Executive summary

From its beginnings as a movement of concerned citizens in 1993 to an established NGO in 2003, MCIC has recorded a series of remarkable achievements in pursuit of its mission for the sustainable development of human resources in the national and international arena. With increasing confidence, MCIC has addressed a range of sectors and themes, as circumstances in Macedonia and in neighbouring countries have demanded. The organisation has kept its ultimate beneficiaries clearly in mind over the years. These include the most vulnerable and discriminated groups of the population such as women and children, refugees and displaced persons, impoverished villagers, the youth and the aged, the Roma and other minorities. In analysing their needs, promoting solutions and lobbying for improvements, MCIC's commitment and competence have generated substantial international resources and local goodwill.

In order to assess the performance of MCIC the evaluation team has faced the challenge of reviewing more than one thousand projects in 52 programmes – an investment in the development of Macedonia amounting to Euro 36 million. A key resource has been MCIC's own publication marking its 10th Anniversary. Another has been the body of external evaluations commissioned by MCIC over the years. The evaluation team also undertook field visits, interviewed staff (present and former) and donors, commissioned additional independent research in the villages, reviewed internal documentation and facilitated separate workshops for staff and other stakeholders. The evidence gained from this exercise allowed the team to reach the following main conclusions regarding MCIC's achievements.

What are the major MCIC performances?

A major, perhaps **the** major, achievement of MCIC has been the <u>practical demonstration of tolerance and dialogue in an environment where these values are constantly under threat.</u> It is impossible to assess how much MCIC has contributed to preventing outright civil war in Macedonia, but there is much evidence that MCIC's even-handed service to all communities that suffer the consequence of war has set a strong positive example of tolerance. MCIC's staff is multi-ethnic and the organisation has set a standard of cultural exchange and mutual understanding by which other NGOs, national and international, can measure themselves.

In terms of direct assistance to Macedonia's impoverished villages, MCIC has improved <u>the provision of water for more than 154.028 inhabitants</u>. MCIC technicians have demonstrated technical competence, especially in the design and implementation of small-scale water supply systems. At their best these projects have brought new life into decaying villages by encouraging young people to remain. MCIC has also piloted the provision of small loans to stimulate productivity in the villages. This has resulted in improved access to credit through the MCIC subsidiary – the Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation.

Maintenance of water supply systems remains a problem and MCIC's answer has been to strengthen the skills of its main counterpart in the villages, the units of local self-government (LSG). The overall effect of MCIC investments is that across the country units

of LSG are now more capable of delivering better services in their localities. There is still room for improvement amongst the LSG, especially in the important area of consulting and motivating local people to participate actively in village regeneration projects. There is also still much work to be done in improving basic infrastructure in the villages – piped water, for example, creates a demand for disposal of sewage and MCIC has also begun to develop appropriate sanitation systems with its partners.

MCIC can also demonstrate achievement through its capacity building programme which has <u>nurtured a number of NGOs over the years and strengthened their own performance.</u> Long term partner organisations, especially those working with women, children and the Roma, have benefited from MCIC training, financial resources and advice to become established institutions in their own right.

At the broader level of civil society, MCIC has frequently taken a <u>leading role in advocating for improved laws and tax benefits for NGOs</u>. MCIC is a very active publisher. It has a <u>good reputation for useful reference material</u> such as the Directory of NGOs and also for comment and analysis. MCIC has done much to promote a good image for the civil sector, and there is evidence that public opinion is beginning to accept the need for such a sector. Over three years the number of people attending a national level Fair for NGOs has steadily increased and MCIC has built on this success to initiate a Civic Platform of key NGOs for formulating alternatives on crucial strategies policies.

The measurement of impact is difficult for a number of reasons. It takes time to recognise sustainable achievements - between 3-5 years after completion of the programme. Data is often not available and memories of the events in question fade over time. Few programmes define their indicators of impact before starting, making it difficult to be precise about measuring change. It is also hard to attribute particular achievements to particular programmes. What other influences brought about the change, and would change have occurred anyway? In the Integrated Organisation Model (see page 2), the further the organisation moves along the continuum from outputs to impact, the stronger is the effect of actors and factors upon its capacity to influence outcomes through its programmes.

How do stakeholders perceive MCIC performances?

All stakeholders, donors, civil organisations and local self-government, expressed very positive appreciations of MCIC staff and their activities. In interviews or through questionnaires stakeholders are very hesitant to voice any criticism, even constructive criticism. Donors underline MCIC's contribution to peace promotion and successful interventions in humanitarian aid during the crises. Civil organisations appreciate the support to their respective organisation by MCIC, including more general lobby and advocacy activities leading to a strengthened civil society and improved profile of Civil Society Organisations. Local Self Government is very satisfied about water supply in their villages, even though some technical problems remain to be solved.

How has the organisation developed over the years?

MCIC has grown from 5 staff members in 1993 to 38 in 2003. Annual revenues were around 70 million Denar during the first 5 years and were 111 million in 2003. During the crises in 1999 and 2001 MCIC had 43 staff members and revenues rose to 792 million

Denars. This shows a flexible and dynamic organisation that is successful in adapting to the needs and demands of the context, from development to aid and back again from aid to development. In all these different situations the organisation has always proven to deliver good quality outputs. Among the main reasons for this are strong leadership, adequate systems, regular review of strategy and highly motivated staff.

What are major opportunities and threats MCIC will be confronted with?

Opportunities

MCIC is an internationally recognised organisation which will play a role in the preparations of Macedonia for accession to the European Union. Together with other (international) organisations MCIC is well placed to bid for EU funds that are earmarked for civil society in Macedonia and regionally.

MCIC is highly appreciated by such target groups as civil organisations and local self-government. MCIC stands to benefit from new policies for improving (economic) living conditions in villages and for addressing the marginalisation of minorities (The Decade of Roma). MCIC is very well positioned to contribute to development in these areas and also to their intended beneficiaries through intermediate organisations.

Threats

With diminishing funding by the ecumenical partners MCIC has to adjust to a new and harsher funding regime. The funding regime, procedures and priorities of these multilateral and bilateral donors will be different compared to those of the familiar "partners" in the Consortium. The relationship will be more distant with the European bureaucracies.

Macedonia is a country situated in a highly fragile region politically with internal and external risks for major ethnic tensions. This amounts to a threat to sustainable development and the effective contribution to it by MCIC.

What are major strengths and weaknesses of the organisation?

Major strengths are leadership and committed staff. MCIC has gained the experience to deliver adequate services and has built the capacity required for this. This implies the capacity to start from a well thought-through strategy and use financial and non-financial means to deliver services to target groups, be it water supply systems, credit (indirectly), information or training.

In their choices for strategy, tactics and actions MCIC staff and stakeholders still depend to a large degree on the leader who has guided MCIC over the years. The style of the leader is one of confronting staff and others and thereby triggering debate. Middle management does not take (or is not given) sufficient room to carry out managerial tasks effectively.
The organisation is very sensitive to criticism, also internally.

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What are the recommendations

It is recommended to MCIC to:

1. Prioritise the target groups (civil organisations, LSG) MCIC aims to strengthen and agree with them on expected results. These results should also reflect the improved situation of the beneficiaries served by these organisations. Monitoring achievements and impact is required, also for MCIC's learning ability.

2. Concentrate on strengthening civil society at all levels (from micro to macro) and using MCIC's (and MEDF's) different instruments (access to credit, technical support, training, information, etc.) for the same purpose.

3. Remain one organisation with a strong middle line management, shared strategies and practice, appropriate structure and updated and effective systems, including monitoring systems.

1.   Introduction

The Macedonian Center for International Cooperation (MCIC) is a civil society organisation that operates in the domain of sustainable development, awareness raising and social - humanitarian (basic) assistance. MCIC was founded in 1993 as a joint venture between local initiatives in Macedonia and Dutch Interchurch Aid.
The goal of the MCIC is the promotion, support and development of local, national and international initiatives for encouraging sustainable development of human resources in Macedonia and abroad.
Last year (2003) MCIC celebrated its 10th anniversary. In the past ten years MCIC implemented more than one thousand projects with an approximate budget of 36 million Euro. Now MCIC is facing a changing environment: the context is one of post-conflict reconstruction and development within extensive social, economic and administrative reform, or "transformation".
The long term evaluation (1993-2003) is intended to examine the success, positive effects or long-term changes initiated by MCIC interventions, and to explore and find out opportunities and threats, weaknesses and strengths.

> The expectation is that a common understanding of the past and its achievements will strengthen the capacity of the organisation to address new challenges in the future.

MCIC management has requested MDF and INTRAC to do an evaluation study in order to reflect on the performances of the organisation during the last ten years and guide MCIC in coping with the changing context in which it operates[1].
The evaluation was carried out during two missions, the first from 23rd to 29th of February and the second from 25th of April to 7th of May.
The first mission focused mainly on the internal organisation of MCIC with group- and individual interviews with staff but also with interviews with representatives of The Royal Netherlands Embassy, EAR, UNDP and the EC Delegation.
In order to asses the impact, achievements and output of MCIC programmes, the evaluation commissioned a survey in 12 villages from the Institute of Sociological, Political and Legal Research. As a result members of the Institute carried out 12 focus groups between the first and second mission.

In addition questionnaires were sent to 11 representatives of Local self – government (LSG) and 22 local community leaders. Other questionnaires were sent to 54 civil organisations and to representatives of agencies in the consortium for Macedonia.
The second mission had an external focus. The evaluation team conducted four more focus groups in villages. Finally, all MCIC's stakeholders (civil organisations, LSGs, individual experts, universities, religious groups) were invited to participate in a workshop "MCIC in the Past and Future" on 29th of April in Skopje[2].

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[1] TOR in annex 1
[2] See annex 2

The findings, conclusions and recommendations are based on facts collected through interviews, workshops, focus groups as well as data from previous programme and organisational evaluations, analysis, reports and other available documents.
The report is structured as follows: while chapter 2 addresses impact, achievements and output, chapter 3 explains influence of context on performances, chapter 4 focuses on organisational functioning, chapter 5 describes the changing context and chapter 6 outlines strategic orientations. Conclusions and recommendations are in chapters 7 and 8.

Methodology

The evaluation is based on the Integrated Organisational Model (IOM) which is used as a framework to assess the impact, achievements (outcome) and output of MCIC activities, and the context factors and actors as well as the internal MCIC organisation.
The IOM is an integrated (or integral) model to emphasize the inter-relationships of the different elements (outputs, inputs, internal aspects and environment) of an organisation: although the elements can to a certain extent be treated separately, they are all connected to each other and - ideally - in balance. When there is no or no clear balance (fit) between the different internal elements of the organisation or organisational unit, the organisation will not function optimally and the need for organisational change will be or become apparent (see picture below).

Figure: Picture IOM Model
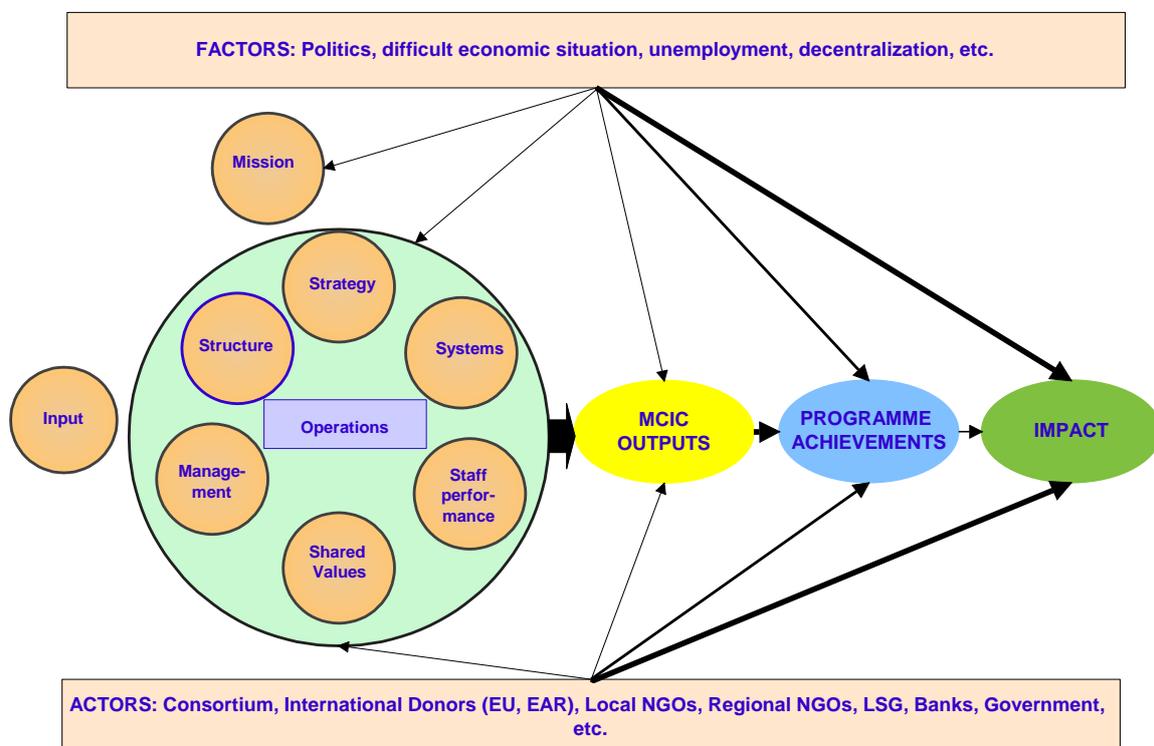
In the IOM model, the further the organisation moves along the continuum from outputs to impact, the stronger is the effect of actors and factors upon its capacity to influence outcomes through its programmes.

2. Performances

This chapter addresses the requirement of the TOR to measure impact. To do so the team developed a range of methods aimed at detecting where and how MCIC has contributed to lasting change in the lives of beneficiaries. The text moves between discussions of output and impact, but the main focus is on achievements. Making fine distinctions between outputs, achievement (result) or impact (change) does not always help analysis and therefore we assess performance from all three angles at the same time.

In order to assess MCIC performance over the ten years the team employed the following terminology[3]:
- output relates to implementation of the organisation's plan of activities. The evaluation of outputs involves the measurement of effort and efficiency;
- achievements (or effects) are closely linked to the objectives of the programmes of the organisation. The evaluation of *specific* objectives involves measuring effectiveness.
- the evaluation of *broader* objectives and goals involves measuring impact; the key indicator of impact is change, defined as sustainable improvements in people's lives.

The measurement of impact is difficult for a number of reasons. It takes time to recognise sustainable achievements - between 3-5 years after completion of the programme. Data is often not available and memories of the events in question fade over time. Few programmes define their indicators of impact before starting, making it difficult to be precise about measuring change. It is also hard to attribute particular achievements to particular programmes. What other influences brought about the change, and would change have occurred anyway?

2.1 Programme achievements 1993-2003

Achievements derive from outputs and are related to the original purpose of the programme. MCIC has implemented a great number of programmes between 1994-2003: 52 multi-year programmes with 1081 projects in all. Over this period MCIC has classified these projects and programmes by the following sectors:

1. Rural Development [4]
   Education and Health Care
2. Employment and Income Generation[5]
3. Civil Society and Democracy
4. Basic and Emergency Aid

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[3] See annex 13

[4] Rural Development was one of 4 basic programmes started in 1993. Through the years, management of the programme shifted to the Development Group, covering Roma programmes as well as water supply and sanitation.

[5] In 1998 MCIC set up an independent subsidiary, the Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation (MEDF), to manage the loans portfolio.

5. Cross sector
6. International programmes

The sectoral method of clustering makes it difficult to assess achievements from a target group perspective. A different way of clustering these programmes is by approach used to achieve the organisation's purpose in relation to different target groups. This analysis of MCIC's programmes suggests that it used the following basic approaches to address key categories of target group:

Table: Target group and beneficiaries with which MCIC and MEDF have worked

Approach	Target Group	Beneficiaries
Operational: - humanitarian - direct assistance	- NGOs - LSG - neighbourhood committees - initiative boards - banks & financial service agencies	- refugees - blockaded villagers - internally displaced - drought affected farmers, villagers - farmers, entrepreneurs
Organisational strengthening	- NGOs	- women - ethnic minorities - religious communities - people with disabilities - children and youth - pensioners - students - farmers, entrepreneurs - work in special areas (e.g. environment)
Civil society strengthening / advocacy and lobbying	- networks of organisations in civil society -network of organisations in SME sector	- individual civil organisations - Macedonian citizens

Graphic 1: Number of projects per approach (see Annex 2: List of projects per approach)
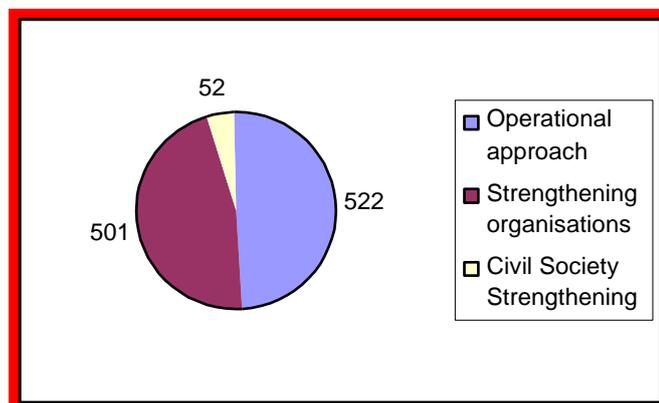
2.2 Operational approach

This category of achievement concerns programmes and projects implemented by MCIC in favour of individual beneficiaries using the following main approaches: humanitarian assistance and direct assistance. As can be seen in Graphic 1 the operational approach accounts for half of MCIC's output over the years.

Humanitarian assistance

MCIC's earliest years were largely occupied with humanitarian response to drought conditions in the villages and the consequences on people's lives when farmers left the land for the towns. In 1993 MCIC helped 2,296 farming households from 104 villages with fertilizer, seed and other essential inputs. In the towns efforts concentrated on job-creation and charitable support for the marginalized. Until 1999, during which time Macedonia enjoyed relative stability by modern Balkan standards, the emphasis moved to strengthening civil society through human rights, women's rights, inter-ethnic dialogue etc.

Between 1999-2003 MCIC implemented a total of 153 emergency aid projects in 8 programmes. In doing so it successfully demonstrated the capacity to respond to the two major Balkan emergencies directly involving Macedonia, while maintaining true to its mission to promote peace and neutrality. There is broad consensus around this statement with staff at all levels, with partners, with beneficiaries, within government and with international agencies.

Key humanitarian achievements:
- *clear and consistent stance on neutrality;*
- *total commitment of multi-ethnic staff/board;*
- *successful policy of first response;*
- *bold but realistic plans;*
- *effective and timely distribution of essential items;*
- *effective networking with local partners;*
- *commitment to co-ordination;*
- *smooth transition from relief to development.*

1999 Kosovo Crisis and the sudden arrival in Macedonian territory between March and July of 350,000 refugees. All MCIC staff immediately responded to the emergency and 20 new staff were taken on. These faced the challenge of learning how to meet urgent and large scale humanitarian needs in a situation of great uncertainty for Macedonia.

As well as providing timely support for the basic needs of refugees, MCIC confronted national prejudice and fear by campaigning against rising ethnic tensions. This courageous stand earned MCIC international recognition as a force for neutrality in the Balkans. The Albanian minority also recognised MCIC's rare stand against discrimination. This assured MCIC of a welcome when it decided to follow the refugees back to Kosovo in order to support their rehabilitation.

2000-2001 Rehabilitation in Kosovo. With the opening of a branch office in Kosovo in August 1999 MCIC became an International NGO for the first time. Supported financially by ACT International, it developed reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes in 43 villages of south-western Kosovo for around 48,700 beneficiaries of mixed ethnicity.

MCIC followed up this emergency support by encouraging the Kosovo staff to set up a local NGO when the MCIC office in Djakova was intended to close. The staff formed two NGOs. MCIC continued its presence through the two new established NGOs and one already formed local NGO – each acting in their appropriate areas of intervention. Two of the three NGOs have recently won financial support from the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) and shows signs of possible sustainability. As mentioned in the Evaluation done by MOKORO for the Kosovo programme, one of the most focused of these 4 NGOs - the Kosovo Development Centre (which has a mission to improve agro-husbandry in the villages) has steadily improved its technical support to villagers.

MCIC's achievements in Kosovo include:
- immediate assistance of tents and bedding to 171 returning families;
- provision of 136 prefabricated houses delivered before the onset of winter;
- repair of 350 houses in 11 villages and two towns;
- agricultural support: hens, fodder, tools and tractor repairs, and later;
- water supplies, seed for spring and autumn planting, and livestock for 160 families;
- support to the Association of Dairy Producers;
- transition to development through the creation of two Kosovar NGOs.

Drawbacks:

The evaluation of the Transition in Kosovo programme of October 2002 remarked:
- frustrations at the slow pace of negotiations for starting the programme;
- NGOs insufficiently focused;
- excessive financial dependence upon MCIC;
- MCIC was unrealistic in expecting these NGOs to become independent within less than two years.

MCIC managers with responsibility for work in Kosovo dealt with these programmatic drawbacks and by early 2004 the prospects for the partner NGOs were positive. This amounts to a significant achievement, based as it was on a positive combination of MCIC instruments: direct humanitarian assistance and organisational strengthening.

2001 Macedonian Crisis. MCIC's logistical capacities and above all its reputation for neutrality were required again when the long-feared outbreak of ethnic violence erupted on the borders with Kosovo in February. By August 120,000 people had moved away from the conflict area and become displaced. MCIC mobilised itself fully for the crisis, re-allocating 17 of its 43 staff to emergency operations and eventually recruiting a further 11 to implement an extensive relief programme. In February it issued a joint call for peace with 6 other NGOs, by March MCIC had developed an operational plan. In June it sent an emergency appeal to Action by Churches Together (ACT) and in July MCIC successfully proposed a National Humanitarian Co-ordination body, a body that brought together 11 national NGOs.

In its capacity as Co-ordinator of this body, MCIC's most memorable achievement was to mobilise a convoy of humanitarian food supplies for delivery and distribution in Lipkovo early in May, together with El Hilal. This dramatic event was publicised widely and brought MCIC to national attention. It also opened the way for direct support and rehabilitation to the blockaded villagers as well as those who fled the fighting and were internally displaced.

MCIC also went to great lengths to bring about the conditions for a joint appeal for peace by churches and religious communities. In a country where ethnic and religious identities are so closely linked, this united appeal for moderation had a crucial calming effect upon the population. Only MCIC had the national and international credibility to broker the agreement. Through its international networks it was able to provide neutral ground for signing the agreement – in Switzerland.

Between March 2001 and January 2002 MCIC implemented 22 emergency and relief projects totalling US$731,809. Approximately 55% of this amount was raised from 3 ACT appeals. Almost 80% of ACT's support was used in direct assistance to internally displaced persons (IDP) and to blockaded residents. The remainder was divided between water supply systems, information for IDPs and publicity and other initiatives to promote peace. UNHCR was the main contributor to the rest of MCIC's emergency programme, covering the costs of 13 projects of agricultural and livestock assistance in crisis areas, repair of houses and public infrastructure, psychosocial assistance to IDPs and information regarding the return of IDPs to their homes.

The beneficiaries included:
- 3,500 IDPs in collective centres and
- 10,000 IDPs in 2,130 host families supplied with 131 tonnes of foodstuffs;
- 20,000 blockaded residents supplied with 212 tonnes of foodstuffs.

IDPs also received materials with which to return home (mattresses, kitchen utensils, water containers, tarpaulins for leaking roofs etc.).

The evaluation of MCIC's emergency work in April 2002 concluded[6]:
- MCIC had efficient management and good accountability (reported by donors and NGO partners);
- the NGO Humanitarian Co-ordination body was perceived as a very good idea, and was effective;
- MCIC was particularly good at gaining access to areas where others (the government, the international community present in the country and other NGOs) could not;
- MCIC's success in getting food convoys through was recognised as an especially important achievement;
- MCIC was credited by major international agencies (ICRC and UNHCR) for having particularly good connections (with local NGOs) and an un-biased, multi-ethnic approach. No other comparable organisation exists in Macedonia.

Drawbacks:

Operations on the scale of the MCIC response to the Macedonian crisis cannot be expected to go to plan entirely. The following observations arise from the standpoint of the year 2004:

Questionable autonomy of local NGOs
MCIC's timely response was a result of its extensive network of NGOs in the conflict area. These became in effect the implementers of the various emergency programmes under MCIC co-ordination and funding. The Mokoro evaluation of April 2002 questioned whether

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[6] Evaluation of MCIC Emergency Programmes 2001 in Macedonia. Mokoro, April 2002

(as recipients of long term MCIC funding) they were sufficiently autonomous to make their own choices.

Disruption of long-term programmes

Local NGOs visited in 2004 have mixed feelings about their role in the 2001 emergency intervention. In one case, as with MCIC, it also disrupted the organisation and raised beneficiaries' expectations for long term handouts. In other cases it is apparent that implementing NGOs have not yet adjusted to the empowering methods of long-term development aid.

Direct assistance

The direct assistance approach is so-called because it also aims at improvements in the living conditions of individual beneficiaries through the direct intervention of MCIC staff and resources. During the evaluation period MCIC has implemented a total of 369 projects in 11 programmes that could be loosely described as direct assistance. Of these 220 are water supply and sanitation projects. The other major category of direct assistance is employment promotion, through the Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation.

Water Supply and Sanitation

Direct assistance is the major approach of MCIC in terms of number of beneficiaries and of investment and water supply is the main intervention. The purpose of these programmes is to provide reliable sources of safe drinking water to rural populations. In examining achievements the scale of the water supply operations are impressive:

- Projects implemented in 216 communities throughout Macedonia
- Population of 154,028 benefits
- Investments over the period: MKD 434,811,000 ($7.070.000)

According to local self-government (LSG) representatives and community leaders ('sources of information', see methodology) the positive performances of the water supply work are evident.

Achievements and impact of MCIC Water Supply Provision:
- *successful projects in most cases;*
- *water problems resolved after up to 30 years of difficulties;*
- *villagers participate in project design and implementation;*
- *villagers make cash and labour contributions;*
- *living conditions improved*
- *migration to town reduced;*
- *higher levels of individual and collective initiative;*
- *economic activities on the increase;*
- *village goes on to improve other infrastructure.*

The reasons for successful MCIC outputs for the projects are according to LSG and Local Community Leaders:

- *the project was implemented on time ;*
- *good organisation of joint activities;*
- *participation of all groups in the community activities/capacity building;*

- *the technical know-how when implementing water supply projects;*
- *high professional level of co-operation with MCIC;*
- *elimination of unnecessary administration and techno bureaucracy;*
- *transparent procedures in procurement.*

Although there is good evidence of successful achievements in the construction of village water supply systems, there are also very different perceptions according to who assesses the outcomes and how. The LSG representatives and the community leaders consistently report positive results, while the independent focus groups (verified by the evaluation team) found the reality much more complex. As is to be expected there are many complicating factors in the improvement of village water supplies in Macedonian villages and these include the following:

Complicating factors affecting the impact of water supply projects
(according to specialists of the Institute of Legal, Political and Sociological Research, Skopje):
- system does not always live up to local expectations;
- information is sometimes restricted to community and local government leaders;
- tendency of villages to divide along party political lines;
- individual families cannot or will not invest in domestic connections;
- users do not pay water charges - maintenance suffers;
- waste water causes sewage problems.

The Focus Group reports give evidence of all the situations mentioned above, yet the LSG (LSG) and community leader questionnaires are reluctant to acknowledge any difficulties. For example, the LSG questionnaire for the mountain village of Turalevo gives an optimistic picture:

> "the village… is in the vicinity of the regional road, is supplied with electricity and now water. The people are no longer migrating to the towns. The cattle and poultry fund was re-instated and also people are cultivating different fruits and vegetables for their own use, and what remains is sold on the market".

The Focus Group report indicates that the system, which was installed in 1995/6, does not provide drinking water for lack of a filter at the pump station. This does not however appear to bother the population, which expressed itself very satisfied.

Similarly the local community leader of Dolna Charlija reports that "the water supply in the village has been resolved. It contributed to better organisation of the citizens and joint active participation". In reality only 5 out of the 50 households are directly connected to the system and the village is seriously divided along political party lines.

Finding

Conclusively determining impact is not possible in the circumstances. It is clear that MCIC's efforts have yielded substantial benefits to large numbers of villagers who previously lacked reliable access to water – at least in their street if not in their houses. At the same time MCIC has introduced participatory methods in a systematic manner, holding out the possibility of sustainable water supply services through greater investment transparency, civil engagement and cost recovery. It is also reasonable to suppose that taking the infrastructural needs of neglected villages seriously is likely to have improved their prospects and arrested outward migration to some extent.

However, with a staff of only 3, MCIC's Development Department is inevitably obliged to delegate. Even in direct assistance mode this is good practice but the local authorities and community leaders may not always have placed as much importance upon participation as MCIC. The result in these cases at least is that insufficient attention is paid to community mobilisation and the development process in the village is not pursued to its full potential.

Given the problems facing Macedonia's impoverished and drought prone villages, the sheer wealth of MCIC experience in rural and suburban areas may prove to be its most lasting contribution to infrastructure development. Objectively analysed from the perspective of what works and why, this experience could usefully be made available to local self government and community groups in the form of practical manuals, supported by MCIC training and consultancy. This would involve further strengthening the 2001-2003 programme Enabling Communities and Institutions, which focused on building the capacities of the organisations of local self-government

Enterprise Development

MCIC has been involved in boosting the rural economy through a range of programmes since 1994. These initiatives were systematised and scaled up in 1998 through the Macedonian Enterprise Development Foundation (MEDF), a subsidiary of MCIC that is mainly financed by The Netherlands with a grant of approximately 9 million Euro.

The purpose of MEDF is to contribute to reducing poverty through promoting self-employment and the development of small businesses. It does not implement loans but works through carefully selected banks and trade intermediaries (for farmers). The provision of credit for small-scale entrepreneurs in Macedonia is severely under-supplied and MEDF aims to innovate and set an example for others to take in meeting the need for credit, especially in rural areas. MEDF provides non-financial services (promotion, training and support) and a revolving fund for three types of loans through four licensed lending institutions, mainly banks. It has identified three specific target groups: individual farmers, unemployed persons, micro and small entrepreneurs and their employees. The three types of loans are:
- loan type 1: for individual farmers and micro-enterprises through trade intermediaries
- loan type 2: for small enterprises – up to 20 employees
- loan type 3: for micro enterprises

MEDF started work in 1998 in the Western and Central parts of Macedonia but has since expanded to the entire country. So far nearly 2,000 beneficiaries have shared a total of over 7.5 million Euro in the proportions and types of activity that follow[7].

Typical examples of MEDF beneficiaries include:

A farmer from Veles who works 3 hectares of land with an annual turnover of 10-20,000 Euro. He has between 8-10 employees, mainly family members and supplies vegetables to the Agrova fruit and vegetable-drying factory. He has borrowed 300,000 MKD over 4 years at 7.25% with a one-year grace period. He uses the loan to balance cash flow and purchase inputs. 1,429 individual farmers and micro-entrepreneurs of this type have

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[7] The exact figures are disbursals of 7.668.563 EUR to 1,918 beneficiaries (source MEDF, October 2004).

benefited from approximately 1.78 EUR. They amount to 75% of borrowers and consume 23.5% of lending.

A family fish farm in Tetovo is an example of the small enterprise type. The loan enabled the owner to double annual production from 10 to 20 tons. There are 103 beneficiaries in this category who have benefited from approximately 3.94 million EUR. They form 5% of borrowers and consume 51.5% of lending

There are 386 beneficiaries of the micro-enterprise loan type. They have benefited from approximately 1.33 million EUR. They form 20% of borrowers and have consumed 25% of lending.

Repayment rates are reportedly amongst the best in the country and MEDF's special arrangement with the on-lending banks means that the banks take the risk of non-performing loans. This guarantees that the MEDF capital will revolve unless one of its banks collapses. This has unfortunately happened once, though the MEDF loss was limited to around 2% of its fund.

The 2001 external evaluation of MEDF concludes that it has:
- successfully launched an innovatory scheme for attracting specific target groups into the financial system;
- become financially viable and is well managed;
- survived the collapse of one of its banks;
- not been adversely affected by the 1999 and 2001 emergencies.

2.3   Strengthening organisations

This category of intervention achieves MCIC's aims by strengthening different kinds of organisations through a number of instruments, such as funding, training, information and advice. Unlike the rural development programme, which largely reaches villages through LSG, this approach focuses on NGOs. Strengthening the capacities of NGOs has involved MCIC staff in continuous effort from 1994 until the present. Over this period it has implemented a total of 17 programmes with 501 projects.

Graphic 1 shows the importance of the strengthening organisations approach to MCIC's achievement. It accounts for almost half of projects over the decade.

MCIC's purpose in strengthening organisations is to achieve its mission indirectly through sectoral partnerships, preferably of organisations managed by the beneficiaries themselves, whether for example disabled persons, ethnic minorities (e.g. Roma) or women. MCIC describes this approach as "indirect implementation". The potential advantage for MCIC is that it can achieve much greater impact than it would if it acted directly.

Summary of findings

- *MCIC's approach of strengthening organisations is a necessary condition of achieving its mission through the indirect implementation method.*
- *Partner organisations are very satisfied with MCIC's support, especially the financial instruments.*

- *MCIC's training and capacity building activities are not always tailored to individual needs of the organisations. Organisations need tailor made (not off the shelf) approaches which are specifically geared to the individual needs of the organisation.*
- *In the absence of verifiable indicators it is difficult to assess objectively the degree to which the MCIC approach and activities have resulted in stronger partner organisations.*
- *Current monitoring and evaluation systems used by MCIC and its partners do not provide information on the impact of programmes for different beneficiaries.*

An Assessment of Training Achievements

The most intensive periods for training were in the year 2000 when MCIC trained 327 participants from 78 NGOs and in 2002 when it trained 296 participants from 89 organisations. MCIC has developed over the decade a very broad range of training courses.

Training at this level of intensity was not sustainable for a number of reasons, including:
- diminishing demand owing to competition from other training providers. This encouraged MCIC to explore possibilities of building a market for training in the south-east Europe region (see Capacity Building Network below)
- insufficient time and resources for preparing and adapting new curricula. Although MCIC staff received extensive training themselves during the periods 1996-1998 and 2000-2003, they were too heavily engaged in training and project implementation.

Table 1. Number of trainings and participants

Training	Trainings	Participants	Men	Women
Project Cycle Management (PCM)	52	901	533	368
Institutional Development and Organisational Strengthening (ID/OS)	29	346	141	205
Administrative Work (AW)	9	144	62	82
Programme Management (PM)	2	33	12	21
Gender Relations and Development (GRD)	16	166	4	162
On-the-job training	2	16	4	12
Basic Skills	18	208	79	129
Public Relations	4	54	19	35
Preparing an application	7	106	72	34
Tailored training on Action Plans	2	26	0	26
Training for Trainers	1	15	1	14
Human Resources Management	1	17	6	11
Visits to positive examples	1	16	16	0
Inter-cultural learning	1	15	8	7
Total	**145**	**2063**	**957**	**1106**

An evaluation of the NGO Strengthening Programme in 2002 suggested that MCIC review and prioritise its core subjects, developing in greater depth those for which there was highest demand and dividing them between basic and advanced modules. It also recommended that organisational support give more attention to the particular needs of specific clients through a tailor-made approach to training and organisational

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development. The evaluators also raised the concern that the demand for training may be artificially high because MCIC was often engaged in funding NGOs which attended the training. The fear was that these organisations might feel they were expected to attend the training as a condition of project or programme funding.

By the time of the 10 year evaluation many of these recommendations had been implemented. Participants in the April 2004 workshop, MCIC in the Past and Future, commented that the training provided by MCIC had indeed resulted in positive changes, such as strengthening the supply of skilled volunteers for their organisations.
The questionnaire survey of 21 Civil organisations in April 2004 was generally complimentary of MCIC's training activities. It was seen as achieving better functioning organisations and establishing a pool of local trainers.

An assessment of organisational support

Organisational support is an MCIC mechanism aimed at strengthening and establishing key NGOs in sectors of importance to MCIC and to the civil sector in Macedonia. It offers core funding as well as intensive capacity building over a 3-year period. It is a high cost mechanism and so is limited to few, select organisations. The average contribution to organisational support to each NGO is approximately 15.000 Euro over the period of three years.

The exception is Kosovo where the NGOs received much larger amounts of organisational support to take account of the cost of rehabilitation (350.000 Euro). In Macedonia organisational support was long term and developmental in approach while in Kosovo it was post emergency in approach.

MCIC and its subsidiary MEDF have designed and carried out 7 organisational support programmes with 17 organisations between 2000 and 2005. 5 of these programmes provide support to 7 women's organisations: 4 in the provinces, 3 in Skopje; 1 for multi-cultural understanding; 1 ethnic Roma NGO; 1 children's organisation; and one provincial information centre.

Individual NGOs mentioned the following as most appreciated activities/programmes[8]:
1. *capacity building of women NGOs;*
2. *education of young Roma;*
3. *pages of mutual understanding;*
4. *capacity building of organisations including financial support;*
5. *activities related to developing human resources/training and transfer of experience;*
6. *support of non-financial services.*

An evaluation of these programmes in October 2003 found the programmes to be effective, in terms of MCIC's capacity to deliver the programmes as well as in terms of the organisation's capacity to use the opportunity to strengthen themselves. However the evaluation was less certain regarding sustainable impact. This is not to say that the organisations made no improvement - many of them are clearly amongst the most active and strongest organisations in the country.

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[8] Source: Annex 7 – summary of questionnaires for civil organisations

But none of the programmes had formally established objective criteria for assessing whether the organisations were indeed stronger or more "capacitated" after the MCIC support than before. Without such indicators, it is difficult to provide effective monitoring or to make appropriate adjustment of inputs in order to meet agreed targets. The suspicion is that, despite rigorous application procedures, at least some organisations applied for the organisational support with a stronger interest in the core funding than in the capacity building support.

A clearer definition of what constitutes a strong organisation in the Macedonian context would improve the prospects for positive achievements in this respect. It is important that assessment of organisational capacity takes into account context. Key indicators might include: a strategic plan in place; outputs in line with the mission; annual published report and audit; a functioning board, and secured inputs. It is interesting to note that NGOs attending the Stakeholders Workshop rated MCIC support for publishing annual reports as one of MCIC's most useful approaches to strengthening organisations.

Several of the organisations which have worked with MCIC over five years and more have achieved a number of the key indicators mentioned above and are clearly demonstrating enhanced capacities. Staff also report that some of the most recent programmes (2003 on) include very stringent baseline assessments. The more extreme examples of these may be exaggerated. Implementers of the USAID funded Balkan Youth Programme, (MCIC amongst them) are required to carry out McKinsey Organisational Assessments (with upwards of 40 indicators) on each applicant.

The newest of these programmes, Strengthening Strategic Partners, offers an opportunity for MCIC to tighten its conditions in this respect without going to extremes. However MCIC may also need to reflect upon the geographic distribution and selection of target groups for this new programme. A preliminary analysis reveals that 5 out of 7 of the NGOs are based in Skopje; 6 out of 7 are ethnic Macedonian; no Roma NGO is represented; none address rural development or poverty reduction; and 3 out of 7 address civil awareness.

Programmes of key target groups:

Roma organisations

MCIC identified Roma as a target group in 1994 and has implemented two major programmes in their support. These interventions have primarily sought to address Roma children's lack of access to education and to improve Roma youth's participation in the labour market. Both of these are very low by Macedonian standards. MCIC has reached over 7,000 youth and children in schools in the bigger cities of Macedonia, starting with direct assistance for school refurbishment and school materials and progressing in later years to more complex interventions addressing the quality of education and the relationship between Roma and the school system.

A recent evaluation of the ongoing Applied Education Programme (which works with 3,000 primary class children in 15 schools) finds that It is not possible to assess how far MCIC has achieved its objectives of integrating Roma children and youth into school and society. The reason is the lack of baseline data and impact monitoring – a major handicap in many similar programmes in the region, where official statistics are unreliable for many reasons. Despite these constraints however, the evaluation in question suggests that

"signs of progress are visible in both awareness creation and in the improvement of relations between schools and communities"[9].

Over the years MCIC has made a substantial contribution to strengthening the capacity of Roma NGOs in Skopje, Gostivar and Kumanovo where Roma populations are greatest. MCIC has provided core funding for some of these NGOs and has provided project funding to all of them at different stages. The relationship is often a close one. For example leaders of the Roma Humanitarian and Volunteer Society Mesescina in Gostivar serve on the MCIC Board and in 2001 the Roma organisation co-ordinated MCIC's humanitarian work implemented by 15 NGOs in the Gostivar region. As a result of the long process of strengthening Roma organisations, MCIC started implementing the Citizen Counselling Centre programme which is led by Mesescina, together with six other local Roma organisations.

During this long process MCIC and its Roma NGO partners have found that advocacy and lobbying have potential for raising awareness of the prejudice and discrimination that underlie Roma marginalisation. They reason that individual projects and one-off programmes - however well-intentioned - are unlikely to make a lasting impact on Roma social exclusion. For example, in the programme within the education sector there is a substantial risk of the segregation of Roma children rather than their gradual integration. A further problem is that few teachers will continue to work with the Roma children at their current enhanced level without MCIC's material inputs.

Civil actors such as MCIC and its Roma NGO partners are in a good position to learn from past experience in order to develop a long term, integrated strategy. This strategy should include government partners and direct consultations with the Roma themselves. It should be informed by regional trends and aim to contribute to and benefit from the Roma Decade.

Women's organisations

Owing to the marginalized position of large numbers of women in Macedonia's patriarchal communities, MCIC has made special efforts to strengthen women's organisations. Health education and gender education are the main areas of work sponsored by MCIC, beginning in 1996 with a health education programme in 10 rural villages organised by the Union of Albanian Women of Macedonia. MCIC followed up this work by developing strong contacts through its training and project funding work with a further 7 women's organisations with operations at both national and provincial levels. A positive external evaluation in 2001 confirmed the commitment of the NGOs to the programme and their desire to continue it.

MCIC redesigned the programme and funded it from its core resources between 2002-2004. As with other MCIC programmes it is not possible to identify the changes brought about in the lives of the beneficiaries themselves for lack of monitoring and evaluation criteria. However there is evidence that the programmes have strengthened the capacities of 8 important women's NGOs through networking, information exchange and the self-management of their joint programmes.

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[9] Mid Term Evaluation of the Programme "Applied Education for Young Roma" Macedonia *December 2003*

A specially positive achievement is that the NGOs take responsibility in turn to edit their respected magazine "Perspectives". Through questionnaires undertaken by the 2004 evaluation, partners credit MCIC more broadly with improving the status and position of women through the development of the gender concept in Macedonia. In this respect an important achievement of MCIC is having established a pool of local trainers on gender and development.

Disabled persons Organisations

Although the disabled are both beneficiaries and target group for MCIC it is difficult to assert that MCIC has made a strong, direct contribution to Macedonia's disability movement. Nor would it claim such an achievement. Certainly MCIC has supplied a range of instruments (training, organisational development, organisational support (funding) to individual disability organisations at national and local levels. The evaluation team was not however able to assess the impact of these initiatives.

Programmes with new target groups

Drug users

In 2003 MCIC started a new initiative aimed at raising awareness of the health needs of drugs users and, indirectly, of HIV Aids victims - a taboo subject in Macedonia. In this work, MCIC supports the Association of Social Workers who run a help line and gather and distribute information on these subjects. It is too early to assess achievements but it is a good sign that MCIC continues to identify new needs and explore ways of addressing them.

The NGOs, donors, local authorities and others attending the stakeholders workshop in April 2004 made their own assessment of the effectiveness of MCIC's programme interventions as follows:

Stakeholders workshop

Most effective interventions of MCIC were:
1. *water supply and sanitation programmes, including training in maintenance;*
2. *strengthening Civil Society/ improving the profile of CSO;*
3. *organisation of NGO Fair;*
4. *inclusion of Roma in educational process;*
5. *organising debates and proposing changes to the law on NGOs;*
6. *financial support to the publication of annual reports;*
7. *organisation of civil society and sustainability award.*

2.4   Strengthening civil society

In its current form, this is a relatively new programme approach for MCIC. Graphic 1 shows the small number of Civil Society Strengthening (CSS) projects at the societal level in the MCIC portfolio, compared with the other two approaches. This is an extraordinary indicator of achievement, when the impact of MCIC's CSS work at societal level is taken into consideration.

Components of CSS have always existed within MCIC. For example, with a view to fostering the enabling environment for NGOs, MCIC had already sponsored public debates on the legal framework in 1995. MCIC as a rule tries to combine approaches and it is very effective in explaining to the public the values and principles that lie behind its direct action. In this way it maximises impact.

MCIC goals in the realm of wider society are achieved through networking, lobbying, and awareness raising and rewarding significant individual achievement in these fields. The main approaches used by MCIC staff and partners are advocacy and campaigns, building civil coalitions and providing information.

One of MCIC's greatest contributions to the strengthening of Civil Society lies in its constant promotion of dialogue and understanding over conflict. It has achieved this by developing and maintaining its own status as a "unique platform for dialogue and co-operation of various interest groups in Macedonia, which find their own space in MCIC"[10]. Despite the great strains between its own staff's ethnic communities, the organisation has shown its neutrality and impartiality in word and deed in the country's most difficult moments. This is a rare achievement in the Balkans. All stakeholders are aware of it and appreciate it: government, donors, partner NGOs, media, villagers and so on.

Advocacy and Campaigns

NGO Law

MCIC followed up its reputation as an advocate for the civil sector with the publication of a manual on the new NGO law of 1998. As the law required NGOs to re-register, many needed guidance in the procedures and MCIC held a seminar titled "Application of the Law on Citizen Associations and Foundations". Also in 1998 MCIC first organised public debates urging amendments to the law's fiscal provisions, which were unfavourable to NGOs. This remains a key demand of the sector and participants of the MCIC Stakeholders Workshop gave a high priority to MCIC lobbying through public debates and other means.

Campaign - Whole is when there is everything

MCIC made good use of a child's description of integrated Macedonia to promote tolerance between ethnic communities in the months leading up to, during and after the Kosovo crisis. The project was focused primarily on young people, especially those in multi-ethnic secondary schools and areas populated by various ethnic groups. The campaign included TV and radio spots, billboards and a 20-minute documentary.

Altogether, MCIC estimates that the message of tolerance reached 20,000 secondary school students. It then followed up the campaign with pilot projects on dialogue, tolerance and human rights with the intention of opening a new "dialogue and tolerance" sector within MCIC. This was also a recommendation of the external evaluation of 2000. However this was never implemented. Instead MCIC developed its concept of dialogue and tolerance through work with media, churches and education. Initiatives that emerged from this concept (both in 2003) include the Bridging Religions programme and the Pages for Mutual Understanding programme.

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[10] MCIC 10 Years, Message from the Executive Director, Saso Klekovski, 2003

The campaigns can be judged a successful contribution to the promotion of peace and the prevention of inter-community violence. In the event there were no major outbreaks of violence between the Macedonian and Albanian communities in 1999 and 2000. At a time when the communities were seriously polarised, the impact of a firm and principled public stand by a high profile national organisation, should not be under-estimated.

Coalition building

Forum of civil society (NGO Fair)

Originated by MCIC and implemented with a small group of leading Macedonian NGOs, the success of this civil society strengthening initiative is demonstrated by its becoming an annual event with increasing participation of NGOs, members of the public, government and business.

- In 2001 144 NGOs and media representatives from every region of the country first assembled in Skopje to show the public achievements of the NGO sector. MCIC also took the opportunity to organise round tables to discuss issues of common interest;
- In 2002 attendance by NGOs increased to 199 and the fair attracted more than 6,000 visitors. 31 topics of interest were addressed during the Forum discussions;
- In 2003 there were 205 citizen's organisations including NGOs, private businesses and the government bodies involved in EU integration. 10,000 visitors came to the exhibition. For the first time regional NGOs attended - from Bulgaria, Montenegro, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and Slovenia. Also participating for the first time were representatives from Macedonia's religious communities. The European Agency for Reconstruction contributed to costs for the second time.

Civic Platform

The NGO Fair has succeeded in raising public awareness of the positive contribution of civil society organisations to development in Macedonia and identifying issues of sectoral interest for advocacy.

It is not however suited for planning and carrying out sustained policy development or advocacy . or this MCIC lobbied for the creation of a body of established CSOs to pursue the advocacy agenda. This was finally achieved in March 2004 following skilful negotiations by MCIC, which was careful not to be seen as the co-ordinator.

The Civic Platform offers great potential for linking civil society organisations. Essentially this initiative will be judged according to effectiveness in influencing government and the EU integration process in coming years.

Regional capacity building network

In 2001 MCIC initiated the concept of regional networking between training and support NGOs in the Balkan region. The purpose was to exchange skills and jointly explore the future regional market for training and other consultancy work. 13 organisations of the new "Hub" met for the first time in April 2001 in Ohrid to prepare a plan of action according to training needs.

In 2003 an evaluation of activities undertaken to date - including the second meeting of Hub members in Mavrovo, Macedonia - identified the need to articulate a distinct vision for

the Hub's activities, given the growing number of networks in the region. It was also clear that MCIC would need to provide on-going co-ordination until the initiative developed its own structures and sustainability.

In 2003 and 2004 the consortium partners started to develop an ambitious inter-regional capacity building programme, based in part on the Hub's vision for co-operation between regional capacity builders. A vision began to emerge for strengthening regional dialogue while advocating for appropriate EU integration instruments.

It is too early to expect results from the network's ambitious agenda. However it demonstrates the growing confidence and determination of civil actors in the Balkans to play its part in setting the social and security agenda for the Balkans. The 2003 external evaluation highlighted the potential of the network, pointing to its "uniqueness in the region … (as an)… alliance of CSOs on the one hand and church-related/oecumenical organisations on the other hand".[11]

Information provision

MCIC is a highly competent producer of quality information on a range of topics of interest to the civil sector. Both content and presentation are strong. The organisation's learning is quickly analysed and transferred to other stakeholders. As a result MCIC's publication record is impressive and includes:
- 7 editions of the Directory of Civil Organisations, with data on 1,509 Macedonian NGOs;
- a Directory of Units of Local Self Government with data on 108 of the 124 Municipalities;
- NGO Bulletin 1996-2001, followed by
- Civil World, now in its fourth year of publication;
- Civic Practices - a new publication for sharing Macedonian understanding of development;
- pages for mutual understanding, an initiative designed to promote objective reporting of inter-ethnic events and issues;[12]

MCIC achievements in the information sector include:
- regularity of publication, with materials available in electronic and print form;
- accurate and updated information on NGOs;
- gradual development from news items to analysis of development lessons;
- focus on impartiality;
- good relations with the media and individual journalists.

Donors appreciate the following achievements of MCIC[13]:
1. substantial contribution to peace promotion;
2. successful intervention in humanitarian aid in crises in Kosovo, Macedonia;
3. effective contribution to development of civil society;
4. able to act as a representative of Macedonia in crisis in Kosovo and Macedonia;
5. strong capacity to adapt itself (for example to crisis, to donors);
6. strong core structure and cadre of motivated and skilled staff.

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[11] External Evaluation of the Capacity Building Hub, INTRAC, 2003:2

[12] The method is innovative. The editors chose a specific event and then compare the wat journalists from different communities have reported the event and the reactions and issues arising from it.

[13] Source: survey of donors, April 2004

Specific Recommendations related to performances

- o Revise MCIC monitoring and evaluation mechanisms so that they can take account of programme achievements and impact as well as outputs.

- o Be especially sensitive to local needs for organisational growth and development when functioning in the humanitarian or direct assistance approaches – particularly when MCIC funding of local organisations may limit their autonomy.

- o Consider capitalising on the wealth of MCIC experience in the organisational aspects of providing water supply and other infrastructure by researching and developing MCIC courses, materials and consultancy capacity for local self-government and other local actors.

- o Continue the process already begun by MCIC of prioritising core training subjects in the light of demand as well as tailoring training and consultancy to the specific needs of client groups.

- o Maintain and strengthen MCIC's pioneering work in building the profile, effectiveness and accountability of civil society.

3. Influence of context on performances

Over the years MCIC has shown to react quickly on emerging issues in the context, be it of a natural (drought), social, political or economic nature. It reacts by mobilising its staff and resources to give humanitarian aid, it starts water supply programmes to serve villagers who live in miserable conditions and have no water in their homes, it designs programmes to contribute to investments in small enterprises as the engine for employment creation, it sets up organisational and institutional strengthening programmes to create a strong civil society as an actor not to be ignored in the public arena and in the development debate. MCIC has a very good capacity to adapt itself to the context and does it in a dynamic and swift manner, it is action oriented.
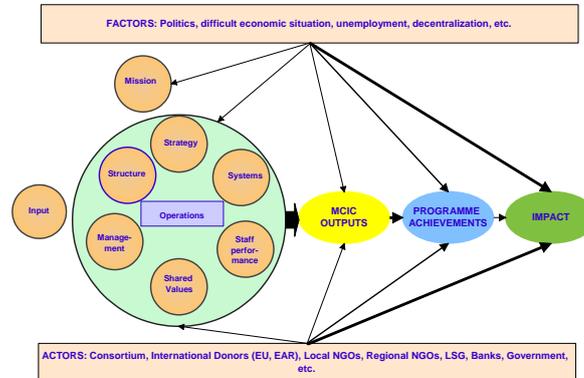
The down side of these swift reactions to external changes is that many programmes of different nature are created (and continue for some years or die) leading to an organisational functioning that is characterised by highly motivated staff but working in (too) many different fields in a not yet structured or systemised manner (efficiency might be in danger). Also quick reactions lead to an organisation in which the continuity of activities is confronted with the spontaneity of getting new things done.

Illustrations of these statements:
- deteriorating climatic conditions resulting in acute water shortages lead to the creation by MCIC of the rural development and water supply programmes (1994);
- international donors becoming interested in Macedonia lead to the creation of Civil Society Support, which is also a policy of these donors (1994);
- when government debates issues on NGOs and their role vis-à-vis the government MCIC gets involved in the public debate (amongst others on the law for citizens associations) and issues NGO bulletin and NGO directory(1995/1996/1998);
- when inter-ethnic relations deteriorated in 1998 MCIC organised a summer school for youth dialogue;
- when the economy deteriorates and unemployment rises employment promotion programmes (1994) were started and a fund for giving loans to enterprises (MEDF) was established as an independent organisation in 1998.
- When, because of the Kosovo crisis 350.000 refugees' influxed Macedonia in 1999, MCIC quickly reacted and gave support for basic needs of refugees as well as establishing a regional branch office in Kosovo. The number of staff rose by 24, and doubled overall. The implementation of existing programmes was delayed as well as a decline of expenditures for these programmes;
- when calm reigns once more in 2000, the direct revenues and costs decrease drastically but the operational expenses increase. MCIC returns to the more developmental and capacity building activities;
- however when socio-economic relations deteriorate and a conflict arises in Macedonia in 2001, MCIC takes a leading role in showing its neutral position while actively distributing humanitarian aid.

4. Organisational functioning

Figure: IOM model

FACTORS: Politics, difficult economic situation, unemployment, decentralization, etc.

Mission

Strategy

Structure

Systems

Input

Operations

Manage-ment

Staff perfor-mance

Shared Values

MCIC OUTPUTS

PROGRAMME ACHIEVEMENTS

IMPACT

ACTORS: Consortium, International Donors (EU, EAR), Local NGOs, Regional NGOs, LSG, Banks, Government, etc.

The functioning of the organisation is seen from the perspective of output, programme achievements and impact. Focus here is on the programme achievements. Outputs are very much direct results of MCIC operations and are less influenced by factors and actors. Programme achievements are the result of many interventions and contributions from various parties involved. There are also more factors beyond the control of MCIC. Therefore MCIC has less influence on the programme performances and the programme purposes that they reflect. With regard to impact this MCIC influence is even less and the beneficiaries may only experience sustainable changes if the context allows them to use the acquired services or capacities.

The internal organisation composed of strategy, inputs, management, staff performances, etc., has decreasing effect on these outputs, achievement and impact. But also the analysis of performances should have an influence on the internal organisation. To what extent these internal aspects were well organised and integrated is the subject of this chapter.

4.1 From the perspective of output

MCIC is an effective organisation in delivering outputs such as training, grants, information, distribution of goods, etc. All "clients" do highly appreciate these services provided to them. The mission did not assess the quality of the outputs but bases its findings on existing programme evaluation reports and from the various questionnaires received from the "clients" of MCIC.

4.2 From the perspective of programme achievements

The perspective of programme achievements means to look at the question of effectiveness (doing the right thing). The question to be answered in this chapter is:

How was the internal organisation functioning and adapted to the different and numerous programmes in which MCIC was involved?

Operations

The type of operations in which MCIC was involved varied enormously, e.g.:
- crisis operations;
- providing assistance to enterprises;
- implementation of water supply projects;
- strengthening of organisations;
- organising events and public debates;
- etc.

In crisis situations MCIC has proven to be able to organise complex and politically sensitive activities effectively and efficiently. Also, after these large-scale activities, MCIC has shown to be able to re-adjust itself and concentrate again on developmental activities. This shows great adaptability, flexibility and drive of management and staff of the organisation.

Many new programmes were developed in response to needs of target groups. Comparing planning and realisation over the years shows a level of achievement of over 80%.

*Table: Number of projects per sector in the period 1994-2003*

Sector/year	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total
Water Supply and Sanitation	20	47	38	17	18	20	21	25	37	44	**287**
Health and Education	5	11	7	13	27	12	42	11	35	25	**188**
Employment and Income Generation (incl. Rural Development)	14	11	10	8		13	15	3	13	3	**90**
Civil society and Democracy	44	39	45	27	35	29	56	38	75	71	**459**
Basic and Emergency Aid	6	-	-	-	-	16	13	12	9	1	**57**
Total	**89**	**108**	**100**	**65**	**80**	**90**	**147**	**89**	**169**	**146**	**1081**

The number of projects carried out each year is largely influenced by external factors such as the crisis in Kosovo (1999) and Macedonia (2001). Those years the basic and emergency projects were most important and existing and newly employed staff of MCIC were all involved implementing these programmes. Once the crisis is over MCIC returns to the regular development activities.

Different type of operations require different skills and different organisational set-up. MCIC plays various roles and offers various services: provider of grants, consulting organisations, distributing of goods, provider of training activities, of product information material, and of development information material, organiser of events and lobbying activities, etc. The different roles MCIC is playing are reflected in the organisational set up. Linkages between these groups is essential for delivery of adequate services to the target group but do not seem to happen frequently and in a structured way.

Structure

Figure: organogram
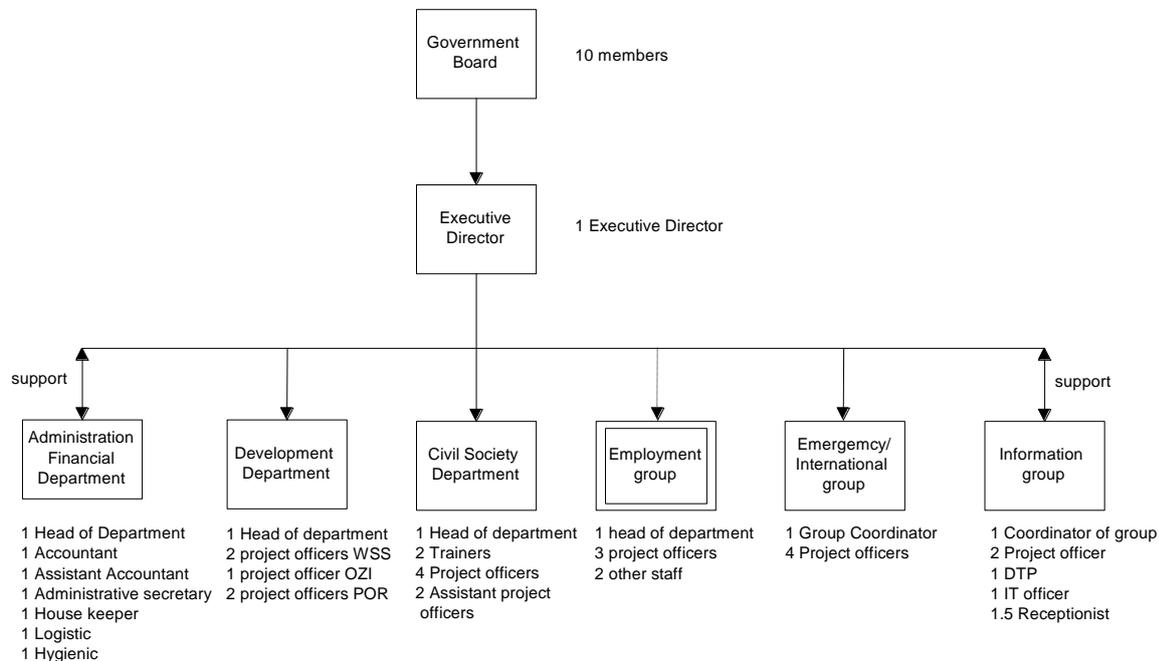
Clustering of the activities in the first groups/departments (2002) is done more or less according to the current approaches and target groups of MCIC. The "group for emergency aid, cross sectoral and international programmes" seems to be the residual category, clustering activities that do not easily fit into the first three categories.

The Development Department deals with different target groups (villagers and Roma) and different types of projects (water supply and education).
(MEDF) is a legally constituted Foundation for which MCIC performs management, professional and administrative operations (on a contract basis) through its Employment and other groups or departments. .
The Civil Society Group enables the development of civil society and supports the strengthening of individual organisations.

The activities in all these departments are training, advice, funding, information and advocacy. The departments serve different target groups but there is overlap as well. This is the logic of all divisions of activities in an organisational structure.

It might be more appropriate to separate the more regular support activities for strengthening organisations (organisational development) from activities of lobbying, advocacy and organising campaigns (institutional or societal development).

The position and functioning of MEDF within the MCIC structure is not clear. MCIC is responsible for above-mentioned operations and at the same time MEDF has an independent position, considering also to strengthen its separate identity in relation to MCIC (corporate plan 2002-2006). On the other hand types of services and target groups do partly overlap, and therefore room for joint activities exist with other MCIC groups. Staff also express need for (more) co-operation.

MCIC Bodies

First category organisations with a consultative status are represented in the council (formerly assembly). The organisations represent different target groups such as Roma, Youth, Women, Pensioners, Students, religious communities, disabled or work in specific fields, e.g. environment.
One may notice that MCIC activities as of today do not always correspond with these areas or target groups, such as environment, pensioners or disabled. Actually MCIC doesn't have activities in these areas[14].

From the perspective of the beneficiaries served over the years the rural population is an important category. MCIC works together with the LSG and Initiative boards. Also MEDF is working with enterprises and entrepreneurs. Both groups are not represented in the Board.

In order to have all stakeholders/target groups of its activities represented in the management board, MCIC may consider attracting representatives of LSG and the business community.

Strategy

MCIC was always alert to changes in the context (see chapter 3): urgent requirements because of crises, policies of donors, demands from target groups, etc. It did respond to all these external influences by defining its long term and medium term strategies. The strategies per "sector" (civil society and democratisation, rural development, water supply and sanitation, employment and income generation, health and education, emergency aid) are spelled out in three documents for three-year periods. The strategies are clear but allow for many types of MCIC interventions. However they guide the departments in their planning. Not all strategies are always reflected in programmes or executed.

Each department makes a 3-year plan with several programmes lasting 1,2 or 3 years. The programme is then used to make annual plans. These plans are submitted to the management meeting for discussion. The Executive Director then makes a decision, which is submitted, to the governing boards for approval. The procedure is clear.

These strategic discussions per theme, instruments or approach are often organised and led by the executive director, who is very much aware of the national and international context, and the challenge for MCIC to achieve the objectives. The demands are known (water, sanitation, loans and organisational support). Surveys are undertaken while preparing mid-term plans and sometimes 2-3 Day workshops are organised with actors relevant to MCIC's work.

However the beneficiaries or target groups are not sufficiently involved in this process. The current planning therefore depends mostly on existing funds from donors and existing MCIC capacity

Financial strategy has proven to be successful. MCIC always had the money to implement its programmes. It has shown to have the capacity to adapt itself to donor's priorities while maintaining the same focus and the MCIC identity.

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[14] From 2003 an environment organisation benefited from organisational support under the Strategic NGOs programme. This followed a long gap during which environment was not a priority sector for MCIC.

Table: Review of revenues per source, for the period 1994-2003 (in thousand MKD)

Revenues	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	Total
Consortium for Macedonia	66,465	51,474	27,858	49,157	36,799	42,713	47,139	94,691	125,840	93,939	636,075
Action by Churches Together (ACT)	-	-	-	-	-	673,632	352,023	72,125	26,378	-	1,124,158
Other partners	1,080	118	153	531	-	43,524	11,118	3,325	15,133	-	74,982
Government and inter-government agencies	38,005	25,804	36,472	6,500	9,369	22,204	20,363	32,086	27,685	3,688	222,176
Extra-ordinary and own revenues	963	1,314	5,343	8,977	5,293	10,416	60,184	24,355	18,421	13,500	148,766
Total	106,513	78,710	69,826	65,165	51,461	792,489	490,827	226,582	213,457	111,127	2,206,157

However, the table shows diminishing funds since 1999 (Kosovo crisis) and a large dependence of the Consortium for Macedonia (83% in 2003). This trend is going to continue and brings to the forefront three important questions:

- what are alternative sources of funding?
- what are the consequences for MCIC mission and objectives?
- what will be future relations with target groups and beneficiaries if funds are coming from other sources such as EU/CARDS?

Systems[15]

New staff coming into the organisation all appreciate the systems and procedures in place in the organisation. Many systems and procedures have been developed although not often changes are made to make them in accordance to new realities and changes in organisational functioning (most stem from 1996). Information about programmes, evaluations, job descriptions, financial results, etc. is easily accessible to all staff as they are on the intranet.

Meetings at collegium level take place regularly but seem to last long hours. Minutes of the meeting are accessible at the intranet. Meetings per department are not held

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[15] Some of the statements made in these chapters are based on group sessions, individual discussions and small group(informal) meetings. Yet not always factual evidence, nor SMART indicators.

frequently. In general there is insufficient horizontal sharing between the departments. However, staff working in different departments but for the same target group (Roma or women) and using the same instrument (training) do communicate much easier.

Monitoring of achievements is an area much discussed, with established system but not yet implemented. MCIC has proven to be very good at data collection. The next step is to systemise and discuss the progress on the basis of indicators for each programme and project.

The executive director is involved in many operational systems (etc.). There is much focus on control and centralisation and not enough attention on delegation. Certainly the last years there has been a development towards more delegation, but this is not always reflected in day-to-day activities of staff.

There is insufficient co-operation between the administration group and the other groups specifically with regard to preparing budgets, monitoring of expenses and preparing financial reports. It is reflected in having two separate systems for financial administration: project-based in the operational departments and accounting-based in the financial department.

Staff performances

Staff has been trained in various techniques relevant for their work. They all expressed satisfaction about this MCIC practice. Motivation is high and they have a dynamic attitude. However questions are raised with regard to staff performances, as many different and unforeseen activities to support NGOs also have to be carried out, and middle line managers do not seem to have time or capacity to sufficiently manage.
In an organisation with 38 employees and existing more then 10 years Human Resource Management is becoming more and more an issue. It includes regular performance discussions, incentives, formal staff performances evaluation, staff development, hiring and firing, etc. Those procedures that exist are not systematically put into practice by the middle management which, according to staff, does not pay sufficient and regular attention to these issues.

Management

A young organisation needs strong leadership and management. In MCIC both functions are strongly combined in one person. It has proven to be efficient, particularly in crisis situations where humanitarian assistance (Kosovo and Macedonia) was given. MCIC now is a mature organisation which needs more separation between management and leadership for the stage of its life cycle (in other words a deputy director).

Middle management's position and authority is not fully recognised. There are too many new programmes of a different nature. These programmes do not always fit into the area of expertise of departments, either because of its nature or because of the managers not understanding or interested in these activities. Another indicator is that managers tend to leave some decisions to the executive director although not needed according to the job description. As a result of this staff sometimes directly report to the executive director and bypass the hierarchy[16]. This in turn weakens the position of middle managers: a vicious circle is created.

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[16] By virtue of innate capacity, if not formal seniority, one of the middle managers acts as de facto deputy to the director and is also consulted (unofficially) by staff, thus further complicating the management structure.

Shared values and culture

Staff feel proud of being part of MCIC and supports the mission and objectives of the organisation. Values are repeatedly discussed and stimulated by the executive director. Values of tolerance, human rights, dialogue, respect for diversity and peace are recognised by many of the target groups and this is one of the most important non-visible results of MCIC. It is reflected in the composition of staff in the organisation as well as in the way of working together. However in Macedonia the dominant culture is individualistic which makes it sometimes difficult to develop teams, to exchange experiences, to learn from each other, but also to accept authority. Within MCIC a culture has been developed that revolves around the executive director. It is a choice many staff made irrespective of the structure and responsibilities of staff and middle management. It makes the organisation dependent on one person even if against his will. Staff doesn't sufficiently take risks because of the strong leadership and the presumed or felt lack of delegation of responsibilities to lower levels.

Specific recommendations for organisational functioning

- o Systematically structure linkages between departments for more efficient delivery of services to the target group.
- o In order to have all stakeholders/target groups of its activities represented in the management board, MCIC may consider attracting representatives of LSG and the business community.
- o Create a greater separation between leadership and management in response to MCIC's organisational maturity.

5.   Changing context

Current situation in MCIC

Soon after establishment MCIC was financed by the Consortium for Macedonia, which consist of donors from western countries: Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and Great Britain. Almost all the participants in the Consortium have already given their commitment up to which year they are going to continue financing of MCIC. Almost of them will leave the region and Macedonia by the end of 2006. In this situation MCIC must start to think which way they will need to follow, where the focus for possible funding will be.
We will attempt an overview of some of the key observations which can be interesting to the future development in MCIC:

Economic situation

Since 1993 Macedonia passed many crisis and conflict situations in the region and in the country: the Bosnia crisis, the trade embargo in Yugoslavia, the Kosovo crisis and finally, in 2001, the Macedonian crisis. The negative economic trends continued in the following years with the exception of a number of reforms (privatising loss-making state enterprises, reducing over-employment in public administration). The reforms had the effect of significantly raising social tensions and the number of unemployed according to the Employment Bureau at the end of 2003 reached 384.000 persons. The Government also announced layoff of 5.000 employees in the administration, mainly ethnic Macedonians and parallel with this, the employment of 6.000 members of minority communities in Macedonia, which might be a factor in the weak ethnic relations.

Political situation

At the moment Macedonia is going through a Presidential Election, it is expected that it will not bring big consequences on MCIC work. Another important moment is the process of decentralization, which has passed public discussion and is waiting for approval in the Parliament as the Law for Decentralization. If everything goes as planned by the end of the year Macedonia has to go through the process of elections for LSG. This is one of the issues that can influence the work of MCIC especially in Development department as well as other departments which implement projects and programs connected with LSG.
With the further implementation of the Ohrid framework agreement, it is hoped for lasting absence of major ethnic tensions. This can be in favour of civil organisations for planning and implementing future programs.

Civil society

There are over 5,000 civil organisations registered in Macedonia of which less than 50% are active[17]. The majority are based in Skopje and other bigger towns in Macedonia. The NGO sector still remains ethnically and politically divided. Competition is still present among civil society organisations, instead of co-operation, even though there are some

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[17] Source: USAID 2003 NGO Sustainability Index for CEE: "there are approximately 5,100 associations and foundations in Macedonia, of which a fraction are considered active"

cases of positive examples of collaboration. This is due to the fact that civil society is still very much foreign donor dependent and there are only few successful cases of mobilising local funds. The legal and fiscal environments do not stimulate the private business sector and individuals to contribute as donors to the CS sector. The majority of CSOs do not help their cause either. Research undertaken in 2002 indicate that lack of demonstration of results and lack of transparency are the main reasons why local donors ignore Macedonian NGOs. [18]

The legal framework remains the same since 1998 when the Law for Citizen Associations and Foundations was enacted, and there are not many promising opportunities or activities for changing the situation.

Status of Macedonia as an applicant for EU member

Macedonia is the first country which signed an Agreement for Stabilisation and Association with the European Union in April 2001. At the beginning of 2004 the agreement was ratified by all EU member states. With this agreement Macedonia is one step forward to the membership of European Union. In March 2004 Macedonia applied for membership in the EU.

This means that now the country can use the experts, technical and financial support for implementation of the structural reform which is condition to become a member of the EU. Every year, the representatives of EU are preparing a report on development of the situation in Macedonia, and according to the reports the Macedonian Government is preparing action plans for implementation of recommendations.

MCIC already has contacts with the Department for Euro Integration in the Government of Macedonia. The department was present with its own stand at the 3rd NGO fair Forum of Civil society in Macedonia, and was involved in the debates and panels.

EU funds

There are various possibilities for MCIC to use EU funds: national PHARE programmes to support democracy in Macedonia and EU CARDS, which is a regional programme implemented by the European Agency for Reconstruction – EAR. . MCIC already has a number of projects financed by EAR, the NGO Fair, the Pages for Mutual Understanding and the Drugs Help Line. In the past MCIC has also received EU ECHO funding for emergencies.

MCIC started regional co-operation in 1999 with its branch office in Kosovo and this opens the possibilities for future EU funded activities in the region.

Co-operation with state institutions

The co-operation with state institutions started with humanitarian activities and water-supply systems. The Ministry of Labour and Social Work was and still remains one of the main partners of MCIC. The Bureau for Less Developed Areas has a common project with MCIC since 2002 in a few villages in western Macedonia (Jegunovce, Skudrinje). With the process of decentralization, new opportunities will open for MCIC co-operation with the Ministry of LSG in strengthening capacities of the municipalities, especially those in the rural areas. The Ministry of Education, and specially the Bureau for the Development of Education was supporting MCIC work in the schools and the good relations with this institution can be useful for future programs.

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[18] Original research by Megasi, cited by Saso Klekoski at the Aprodev Regional Capacity Building Conference for SEE, July 23 2004

6.   Strategic orientations

From the findings in the interviews, questionnaires, evaluations, etc. The following selection of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats is made by the evaluation team. It will guide MCIC in defining the strategic options and finally formulate strategies for the future.

Opportunities	Threats
- interest of international organisations for working with MCIC to develop joint proposal for submission to EC(CARDS) - MCIC is highly appreciated by the villagers and LSG as a reliable partner; - interest for economic development of rural areas - MCIC is recognized as a leading organisation in sustainable development of CS - availability of EU/government funds; - governmental institutions show interest for collaboration - co-operation with NGOS from countries in the region and those in transition - process of decentralisation in LSG; - interest of donors for cross border co-operation in the region - Roma decade will lead to donor funding	- consortium donor funding will stop because of diminishing political interest for the region - deteriorating economic situation in Macedonia - the situation in Macedonian business sector is worsening - poor living conditions in villages - insufficient involvement of minorities in CS - weak performances of LSG (rural areas)

| Weaknesses	Strengths
- delayed implementation and administration of projects - insufficient indicators or analysis of outcomes and impact - insufficient collaboration among departments to deliver comprehensive services to the target groups - lack of strategy and implementation in the area of HRM - unclarity of status of evaluation recommendations - slow implementation of accepted recommendations for organisational changes - narrow leadership makes organisation vulnerable - middle management is not functioning well enough as managers of people - organisation culture doesn't give sufficient room for openness/criticism amongst staff	- capacities to strengthen other NGOs - adapting to needs of donors without losing its identity/degree of self rule - capacity to deliver training in field of PCM and OD - capacity to organise construction of WSS - capacity to mobilize and network CSO - capacity to promote economical activities (MEDF) - capacity to produce and disseminate information of CS - capacity to adapt (between humanitarian assistance and development) - strong and committed leadership - MCIC has competent and qualified staff - capacity for lobbying and advocacy - good infrastructure and equipment - good systems of information/ accessible at all levels - good PR and information delivery to outside parties

The strategy of MCIC has always taken as starting point the needs of target groups including an analysis of their context. It should remain this way even if funding will come from different sources and another, more commercial approach is required. After all MCIC has proven to be flexible to donor demands while remaining faithful to its own mission and objectives. Therefore strategic options are formulated taking into consideration the opportunities, threats, major grouping of target groups and approaches.

Major grouping of target groups and beneficiaries

1. Government and non-government organisations dealing with villagers
2. Government and non-government organisations dealing with specific beneficiaries
3. Government and non-government organisations dealing with Macedonian society

Major approaches

1. operational approach
2. organisational strengthening
3. civil society strengthening/advocacy and lobbying
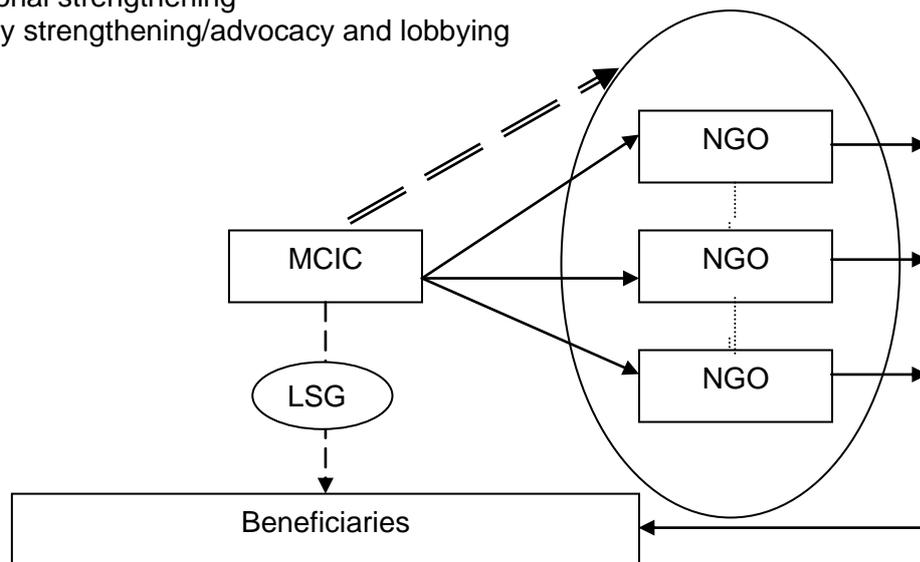
Legend:
- Operational approach   - - - - - >
- Organisational strengthening ———→
- Civil Society Strengthening/
- Advocacy and Lobbying   ══ ══>

Strategic option 1: Improvement of living conditions in the villages through applications for donor funding (CARDS) and in collaboration with LSG (funds etc.).

MCIC develops a strategy starting with a comprehensive analysis of the situation in the village and all the organised structures and stakeholders in the village. Based on this analysis MCIC defines how to intervene, thereby using its three approaches according to the needs and opportunities. However, the strategy will preliminary focus on strengthening local organisations and their linkages and based on this, infrastructure- and economic activities will be stimulated/undertaken. MCIC may take advantage of growing interest for decentralisation which is the official policy of the government. Funds will become available.

Strategic option 2: Strengthening of local NGOs working for specific beneficiaries.

MCIC offers a pallet of services to organisations working directly with beneficiaries. These services include training and advice on organisational and content matters. MCIC determines priorities with regard to beneficiary groups it wants to support indirectly and focuses therefore on a limited group of NGOs (target groups).
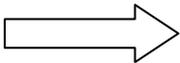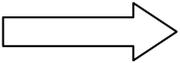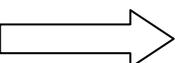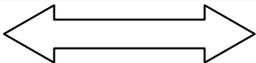
Strategic option 3: Strengthening civil society at the national level through advocacy and lobbying.

MCIC will contribute to strengthening civil society at the national level by advocacy, lobbying and networking. MCIC is using its (inter) national strong image of a lobby and advocacy organisation in order to get funding from international donors.

Strategic option 4: Regional co-operation between NGOs, GOs and LSGs.

There is a demand and MCIC is already involved in this type of programmes. Funds from EU/CARDS but also from Consortium are available for regional co-operation.

In each of the options decisions are required with regard to number of organisations to work with and beneficiary groups MCIC wants to indirectly work for. It assumes in all case good knowledge and experience of its staff regarding the problems and opportunities of these groups.

Approach/Target group, beneficiaries	LSG + NGO Villagers	LSG + NGO Specific beneficiaries	GO + NGO MKD CS/macro
Operational approach	⟹ (large)	⇒ (small)	
Organisational strengthening	⇒ (small)	⟹ (large)	⇒ (medium)
CS strengthening/ advocacy, lobbying		⇒ (small)	⟹ (large)
Regional co-operation		⟺ (double-headed)	

7. Conclusions

1. Performances

- Values of peace and reconciliation are fully shared by staff and this as positive impact on performance and it is confirmed by external parties.
- MCIC's humanitarian work is exemplary in approach and execution.
- Output is strong. Also MCIC and stakeholders can credibly point to positive achievements in most programmes implemented over the decade.
- MCIC's long term contribution to strengthening Macedonian Civil Society is especially appreciated by stakeholders.
- Sustained co-operation has had a positive effect on strengthening the organisational capacities of around 12 key Macedonian NGOs. Many others have benefited less intensively.
- MCIC infrastructural work is very much appreciated at local levels. It has provided decentralised LSG with better models and strategies for improvements to villages and suburbs.
- MCIC has placed a lower emphasis on building the capacity of LSG organisations and village initiative boards. This has reduced the effectiveness and potential impact of the models.
- When defined as "*lasting improvement in peoples' lives*", the impact of programmes to which MCIC contributed cannot be easily assessed. The relation between programme achievements and impact could not be verified by the team, for lack of specific documentation.

2. Organisational

- MCIC is an experienced and <u>strong</u> organisation, capable of adapting to the "unpredictable" demands of a society/region in transformation.
- MCIC has excellent relations with donors, NGOs, LSG and other actors involved in the development of Macedonian (civil) society.
- MCIC has a well-developed strategy supported by adequate information systems.
- MCIC has difficulties in linking approaches, activities and internal (horizontal) sharing within current structure.
- MCIC has the tendency overly to respond to expressed needs of target groups and opportunities, leading to heavy workload and insufficient human resource management of staff.
- Values of peace and reconciliation are shared but critical reflections about performances are not easily shared or accepted in the working culture of MCIC.

8. Recommendations

1. Performances

- MCIC to further prioritise the beneficiaries it wishes to reach and the target groups (organisations) it aims to strengthen.
- To work (more) with existing NGOs in their fields of expertise but clarify the expected outcomes of collaboration/strengthening. MCIC to give more regular feedback to the supported organisations in order for them to learn better from practice.
- MCIC to take a more integrated and strategic view of rural development and its scope of activities, possibly reconsidering focus geographic areas.
- MCIC to give more attention to analyse output and outcome results based on existing and/or improved PCM systems.

2. Organisational

- MCIC to remain a single organisation in order to further develop Civil Society.
- Update the overall strategy for the whole organisation and work it out for each department.
- Develop funding strategy compatible with mission and objectives.
- Ensure more horizontal communication between departments and create temporary clusters for activities taken care of by different departments.
- Adjust systems to new (funding) strategies and structure.
- Concentrate on empowerment of middle management and increased attention to human resources.
- Create more open atmosphere in which staff is more encouraged to contribute to MCIC mission and outputs.
- Decide on changes, prepare change plan and implement.

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