsen and Dybdal (2012), Mayne (2012) and Delahais and Toulemonde (2012) all emphasise the need to make attribution/ contribution claims that are based on pieces of evidence that are rigorous, traceable, and credible. These pieces of evidence should be as explicit as possible in proving that *subcomponent X causes subcomponent Y* and ruling out other explanations. Several tools are proposed to check the nature and the quality of data needed. One option is, Delahais and Toulemonde's Evidence Analysis Database, which we have adapted for our purpose.

Delahais and Toulemonde (2012) propose an Evidence Analysis Database that takes into consideration three criteria:

- Confirming/ rejecting a causal relation (yes/no);
- Type of causal mechanism: intended contribution/ other contribution/ condition leading to intended contribution/ intended condition to other contribution/ feedback loop;
- Strength of evidence: strong/ rather strong/ rather weak/ weak.

We have adapted their criteria to our purpose. The in-country team, in collaboration with the CDI team, used the criteria in assessing whether causal relationships in the causal map, were strong enough. This has been more of an iterative process trying to find additional evidence for the established relationships through additional document review or contacting the CFA and SPO as well as getting their feedback on the final detailed causal map that was established. Whilst the form below has not been used exactly in the manner depicted, it has been used indirectly when trying to validate the information in the detailed causal map. After that, the final detailed causal map is established both as a visual as well as a narrative, with related references for the established causal relations.

Example format for the adapted evidence analysis database (example included) Description of causal relation	Confirming/ rejecting a causal relation (yes/no)	Type of information providing the background to the confirmation or rejection of the causal relation	Strength of evidence: strong/ rather strong/ rather weak/ weak	Explanation for why the evidence is (rather) strong or (rather) weak, and therefore the causal relation is confirmed/ rejected
e.g. Training staff in M&E leads to enhanced M&E knowledge, skills and practice	e.g. Confirmed	e.g. Training reports confirmed that staff are trained in M&E and that knowledge and skills increased as a result of the training		

*Step 8. **Analyse and conclude** on findings– in-country team and CDI team*

The final detailed causal map was described as a visual and narrative and this was then analysed in terms of the evaluation question two and evaluation question four: *"To what degree are the changes identified in partner capacity attributable to development interventions undertaken by the MFS II consortia (i.e. measuring effectiveness)?"* and *"What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?"* It was analysed to what extent the identified key organisational capacity change can be attributed to MFS II supported capacity development interventions as well as to other related factors, interventions and actors.

Explaining factors – evaluation question 4

This paragraph describes the data collection and analysis methodology for answering the fourth evaluation question: **"What factors explain the findings drawn from the questions above?"**

In order to explain the changes in organisational capacity development between baseline and endline (evaluation question 1) the CDI and in-country evaluation teams needed to review the indicators and how they have changed between baseline and endline and what reasons have been provided for this. This has been explained in the first section of this appendix. It has been difficult to find detailed explanations for changes in each of the separate 5c indicators, but the 'general causal map' has provided some ideas about some of the key underlying factors actors and interventions that influence the key organisational capacity changes, as perceived by the SPO staff.

For those SPOs that are selected for process tracing (evaluation question 2), more in-depth information was procured for the identified key organisational capacity changes and how MFS II supported capacity development interventions as well as other actors, factors and interventions have influenced these changes. This is integrated in the process of process tracing as described in the section above.

Methodological reflection

Below a few methodological reflections are made by the 5C evaluation team.

Use of the 5 core capabilities framework and qualitative approach: this has proven to a be very useful framework to assess organisational capacity. The five core capabilities provide a comprehensive picture of the capacity of an organisation. The capabilities are interlinked, which was also reflected in the description of standard indicators, that have been developed for the purpose of this 5C evaluation and agreed upon for the eight countries. Using this framework with a mainly qualitative approach has provided rich information for the SPOs and CFAs, and many have indicated this was a useful learning exercise.

Using standard indicators and scores: using standard indicators is useful for comparison purposes. However, the information provided per indicator is very specific to the SPO and therefore makes

comparison difficult. Whilst the description of indicators has been useful for the SPO and CFA, it is questionable to what extent indicators can be compared across SPOs since they need to be seen in context, for them to make meaning. In relation to this, one can say that scores that are provided for the indicators, are only relative and cannot show the richness of information as provided in the indicator description. Furthermore, it must be noted that organisations are continuously changing and scores are just a snapshot in time. There cannot be perfect score for this. In hindsight, having rubrics would have been more useful than scores.

General causal map: whilst this general causal map, which is based on key organisational capacity changes and related causes, as perceived by the SPO staff present at the endline workshop, has not been validated with other sources of information except SPO feedback, the 5C evaluation team considers this information important, since it provides the SPO story about how and which changes in the organisation since the baseline, are perceived as being important, and how these changes have come about. This will provide information additional to the information that has been validated when analysing and describing the indicators as well as the information provided through process tracing (selected SPOs). This has proven to be a learning experience for many SPOs.

Using process tracing for dealing with the attribution question: this theory-based and mainly qualitative approach has been chosen to deal with the attribution question, on how the organisational capacity changes in the organisations have come about and what the relationship is with MFS II supported capacity development interventions and other factors. This has proven to be a very useful process, that provided a lot of very rich information. Many SPOs and CFAs have already indicated that they appreciated the richness of information which provided a story about how identified organisational capacity changes have come about. Whilst this process was intensive for SPOs during the process tracing workshops, many appreciated this to be a learning process that provided useful information on how the organisation can further develop itself. For the evaluation team, this has also been an intensive and time-consuming process, but since it provided rich information in a learning process, the effort was worth it, if SPOs and CFAs find this process and findings useful.

A few remarks need to be made:

- Outcome explaining process tracing is used for this purpose, but has been adapted to the situation since the issues being looked at were very complex in nature.
- Difficulty of verifying each and every single change and causal relationship:
  - Intensity of the process and problems with recall: often the process tracing workshop was done straight after the general endline workshop that has been done for all the SPOs.In some cases, the process tracing endline workshop has been done at a different point in time, which was better for staff involved in this process, since process tracing asks people to think back about changes and how these changes have come about. The word difficulties with recalling some of these changes and how they have come about. See also the next paragraph.
  - Difficulty of assessing changes in knowledge and behaviour: training questionnaire is have been developed, based on Kirkpatrick's model and were specifically tailored to identify not only the interest but also the change in knowledge and skills, behaviour as well as organisational changes as a result of a particular training. The retention ability of individuals, irrespective of their position in the organisation, is often unstable. The 5C evaluation team experienced that it was difficult for people to recall specific trainings, and what they learned from those trainings. Often a change in knowledge, skills and behaviour is a result brought about by a combination of different factors , rather than being traceable to one particular event. The detailed causal maps that have been established, also clearly pointed this. There are many factors at play that make people change their behaviour, and this is not just dependent on training but also internal/personal (motivational) factors as well as factors within the organisation, that stimulate or hinder a person to change behaviour. Understanding how behaviour change works is important when trying to really understand the extent to which behaviour has changed as a result of different factors, actors and interventions. Organisations change because people change and therefore understanding when and how these individuals change behaviour is crucial. Also attrition and change in key organisational positions can contribute considerably to the outcome.

Utilisation of the evaluation

The 5C evaluation team considers it important to also discuss issues around utility of this evaluation. We want to mention just a few.

Design – mainly externally driven and with a focus on accountability and standard indicators and approaches within a limited time frame, and limited budget: this MFS II evaluation is originally based on a design that has been decided by IOB (the independent evaluation office of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs) and to some extent MFS II organisations. The evaluators have had no influence on the overall design and sampling for the 5C study. In terms of learning, one may question whether the most useful cases have been selected in this sampling process. The focus was very much on a rigorous evaluation carried out by an independent evaluation team. Indicators had to be streamlined across countries. The 5C team was requested to collaborate with the other 5C country teams (Bangladesh, Congo, Pakistan, Uganda) to streamline the methodological approach across the eight sampled countries. Whilst this may have its purpose in terms of synthesising results, the 5C evaluation team has also experienced the difficulty of tailoring the approach to the specific SPOs. The overall evaluation has been mainly accountability driven and was less focused on enhancing learning for improvement. Furthermore, the timeframe has been very small to compare baseline information (2012) with endline information (2014). Changes in organisational capacity may take a long, particularly if they are related to behaviour change. Furthermore, there has been limited budget to carry out the 5C evaluation. For all the four countries (Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Liberia) that the Centre for Development Innovation, Wageningen University and Research centre has been involved in, the budget has been overspent.

However, the 5C evaluation team has designed an endline process whereby engagement of staff, e.g. in a workshop process was considered important, not only due to the need to collect data, but also to generate learning in the organisation. Furthermore, having general causal maps and detailed causal maps generated by process tracing have provided rich information that many SPOs and CFAs have already appreciated as useful in terms of the findings as well as a learning process.

Another issue that must be mentioned is that additional requests have been added to the country teams during the process of implementation: developing a country based synthesis; questions on design, implementation, and reaching objectives of MFS II funded capacity development interventions, whilst these questions were not in line with the core evaluation questions for the 5C evaluation.

Complexity and inadequate coordination and communication: many actors, both in the Netherlands, as well as in the eight selected countries, have been involved in this evaluation and their roles and responsibilities, were often unclear. For example, 19 MFS II consortia, the internal reference group, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Partos, the Joint Evaluation Trust, NWO-Wotro, the evaluators (Netherlands and in-country), 2 external advisory committees, and the steering committee. Not to mention the SPO's and their related partners and consultants. CDI was involved in 4 countries with a total number of 38 SPOs and related CFAs. This complexity influenced communication and coordination, as well as the extent to which learning could take place. Furthermore, there was a distance between the evaluators and the CFAs, since the approach had to be synchronised across countries, and had to adhere to strict guidelines, which were mainly externally formulated and could not be negotiated or discussed for the purpose of tailoring and learning. Feedback on the final results and report had to be provided mainly in written form. In order to enhance utilisation, a final workshop at the SPO to discuss the findings and think through the use with more people than probably the one who reads the report, would have more impact on organisational learning and development. Furthermore, feedback with the CFAs has also not been institutionalised in the evaluation process in the form of learning events. And as mentioned above, the complexity of the evaluation with many actors involved did not enhance learning and thus utilization.

5C Endline process, and in particular thoroughness of process tracing often appreciated as learning process: The SPO perspective has also brought to light a new experience and technique of self-assessment and self-corrective measures for managers. Most SPOs whether part of process tracing or not, deeply appreciated the thoroughness of the methodology and its ability to capture details with robust connectivity. This is a matter of satisfaction and learning for both evaluators and

SPOs. Having a process whereby SPO staff were very much engaged in the process of self-assessment and reflection has proven for many to be a learning experience for many, and therefore have enhanced utility of the 5C evaluation.

Appendix 2 Background information on the five core capabilities framework

The 5 capabilities (5C) framework was to be used as a framework for the evaluation of capacity development of Southern Partner Organisations (SPOs) of the MFS II consortia. The 5C framework is based on a five-year research program on 'Capacity, change and performance' that was carried out by the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM). The research included an extensive review of the literature and sixteen case studies. The 5C framework has also been applied in an IOB evaluation using 26 case studies in 14 countries, and in the baseline carried out per organisation by the MFS II organisations for the purpose of the monitoring protocol.

The 5C framework is structured to understand and analyse (changes in) the capacity of an organization to deliver (social) value to its constituents. This introduction briefly describes the 5C framework, mainly based on the most recent document on the 5C framework (Keijzer et al., 2011).

The 5C framework sees capacity as an **outcome** of an **open system**. An organisation or collaborative association (for instance a network) is seen as a system interacting with wider society. The most critical practical issue is to ensure that relevant stakeholders share a common way of thinking about capacity and its core constituents or capabilities. Decisive for an organisation's capacity is the context in which the organisation operates. This means that **understanding context issues** is crucial. The use of the 5C framework requires a multi-stakeholder approach because shared values and results orientation are important to facilitate the capacity development process. The 5C framework therefore needs to **accommodate the different visions** of stakeholders and conceive different strategies for raising capacity and improving performance in a given situation.

The 5C framework defines capacity as '**producing social value**' and identifies five core capabilities that together result in that overall capacity. Capacity, capabilities and competences are seen as follows:

Capacity is referred to as the overall ability of an organisation or system to create value for others;

Capabilities are the collective ability of a group or a system to do something either inside or outside the system. The collective ability involved may be technical, logistical, managerial or generative (i.e. the ability to earn legitimacy, to adapt, to create meaning, etc.);

Competencies are the energies, skills and abilities of individuals.

Fundamental to developing capacity are inputs such as human, material and financial resources, technology, and information. To the degree that they are developed and successfully integrated, capabilities contribute to the overall capacity or ability of an organisation or system to create value for others. A single capability is not sufficient to create capacity. All are needed and are strongly interrelated and overlapping. Thus, to achieve its development goals, the 5C framework says that every organisation or system must have **five basic capabilities:**

- The capability to act and commit;
- The capability to deliver on development objectives;
- The capability to adapt and self-renew;
- The capability to relate (to external stakeholders);
- The capability to achieve coherence.

In order to have a common framework for evaluation, the five capabilities have been reformulated in outcome domains and for each outcome domain performance indicators have been developed. A detailed overview of capabilities with outcome domains and indicators is attached in Appendix 3.

There is some overlap between the five core capabilities but together the five capabilities result in a certain level of capacity. Influencing one capability may have an effect on one or more of the other capabilities. In each situation, the level of any of the five capabilities will vary. Each capability can become stronger or weaker over time.

Appendix 3 Results - changes in organisational capacity of the SPO - 5C indicators

Below you will find a description for each of the indicators under each of the capabilities, what the situation is as assessed during the endline, how this has changed since the baseline and what are the reasons for change.

Capability to act and commit

1.1. Responsive leadership: 'Leadership is responsive, inspiring, and sensitive'

This is about leadership within the organisation (operational, strategic). If there is a larger body then you may also want to refer to leadership at a higher level but not located at the local organisation.

The Board of Directors of REFOUND was restructured and is more involved in the activities of the organisation. The executive leadership is not responsive and accountable; due to lack of funding the number of management staff has reduced to one person, which is the Executive Director.

Score: from 2 to 2 (no change)

1.2. Strategic guidance: 'Leaders provide appropriate strategic guidance (strategic leader and operational leader)'

This is about the extent to which the leader(s) provide strategic directions

REFOUND has formulated a new strategic plan to provide strategic directions for the organisation.

Based on the new strategic plan developed, a couple of new focus areas, particularly economic related, gender, policy advocacy, and democratic governance were incorporated into REFOUND's work. These new areas are the result of a change/shift from project to programme planning. In the baseline it was noted that REFOUND seems to have difficulties to turn strategies into operations. This still seems to be the case when reading the new strategy.

ICCO indicated that they have requested a copy of the new strategic plan but REFOUND has not acknowledged the mails sent or share copy of the plan with ICCO. This has led to ICCO uncertainty about REFOUND. The new strategic plan was shared with the evaluation team.

The restructured Board of Directors provided guidance for the strategic planning process.

Score: from 2 to 2.5 (slight improvement)

1.3. Staff turnover: 'Staff turnover is relatively low'

This is about staff turnover.

The issue of staff turnover at REFOUND is notable and it is very high (now 4 main staff compared to 8 during the baseline in 2012) due to lack of funding, thus leading to the incapability of maintaining qualified staff. Due to the level of staff turnover, the endline assessment at REFOUND did not have the required number of staff participation.

Score: from 2 to 1 (deterioration)

1.4. Organisational structure: 'Existence of clear organisational structure reflecting the objectives of the organisation'

Observable indicator: Staff have copy of org structure and understand this

The Board of Directors has been restructured and new officers have been appointed. The management is led by the executive director and per available projects, staff members are hired. There are core staff members that run the organisation from time to time with or without projects, including the executive director and acting chairman of the board of directors. The management spoke of an organogram being designed to inform the members of the organisation. However, the evaluation team did not observe such a document. In the administrative policies of REFOUND there are guidelines to the work of the Board, Management team, project staff and beneficiaries.

Score: from 3 to 3 (no change)

1.5. Articulated strategies: 'Strategies are articulated and based on good situation analysis and adequate M&E'

Observable indicator: strategies are well articulated. Situation analysis and monitoring and evaluation are used to inform strategies.

The board of directors has approved the strategic plan, and management is now contemplating on programme development for implementation. Situational analysis has informed the strategic plan, as well as a SWOT analysis. The focus of the REFOUND strategic goals is threefold:

1. Contribute to the achievement of economic growth through food security of poor and vulnerable populations in rural communities in Bong County
2. To increase community participation and involvement in the implementation of national policies
3. Expand access to justice and enhance the protection of human rights//good governance and democratic empowerment.

The latest news from September 2014 is that REFOUND is working with communities to prevent the spread of the Ebola virus through awareness raising. At the time of the baseline the request for 86,000 USD was made, but 30,000 USD for implementation from November 2012 to November 2013 was made available. This amount did not support the activities outlined in the 86,000 USD proposal.

Score: from 2 to 2.5 (slight improvement)

1.6. Daily operations: 'Day-to-day operations are in line with strategic plans'

This is about the extent to which day-to-day operations are aligned with strategic plans.

The day-to-day field operations of REFOUND are less often due to decrease in funding and less activities.

Score: from 2 to 1.5 (slight deterioration)

1.7. Staff skills: 'Staff have necessary skills to do their work'

This is about whether staff have the skills necessary to do their work and what skills they might they need.

The capacity assessment done in the baseline in 2012 identified skills needed to be addressed by REFOUND.

Through funding provided by ICCO's flexible funding mechanism, both the Executive Director and the new Finance Officer received some training in financial reporting and project management. They received additional trainings and workshops in concessional community tracking and monitoring and human rights-based monitoring.

The Executive Director holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics and Rural Development, the Project Officer has a degree in management, the Project Officer has a vocational training in agriculture, and the field staff has experience in working with women's groups.

Score: from 2.5 to 2.5 (no change)

1.8. Training opportunities: 'Appropriate training opportunities are offered to staff'

This is about whether offered appropriate training opportunities

REFOUND has not had much opportunities for training staff mainly because they cannot maintain adequate staff with long term obligations; most of the staff are project related and contractual.

The Search for Common Ground (SFCG), the Rights and Rice Foundation (RRF), the Sustainable Development Institute (SDI), the National Election Commission (NEC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Constitution Review Committee (CRC) provided few additional trainings: programme and finance training; training in constitutional reform, Human rights monitoring, Monitoring and tracking utilization of funds emanating from both the annual social contributions made by concessions that are exploiting the natural resources of Bong County and the County Development Funds provided by the Government of Liberia through the national budget, by the local government of Bong County. These training were made accessible as a result of Networking.

Through funding provided by ICCO's flexible funding mechanism, both the Executive Director and the new part time Finance Officer received some training in financial reporting and project management. They also participated in a one day training meeting for Programme and Finance Officers to increase awareness regarding ICCO's operational policies and procedures. They received additional trainings and workshops in concessional community tracking and monitoring and human rights-based monitoring. ICCO also provided training at CARI in agricultural planting skills for both REFOUND field staff and beneficiaries in 2013.

Score: from 2.5 to 3 (slight improvement)

1.9.1. Incentives: 'Appropriate incentives are in place to sustain staff motivation'

This is about what makes people want to work here. Incentives could be financial, freedom at work, training opportunities, etc.

As a result of the decreased in ICCO funding, staff are mostly volunteering and are offered stipends, which are lower than before. Staff members who are volunteering on the short-term projects are not getting regular stipends and this does not motivate them; what keeps them working or visiting the office is the hope of getting paid at the end of the few short-term projects.

It is also established that out of the two new staff hired only 1 has benefited from finance and programme management training offered by ICCO.

Score: from 2.5 to 2 (slight deterioration)

1.9.2. Funding sources: 'Funding from multiple sources covering different time periods'

This is about how diversified the SPOs funding sources are over time, and how the level of funding is changing over time.

REFOUND's areas to source funding from have been diversified through the new strategic plan. Proposals were submitted to companies and organisations like AcelorMittal Liberia Limited, Green Hill Quarry Community Agriculture Cooperative Project, etc.

The involvement of REFOUND in the activities of the Civil Society Coalition of Bong County has provided networking opportunities with United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), National Election Commission (NEC), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Constitution Review Committee (CRC), and Sustainable Development Institute (SDI) and these networking opportunities has led to the organisation accessing short term funding from different sources for implementation.

This information needs to be balanced to consider the withdrawal of funding by ICCO, the only long-term funder of REFOUND.

Score: from 1 to 1.5 (slight improvement)

1.9.3. Funding procedures: 'Clear procedures for exploring new funding opportunities'

This is about whether there are clear procedures for getting new funding and staff are aware of these procedures.

REFOUND has formulated a strategic plan that summarizes the institution's priorities and approach towards funding. Funding opportunities and partners are mostly located in Bong County through local networking and proposal writing.

The draft strategic plan is available but due to the lack of capable and full-time staff it is not certain if staff members have read or understood the plan or procedures of REFOUND.

Score: from 1 to 1.5 (slight improvement)

Summary of the capability to act and commit

The leadership of REFOUND cannot be considered to have significantly improved its capacity since the baseline. The main changes have been that the Board, that has been reconstituted and is hoped to bring more guidance than the previous Board. A new strategic plan has been developed that tries to focus on 3 issues: gender economic development, policy advocacy, and democratic governance. Problems related to unclear organisational structure, lack of financial accountability, and unreliable reporting have not clearly been resolved. The main issue that is challenging REFOUND is that many staff members have left, current staff members are practically volunteering as they are paid whenever a project is on hand, which affects staff motivation. The current staff members have been engaging in limited trainings from ICCO and from organisations within the local network, though it cannot be said for sure whether performance has improved. Funding procedures could potentially be guided by the new strategic plan in the future but for now REFOUND relies on ad hoc short-term projects that come along.

Score: from 2 to 2.1 (hardly change)

Capability to adapt and self-renew

2.1. M&E application: 'M&E is effectively applied to assess activities, outputs and outcomes'

This is about what the monitoring and evaluation of the SPO looks at, what type of information they get at and at what level (individual, project, organisational).

Comparable to the situation of the baseline, REFOUND does not have a system for Monitoring and Evaluating projects or programmes. REFOUND engages in informal monitoring and assessment trips to the beneficiary communities. Due to the decrease in ICCO funding, nothing has been done to put in place a Monitoring & Evaluation mechanism because adding the Monitoring & Evaluation component requires funding.

Score: from 2 to 2 (no change)

2.2. M&E competencies: 'Individual competencies for performing M&E functions are in place'

This is about whether the SPO has a trained M&E person; whether other staff have basic understanding of M&E; and whether they know what information to collect, how to process the information, how to make use of the information so as to improve activities etc.

The director of REFOUND holds a basic understanding of M&E. Through funding provided by ICCO's flexible funding mechanism, both the Executive Director and the new part time Finance Officer received some training in financial reporting and project management. They received additional trainings and workshops in concessional community tracking and monitoring and human rights-based monitoring. There is no person specifically designated to carry out M&E tasks.

Score: from 3 to 3 (no change)

2.3. M&E for future strategies: 'M&E is effectively applied to assess the effects of delivered products and services (outcomes) for future strategies'

This is about what type of information is used by the SPO to make decisions; whether the information comes from the monitoring and evaluation; and whether M&E info influences strategic planning.

Since REFOUND does not yet have a M&E system in place, the systematic data is gathered to inform strategic and future decisions, although feedback from beneficiaries provides some input. This has not changed since the baseline.

Score: from 2 to 2 (no change)

2.4. Critical reflection: 'Management stimulates frequent critical reflection meetings that also deal with learning from mistakes'

This is about whether staff talk formally about what is happening in their programmes; and, if so, how regular these meetings are; and whether staff are comfortable raising issues that are problematic.

Information provided by REFOUND's staff interviewed shows that the organisation convenes periodic meetings with the different stakeholder of the organisation, including the board of directors, management team, project staff, and beneficiaries. These meetings are held at different time intervals and are done formally.

The management of REFOUND also holds briefing meetings periodically with the board of directors during project implementation to update them on progress and discuss challenges to find solutions. In the strategic plan, a SWOT analysis is performed but this does not address possible pathways forward.

Due to the lack of minutes of these meetings the evaluation team could not ascertain the holding of the meetings nor the improvements made as a result of the meetings, if any.

Score: from 2 to 2 (no change)

2.5. Freedom for ideas: 'Staff feel free to come up with ideas for implementation of objectives

This is about whether staff feel that ideas they bring for implementation of the programme are welcomed and used.

Feedback sessions are held for both junior and senior staff. These sessions provide the opportunity for staff to freely discuss issues about the organisation. These meetings are part of the culture of REFOUND. These sessions are held when the organisation is actively running and implementing programmes and projects. During the period since the baseline, many staffs have left the organisation, and new staff members may not be able to actively contribute to the direction of the organisation due to lack of experience.

Score: from 3.5 to 3 (slight deterioration)

2.6. System for tracking environment: 'The organisation has a system for being in touch with general trends and developments in its operating environment'

This is about whether the SPO knows what is happening in its environment and whether it will affect the organisation.

Analogous to the baseline, REFOUND still have the same ways for networking and keeping track of the environment, except for now there is much less funding.

REFOUND is engaged with more regional networks and has engaged with some higher-level stakeholders. As a result of high level of participation in coordination meetings, REFOUND chairs the Bong County coalition of Civil Society Organisations and follows trends and activities in the environment which they work. This also facilitated REFOUND to identify new entry points and advocacy intervention possibilities. However, there is no formal system to track the environment since there is no M&E system in place.

Score: from 3 to 3.5 (slight improvement)

2.7. Stakeholder responsiveness: 'The organisation is open and responsive to their stakeholders and the general public'

This is about what mechanisms the SPO has to get input from its stakeholders, and what they do with that input.

REFOUND now have a stronger engagement with other actors in programmatic areas as per the strategic plan and has increased its interaction with other organisations and sector ministries of the Government of Liberia. However, the partners that were interviewed still did not have a very good idea of the activities of REFOUND. Interaction with partners from the LCDGP coalition seems to have been limited as well, besides a few small trainings and meetings. As such, REFOUND is involved in the new LCDGP sector pillar, with economic development. They had a LCDGP meeting where stakeholder mapping exercises were done. These helped to improve the relations with stakeholders. The relationship with other stakeholders led to REFOUND heading the CSO group in Bong County.

Score: from 2 to 2.5 (slight improvement)

Summary of the capability to adapt and self-renew
In the years since the baseline not much has been done to improve M&E competencies or develop an M&E system. Most feedback and monitoring activities still take place through informal meetings and assessment trips. The management and board have attempted to list the strengths and weaknesses of REFOUND, but it is unclear whether critical reflection on the meaning of this analysis is actually taking place.

The networking activities of the director let the organisation stay in touch with what is happening in society, and the current role of Chair of CSO groups in Bong County allows REFOUND to join higher level meetings. Though some small and short-term projects have been taking place, partners of REFOUND still found it difficult to give information about the organisation.

Score: from 2.5 to 2.5 (no change)

Capability to deliver on development objectives
3.1. Clear operational plans: 'Organisation has clear operational plans for carrying out projects which all staff fully understand'

This is about whether each project has an operational work plan and budget, and whether staff use it in their day-to-day operations.

The strategic plan of REFOUND has just been developed to influence operations. However, since there is no project except for the few collaborative short-term projects, it is difficult to establish if operational work plans inform or are line with day-to-day operations. The strategic plan contains at the same time a budget estimate for the costs in order to achieve the strategic objectives.

Score: from 3 to 3 (no change)

3.2. Cost-effective resource use: 'Operations are based on cost-effective use of its resources'

This is about whether the SPO has the resources to do the work, and whether resources are used cost-effectively.

The financial reports of REFOUND are void of details of expenditures and supporting documentation. This posed a challenge to the evaluation in terms of having access to credible financial data from REFOUND to be able to conduct simple cost-benefit analysis to ascertain the cost-effective use of resources.

This is an issue that the CFA – ICCO – has been grappling with since engaging with REFOUND, which consequently resulted to ICCO progressively decreasing funding to REFOUND due to lack of transparency and accountability.

Score: from 3 to 1 (considerable deterioration)

3.3. Delivering planned outputs: 'Extent to which planned outputs are delivered'

This is about whether the SPO is able to carry out the operational plans.

REFOUND has gotten smaller, though not sustainable, grants from the National Election Commission (NEC) / the United Nations Development Programme, the Constitution Review Committee, and the Sustainable Development Institute through partnership to keep them in the limelight of service delivery and through this they were able to hire two new staff on a short-term voluntary basis. The lack of funding is affecting service delivery at REFOUND.

Score: from 2.5 to 1.5 (deterioration)

3.4. Mechanisms for beneficiary needs: 'The organisation has mechanisms in place to verify that services meet beneficiary needs'

This is about how the SPO knows that their services are meeting beneficiary needs

A REFOUND beneficiary needs assessment template has been developed though there is no M&E system in place to inform it. The assessment template was formulated to be able to get substantial details on beneficiaries and to effectively implement project activities. Most information is still gathered informally.

It was indicated that REFOUND carried out an assessment of the economic livelihood activities in one of its project areas using this needs assessment template.

Score: from 2 to 2.5 (slight improvement)

3.5. Monitoring efficiency: 'The organisation monitors its efficiency by linking outputs and related inputs (input-output ratio's)'

This is about how the SPO knows they are efficient or not in their work.

It is not clear how REFOUND monitor's efficiency at this point but staff indicated that the situation is the same as the baseline.

Score: from 2 to 2 (no change)

3.6. Balancing quality-efficiency: 'The organisation aims at balancing efficiency requirements with the quality of its work'

This is about how the SPO ensures quality work with the resources available

Situation is the same as the baseline: there is no system in place to balance quality with efficiency. Budgets are not adequately substantiated and reported upon.

Score: from 2 to 2 (no change)

Summary of the capability to deliver on development objectives
REFOUND has worked on its strategic plan, and has sought to apply the programmatic way of thinking in that strategy. However, when looking at the lack of operational documentation and limited financial accountability, it can be doubted whether REFOUND has been able to deliver on its development objectives. Lack of funding is part of the issue, but the problems related to reporting and the provision general documentation show that REFOUND has trouble managing its projects coherently.

Score: from 2.4 to 2 (slight deterioration)

Capability to relate

4.1. Stakeholder engagement in policies and strategies: 'The organisation maintains relations/ collaboration/alliances with its stakeholders for the benefit of the organisation'

This is about whether the SPO engages external groups in developing their policies and strategies, and how.

As head of the Bong County Coalition of Civil Society Organisations, REFOUND interacts with major stakeholders, especially in the organisation's programmatic areas. Staff and beneficiaries were involved in the drafting the new strategic plan.

Score: from 2 to 3 (improvement)

4.2. Engagement in networks: 'Extent to which the organisation has relationships with existing networks/alliances/partnerships'

This is about what networks/alliances/partnerships the SPO engages with and why; with they are local or international; and what they do together, and how do they do it.

It was proven that REFOUND showed excessive strength in partnering, advocacy and networking. With this strength REFOUND is heading the biggest network in Bong County, the coalition of civil society organisations in Bong County. This position was merited from its ability to network and cooperate with local stakeholders. REFOUND is a prominent Civil Society Organisation in Bong County, because of the role they play as chair of the Civil Society Organisations in Bong County.

They maintained partnership with the 2 government-related external partners that participated in the baseline in June 2012 (Cooperative Development Agency and Ministry of Gender and Development); both were available and participated in the endline. The Cooperative Development Agency was found to be proactively involved in providing technical support and management advice; while the Ministry of Gender and Development is passively involved.

REFOUND is not involved with international networks, their area of operation is limited to Bong County and the networks within Bong County.

Score: from 2 to 3 (improvement)

4.3. Engagement with target groups: 'The organisation performs frequent visits to their target groups/ beneficiaries in their living environment'

This is about how and when the SPO meets with target groups.

REFOUND visits project areas and gives updates at county development sectors and pillar meetings during implementation. Funding somewhat affects the frequency of visits to target groups.

This is mainly about M&E, which is not institutionalized within REFOUND at this time, also due to lack of funding and staff capacity.

Score: from 2.5 to 2 (slight deterioration)

4.4. Relationships within organisation: 'Organisational structure and culture facilitates open internal contacts, communication, and decision-making'

How do staff at the SPO communicate internally? Are people free to talk to whomever they need to talk to? When and at what forum? What are the internal mechanisms for sharing information and building relationships?

In the absence of funding this is difficult to establish. REFOUND has three staff members, excluding the Executive Director; one them is volunteering. It was indicated that during project implementation, there are meetings held every morning to share information about projects and issues concerning the organisation. New staff were not able to contribute very much to the assessment of REFOUND's capacity.

Score: 2 to 1.5 (slight deterioration)

Summary of the capability to relate

REFOUND seems to be quite active within networks in Bong County. The election of REFOUND to be the chair of CSOs in that area has allowed the organisation to maintain and build new regional contacts. Some small projects have come out of that engagement in the past year. It is unclear how stakeholders have actively influenced the policies of REFOUND - the strategic plan does suggest that certain focus areas originate from interactions with other groups. Internally, not much seems to have changed: informal meetings with beneficiaries and with staff guide internal communication, but it seems the director decides on the way forward mostly. Also lack of funding has limited the frequency of visits to beneficiaries.

Score: 2.1 to 2.3 (very slight improvement)

Capability to achieve coherence

5.1. Revisiting vision, mission: 'Vision, mission and strategies regularly discussed in the organisation'

This is about whether there is a vision, mission and strategies; how often staff discuss/revise vision, mission and strategies; and who is involved in this.

In March 2014 REFOUND drafted a new strategic plan with input from the board, staff members and beneficiaries. This plan is available and shared with some of REFOUND stakeholders. The strategic plan has not been shared with ICCO who has requested it frequently.

Policy documents have also been updated in line with the vision and mission. The vision and mission of REFOUND has not been updated or changed.

Score: from 2 to 3 (improvement)

5.2. Operational guidelines: 'Operational guidelines (technical, admin, HRM) are in place and used and supported by the management'

This is about whether there are operational guidelines, which operational guidelines exist; and how they are used.

REFOUND is not fully functional due to less funding and lack of projects.

The organisation has policy documents that spell out the roles and responsibilities of the board, management team, and staff members.

The administrative policy and other policy documents have been crafted and updated and made available to staff and stakeholders as indicated during the endline assessment. These documents are guides to all staffs of REFOUND, but there is still uncertainty about the usage of these documents presently due to low funding and lack of capable staff.

Score: from 2.5 to 2.5 (no change)

5.3. Alignment with vision, mission: 'Projects, strategies and associated operations are in line with the vision and mission of the organisation'

This is about whether the operations and strategies are line with the vision/mission of the SPO.

REFOUND's vision and mission has not changed but it was indicated that the focus has shifted from project to programme implementation. Projects are formulated based on the focus of the new draft strategic plan. Operations and strategies have some connection to the vision and mission as indicated during the endline assessment. The mission of 'Empowering local Communities through Sustainable Economic Initiatives' may need to be adjusted to be more specific.

Score: from 2.5 to 3 (slight improvement)

5.4. Mutually supportive efforts: 'The portfolio of project (activities) provides opportunities for mutually supportive efforts'

This is about whether the efforts in one project complement/support efforts in other projects.

Due to lack of funding and M&E application this has remained unchanged since the baseline. Lack of funding is seriously affecting the work of REFOUND -which is now not fully functional or actively running projects- and thus the extent to which project activities can be complementary. .

Score: from 2 to 1.5 (slight deterioration)

Summary of the capability to achieve coherence

In many aspects the situation is the same as during the baseline. Though the strategy has now been developed it is unsure how the vision and mission statements are still fully connected to this. The strategic plan and the administrative policies guide REFOUND in a sense, but most activities are quite ad hoc. The diversity of small projects being undertaken besides activities for ICCO does not suggest that REFOUND fully knows where it is headed. Lack of funding is seriously affecting the work of REFOUND and thus the extent to which project activities can be complementary.

Score: from 2.25 to 2.5 (very slight improvement)

Appendix 4 Results - key changes in organisational capacity - general causal map

Below you can find a description of the key changes in organisational capacity of REFOUND since the baseline as expressed by REFOUND staff during the endline workshop. First, a description is given of how this topic was introduced during the endline workshop by summarising key information on REFOUND from the baseline report. This information includes a brief description of the vision, mission and strategies of the organisation, staff situation, clients and partner organisations. This then led into a discussion on how the organisation has changed since the baseline.

On Wednesday 25th and Thursday 26th of June 2014, the evaluation team visited the Rural Empowerment Foundation (REFOUND) in Gbargna, Bong County. The following staffs were present at the workshop:

- Stephen J. Mulbah, Jr.   Executive Director
- Marsay Conneh   Civic/Gender Officer
- Jerry Z. Koiwu   Finance/Administrative Officer
- Jallah Sonneh   Programme Officer (joined on the second day)

The only staff members that had been present during the baseline were the executive director and the programme officer. The other two staff members present at the workshop (the finance/administrative officer; since May 2013) and the civic/gender officer; since January 2014) had joined the organisation after 2012. Unfortunately the new staff members could not say much about the changes since the baseline, and the programme officer was mostly involved with fieldwork and monitoring of the project, so most of his insights were on an individual level and output oriented.

Key organisational changes at REFOUND

The REFOUND staff agreed that information that was presented by the evaluators as a recap of the 2012 situation in terms of vision, mission, strategies, staff situation, clients and partner organisations, was still correct. Staff indicated that the only change was that in terms of target communities, saying that they were focusing on Jorquelleh and Zota (not Suakoko) districts. They also said that the main difference now is that the staff composition has changed: now 4 main staff, instead of the 8 people mentioned in the baseline.

Then a discussion was held around the major changes that had occurred at REFOUND in the past two years, since the baseline in 2012. The staffs were also asked to provide dates with each of these changes. Most of these changes were written down by the executive director and are described below:

- Management (the Executive Director and the finance/administrative officer) underwent two trainings in program and finance in 2013. Alvin Zawolo, a programme officer at DEN-L, offered the finance training. Programme training was offered by NARDA and the PMC of the LCDGP.
- The Board was reconstituted in January 2014
- New strategic plan was developed in March 2014 (made available to the evaluation team)
- REFOUND heads CSO in Bong County
- Three staff left REFOUND in April 2013, and a fourth member, a programme officer became part of the Board
- New staff recruited in May 2013 and January 2014: Finance and gender officers. The civic/gender officer indicated that these new staff members have received erratic payments since February 2014.
- Administrative policy was revised in June 2014 (made available to the evaluation team)

- There were two audits commissioned, one in February and one in May 2014. Audits were commissioned by ICCO on the activities under the bridging phase of the LCDGP, and activities done with the LCDGP (these documents were not available).
- REFOUND acquires capacity to coordinate and facilitate the constitutional review process in Bong County. This was in cooperation with the Constitutional Review Committee.
- Skills were acquired in monitoring and tracking of Bong County's social development funds. In cluster arrangement with other organizations and in partnership with SDI. Training held at DEN-L by SDI. Part of the training included resource mapping and introduction of different tools to monitor and track, and the development of templates to be used in monitoring and tracking. February 2014.
- Rights and Rice provided training in monitoring, tracking and dispute resolution in communities for community human rights monitoring. REFOUND uses this information to inform communities on their rights and for example provides information on human rights violations such as rape (October 2013).
- Strategic LCDGP plan validated during a series of meetings in Monrovia. The meetings ended in November 2013.
- REFOUND was accredited by NEC in 2013, to conduct 2014 voters' civic education for the 2014 midterm elections. REFOUND applied and after a review of documents was accredited by NEC.

The general causal map was developed based on the discussions that the evaluation team had with the REFOUND staff on the changes that took place in REFOUND since the baseline, and in particular the organisational capacity changes and how these changes had come about what they had led to. A key factor that has heavily influenced the organisational capacity and the activities of REFOUND since 2012 has been the decreasing level of funding from ICCO. ICCO is the main funder of REFOUND and has been supporting them since 2005 [1]. Members of REFOUND at the workshop noted that 'fallow periods' (periods in which they were not paid) in between the transformation from bilateral relations to the bridging phase (January 2012 - November 2012) [2], and now to the LCDGP (November 2013 - June 2014) led various staff to stop working at the organisation and find other means of employment. The formation of the LCDGP has been something that REFOUND seems to be struggling with, since it is mostly related to less funds being available, and funds being unpredictable [3] (according to the executive director). Due to the decreasing amount of funding, as well as subsequent delays in funding, REFOUND has been seeking additional projects and funding sources [4], but the negative effect is that 4 staff members have left the organisation [5]. Many of these projects are in the region of Bong County, where REFOUND is actively networking to get new projects [6].

During the discussions at the workshop it was difficult to agree on a number of themes or labels that would characterize the discussions. The research team divided the subjects in three categories: 'staff capacity was worked on, but challenges are there'; 'development of a new programmatic approach'; and 'networking in Bong County'.

Below each of these key changes are further discussed, with reference to the general causal map visual. The numbers in the narrative refer to information organised visually in the general causal map on the next page. Main capacity themes (in yellow boxes) are noted on top. Blue boxes represent factors and aspects that influence the outcomes above. These can be further traced back to interventions and activities. The contributing activities have been coloured brown. If a factor or outcome negatively impacted the organisation it has been highlighted in pink. The bottom of the causal map shows the most important underlying causes, opportunities and constraints that have influenced the organisation. Certain key influencing causes and external developments that have substantially impacted the organisation are listed in the round boxes at the bottom in light green.

Staff capacity worked on, but challenges are there [7]

Development of new strategic direction and programmatic approach [28]

Active networking in Bong County [38]

Enhanced financial reporting [8]

Enhanced knowledge on programme management [15]

Occasional awareness raising on HR targeting individual clients [22]

Staff member mentions that she has not been paid since Feb 2014 [25]

Development of new Strategic Plan 2014 - Incorporating experiences with recent projects. [29]

REFOUND was accredited by the National Elections Commission to conduct voter civic education in 2014. Was done in 2013 [33]

Expectations that this current new board will guide policy formulation and strategic directions [34]

Increased access to higher level key stakeholders and duty bearers due to being the reference point for the CSOs in Bong County [39]

Knowledge about project budget management [9]

Knowledge about managing donor funds [10]

Knowledge on value chain development and the use of market analysis [16]

Enhanced learning on stakeholder coordination and networking [17]

Relevance of certain key stakeholders recognized [18]

REFOUND staff acquired skills in HR based programming [23]

REFOUND acquires experience in facilitating constitutional reform processes [26]

Acquired skills in tracking and monitoring county concession implemented projects [30]

Board reconstituted (5 people appointed by management) in 2014 [35]

Since december 2013 REFOUND was elected to be the chairgroup of the CSOs of Bong County [40]

Finance training in 2013 By DEN-L consultant [11]

Briefing/training by SDI in Feb 2014 [31]

REFOUND: In order to address needs and contemporary reality [12]

ICCO funding through institutional support funds (LCDGP) 750 dollars according to REFOUND expenditure plan 2013 [13]

Training in project management with the FED-cluster through the LCDGP in February 2014 (attended by REFOUND management) [19]

Search for Common Ground identified REFOUND activities and involved them in a Human Rights monitoring training October 2013 [24]

REFOUND facilitating the review of the constitution in Bong County and solicits suggestions from citizens in Jorquelleh and Kpaai districts [27]

CSDF Monitoring project with Sustainable Development initiative started in Feb. 2014 [32]

Old board did not give guidance to management [36]

Old board had overstayed its term [37]

LCDGP need to formulate and use reporting template FED Cluster coordination need [20]

REFOUND: Goal to enhance management capacity in service delivery [21]

New employees recruited May 2013 – finance officer Jan 2014 Civic education/ gender officer [14]

Search for other projects [4]

LCDGP coalition and strategic plan validation in Nov 2013 [3]

Staff turnover (3 staff left in April 2013) [5]

Long fallow periods between one project and another Jan 2012 – Nov 2012 Nov 2013 – June 2014 [2]

Networking activities in Bong County [6]

Decreasing ICCO programme funding since end of 2011 Decrease in overal funds [1]

Staff capacity was worked on, but challenges are there

The discussion that staff capacity was worked on [7] was given substance by the statements made by the finance/administrative officer and the executive director that they had improved some of their personal knowledge and skills in the past two years. They both felt that they had enhanced their financial reporting competencies [8], through enhanced knowledge of project budget management [9], and knowledge about managing donor funds [10]. This knowledge was provided in training on finance in 2013 for the new finance officer, and provided by a consultant from DEN-L [11]. The director of REFOUND said it was important to do this because of contemporary needs to have an informed financial officer in order to address contemporary realities [12] and the need for better financial reporting towards donors. This training was funded by money initially set aside for the LCDGP learning trajectory [13]. Instead of the learning trajectory, ICCO made available 3000 dollars in flexible funding. From these funds REFOUND used 750 dollars to organise this training. The director also said that he felt training in financial management would be good to get the finance officer fully capable to perform his role as finance officer. This was because this current finance officer had been hired since May 2013 [14].

On other skills and capacity gains, the director felt that he increased his knowledge on programme management [15] during a training provided by the Programme Management Committee of the LCDGP. He said that he had learned a number of approaches that helped him manage his programme. He said that in this training a number of issues were discussed: stakeholder mapping, value chains, and timely reporting. He said that as a consequence of these trainings he was more knowledgeable in:

- Value chain development and the use of market analysis [16]
- How stakeholder coordination and networking can enhance service delivery and programme support [17]
- Understanding the relevance of including certain key stakeholders [18].

This training, in 2014 (according to REFOUND staff it was in 2013, but other SPOs indicated this training to be on the 6th and 7th of February 2014), was facilitated by NARDA in cooperation with the Programme Management Committee of the LCDGP [19]. The reason that this training was given was related to the way the LCDGP members had formed new clusters. REFOUND was part of the Fair Economic Development (FED) Cluster. As part of the coalition plans it was felt that reporting should be improved, and that a consolidated reporting template needed to be developed [20]. The director added that he felt that he needed to attend these trainings in order to enhance the REFOUND management capacity [21].

A third issue that the staff of REFOUND have been working on was the issue of human rights, and currently staff are doing occasional awareness raising of human rights issues in the communities that REFOUND is active in [22]. This is related to members of REFOUND acquiring ideas on how to incorporate human rights within their programmes [23]. Within their own target communities they tried to inform beneficiaries of their rights, to help to resolve disputes and to highlight rights violations. A question was asked in follow-up: how are you applying the knowledge from the Human Rights training in your communities? This approach is used by the organisation in some individual cases, for example in case of issues of rape. Another example that the director mentioned was a case where community members held a man prisoner. But the REFOUND staff acknowledged that they did not have a consistent approach to human rights abuses. This knowledge was generated through training in October 2013 in the Human Rights-based approach by Search for Common Ground, through the Rights and Rice Foundation [24]. This was not a project, but a training given by Rights and Rice Foundation, with the idea that the CSOs being trained will incorporate this approach within their own work. Some of the topics that were discussed were how to use human rights in monitoring and dispute-resolution.

An issue that seems to impact the staff capacity at REFOUND was mentioned by a new staff member who indicated that REFOUND's management had trouble paying her wages [25]. The civic/gender officer said she was hired as a civic education and gender officer for a small project that REFOUND is taking part in: the facilitation of a Bong County Constitutional Review. This project involved soliciting suggestions from citizens in Jorquelleh and Kpaai districts. This project gave her some experience in facilitating these discussions on constitutional reform [26]. This project with the Constitutional Review Committee (CRC), with the Government of Liberia was set to run from March 2014 to end of July 2014

(5 months) [27]. The idea for REFOUND is that they coordinate and facilitate constitutional review processes in Bong County. This programme had its disadvantages though: due to delays in payment from the CRC it was not possible to pay the staff working on the project at the moment, according to the director. This was a negative effect of being involved as staff member in REFOUND and this could seriously affect staff capacity of REFOUND, since other staffs have also left the organisation after working for a long time as volunteers. REFOUND has tried to get new staff [14] but these problems in paying staff members still remain.

A final additional skill that was acquired was the tracking and monitoring of County concession funds [30]. The Sustainable Development Initiative (SDI) invited REFOUND, among other NGOs, to participate in this project, building on REFOUNDs contacts in the organisations focus areas. They gave REFOUND a short training in February 2013 on how to map these funds, how to monitor, and what tools can be used for this [31]. This experience was initiated through a programme that SDI was running in concessionary communities in order to monitor County Social Development Funds (CSDF) [32].

New strategic directions and programmatic approach

The director mentioned that a key issue he is working on relates to a new strategic plan and a new programmatic approach [28]. He said that he had been working on the new strategic plan to develop slightly new focus areas [29].

Three new focus areas of REFOUND are:

1. Economic development and gender
2. Policy advice
3. Democratic governance

Especially the issue within this strategic plan on democratic governance and policy advice focus of REFOUND is new. The new plan was developed in March 2014. The idea is that the directors' new strategic plan is heading for a more programmatic approach. He mentioned that he wanted to move from project planning to programme planning in order to get a new organisational direction and ensure financial sustainability. He also wanted to do this to get more structure in organisational management, especially regarding issues relating to payments and other management issues. Regarding the new focus areas for REFOUND, the director said that he had tried to incorporate experiences from the (small) other projects which REFOUND was engaged in. The Search for Common Ground project [24] and the project with the Constitutional Review Committee [27] have already been mentioned. REFOUND staff also said that they had been working with tracking and monitoring of county concession funds with SDI [32]. The REFOUND staff mentioned that this was interesting for them, giving them more ideas for their strategic plan, and gave them tracking and monitoring skills in county concession implemented projects.

Another project that influenced the formulation of the new strategic direction of REFOUND was the project with the National Elections Commission [33]. REFOUND was accredited by the National Elections Commission to conduct voter civic education in 2014. In order to do this the REFOUND staff received a short constitutional review training in 2013. Through that session they received license accreditation to do civic voter education. This programme will be for 3 months (leading up to the mid-term senate elections).

A key aspect in this new programmatic approach was the role of the board. The board had been reconstituted with new people whom were expected to do more in the areas of lobbying and fundraising. It was also expected that the board would now guide REFOUND in new policy formulation and strategic directions [34]. The board had been reconstituted, and five new people were elected to be part of the executive management [35]. The board has only recently (in 2014) been reconstituted and they seem to want to be more active, but they do not have any real activities ongoing yet. A former board member of REFOUND has become acting chairperson of the board. The reasons for this were that the previous board had overstayed its term [36], and it was felt by the director of REFOUND that they were not doing enough to help REFOUND to get new projects [37].

Also, being engaged in a wide network helped REFOUND to formulate its strategic directions [39].

Active networking in Bong County

An important part of the discussion in the development of the general causal map was that REFOUND is quite an active networking organisation in Bong County [38], and is well known as a Civil Society Organisation since 2005. This was illustrated on the workshop day: a group of UN representatives visited the REFOUND office to do a civil society assessment. The members of REFOUND stressed that every time there is a stakeholder meeting, REFOUND is actively part of it [39]. REFOUND has recently become the chair of the CSOs of Bong County since December 2013 [40]. The director said that REFOUND was elected to be chair by the present CSOs. REFOUND is an active member of this network. He felt that this role was important to REFOUND, as it gave them a better presence in the community, and enabled more possibilities for networking and engaging with other donors. One example of this networking is that every second Thursday different CSOs will come together to discuss on issues that are arising. After some probing REFOUND staff were able to mention a number of activities and projects that occurred due to networking in Bong County. The active networking is mainly due to the fact that REFOUND has made efforts as chair of CSOs in Bong County. However, when the evaluation team sought to find partners to interview about REFOUND it was not very clear who would be considered a close partner.

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