KVINNA TILL KVINNA

Making Achievements Last

Learning from Exit Experiences

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Chapter 1

Introduction

THE KVINNA TILL KVINNA FOUNDATION, hereinafter referred to as Kvinna till Kvinna, has developed and grown together with women's organisations through our joint efforts for women's peace building in the Western Balkans, South Caucasus and the Middle East. These experiences and contacts are being brought into new regions and partnerships, most recently Africa.

As the global political landscape changes so do priorities in international development cooperation. In an effort to achieve aid-efficiency, several bilateral donors are focusing aid on fewer countries. This trend has not only increased the number of exits but also the interest in comparing exit strategies and analysing their consequences.

Kvinna till Kvinna's long and fruitful presence in the Western Balkans is transforming due, in no small part, to such factors. In 2006, Kvinna till Kvinna phased out our operations in Croatia, our first completed programme exit. Although the exit was generally successful, the experience fuelled an ongoing discussion about sustainability and phasing out. The outcome of these discussions is central to this report.

Exit, in this context, refers to the complete phasing out of all funded activities in a programme country or region. During the lifespan of a programme, partnership with some organisations will end and individual projects will be completed. The report does not cover such scenarios.

The perspectives of our partner organisations have been present every step of the way in our work documenting the phasing out experience as well as in developing guidelines, definitions and strategic thinking. The participation of our partner organisations is visible in this report through quotes from interviews made in the process of developing the exit strategy guidelines. The interviews have also been essential in compiling this report.

In chapters 2-4 we elaborate on the basis for the report by presenting more on Kvinna till Kvinna's work and values, the growing interest internationally in exit strategies and a discussion on defining sustainability. In chapter 5 we use the example of our phase out from Croatia to make different elements of phase out more concrete, followed by a discussion on context in chapter 6. How to bring in the exit already from entry is brought up in chapter 7, followed by conclusions in chapter 8. We also share our recently adopted internal Guiding principles for making exit strategies and our Manual for concrete phase out planning. The few similar documents we found from other organisations helped us, as we hope these will help others.

Sharing experiences and lessons learnt will add to the continuous progress of development cooperation. This report is our contribution to this learning process.

Chapter 2

The Added Value
of Kvinna till Kvinna

**Kvinna till Kvinna supports women in war and conflict in order to increase
their power and influence.**

BY SUPPORTING WOMEN'S organisations in conflict and post-conflict settings, Kvinna till Kvinna contributes to the development of their work for gender equality, human rights and peace and security. The work for peace and security includes combating direct violence, such as violence against women, as well as efforts to combat structural violence. Women's participation and decision making, at various levels and in different sectors of society, are key factors in increasing their power, thus contributing to democratic and peaceful progress. This includes improving prerequisites for participation, such as health, human rights, and legislation.

2.1 Partnership Based on Common Goals and Values

Kvinna till Kvinna's partner organisations have one thing in common with each other and with Kvinna till Kvinna, namely dedication to women's rights and participation in the work for democracy and sustainable peace. Partnerships are based on common goals and values.

"It was always clear that Kvinna till Kvinna aims to primarily empower and encourage women so that these women's groups independently can pursue their work."

CURE, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

THE SELECTION OF PARTNER organisations is guided by the aim to promote a diverse and sustainable women's movement. Cooperating with organisations that vary in size, areas of expertise, capacity for outreach, geographic location and thematic focus is a conscious choice.

To be considered as a potential partner the organisations also have to be open to contacts across the boundaries of a conflict whenever possible and base their operations on transparency, accountability and democracy. Support goes to organisations that reach out to different target groups so as to contribute to long-term democratic improvements in the country or region.

"At the beginning we questioned what Kvinna till Kvinna actually funded and received the reply that it was up to us. A donor that didn't impose itself, that was important. The approach was different and it was up to us to decide what we considered important. I never forget that first conversation […] It was important to have a coordinator that was present and came to us regularly. We had open discussions and even disagreements, which is good."

Women's Group Brod, Slavonski Brod, Croatia

Some of the partner organisations support marginalised and deprived women, others have the capacity to wield a political influence and spread knowledge and experience between organisations and societal spheres. Some of the partner organisations are already highly professional, others in development stages. Some have a strong foothold in their local community, others a strong position at national level.

"Today, owing to the financial support of Kvinna till Kvinna, there are several women NGOs that have strengthened their internal capacities and developed efficient strategies of acting towards the authorities of all levels, and lobbying for 'women's issues'."

Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The funding of individual organisations may be phased out when a group has become sufficiently mature and/or has found other funding sources. This also applies to organisations that are no longer needed due to the public sector taking over their tasks, or if for some reason either party is not able to fulfil its obligations. However, as previously stated, this report focuses on the situation that arises when all activities in a country or region are phased out, in what we herein refer to as a programme phase out.

2.2 Local Ownership

"I feel that Kvinna till Kvinna wants to support from the point at which we stand, similar as we do in the field with empowerment. It's all about empowering women from where they stand, not forcing them to do things they are not ready to do."

**Mervat Omari,
Community of Learning Women,
Kufar Kara, Israel**

Kvinna till Kvinna's method of cooperation is based on the concept that partner organisations themselves hold the key to their own development. This is manifested in the fact that partner organisations set their agenda by identifying problems and solutions. In the conflict and post conflict context, this approach also reflects the conviction that sustainable peace can only be built by the people living in the area concerned.

While problems and relevant solutions are identified and implemented by partner organisations, Kvinna till Kvinna's role is to have a close and chal-lenging dialogue with the partner organisations with the purpose of building capacity, giving inspiration, sharing knowledge and also facilitating contacts and perspectives that otherwise would not have been accessible. This method of cooperation is facilitated through qualified field presence. We meet partner organisations regularly and take part in some of their activities. The bottom up perspective and mutual learning has made it possible to build close relationships with partner organisations, which is verified in the successful outcome of our work.

"It was not teaching or imposing something, but real partnership which is difficult to achieve with any donor because they have their own strategy they follow. We weren't afraid that you would withdraw funds if we said something wrong."

**Autonomous Women's Centre,
Zagreb, Croatia**

2.3 Long-term Core Support and Capacity Building

"The core support has been essential. It leaves us room to grow and initiate other projects."
Zene Zenama, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

KVINNA TILL KVINNA'S METHOD of cooperation is also based on the realisation that a stable funding situation is essential for women's organisations to be able to develop their identity and capacity as independent actors, create an impact on society, and to be watchdogs for human rights and democracy.

Long-term core support gives partner organisations a stable position that allows them to develop their organisational skills and capacity to carry their agenda through, as well as building a structure with the potential to be sustainable. Fundamental in the process is ongoing dialogue and monitoring around partnership programmes and the challenges the organisations face along the way.

"A couple of years ago Kvinna till Kvinna arranged a training on strategic planning, a subject we were weak in. Sometimes we are just working and working and we cannot see anymore the full picture of what we are trying to achieve. So it was really essential to get that training, and at that training we realized that we had a lot of gaps."
Rena Tahirova, Azerbaijan Feminist Group of YUVA Humanitarian Centre, Baku, Azerbaijan

Kvinna till Kvinna's long-term commitment and the possibility to assess the needs in a country or region are vital prerequisites for partner organisations in setting their own agenda. This is illustrated in the example below, where the activities of a partner organisation lead to empowerment and democratic participation in a remote village in Georgia. A place where a good many internally displaced people live.

"Women who live there are very isolated and have limited access to information. The first time we went there for conflict resolution and women's leadership training they weren't able to speak, they just cried. We couldn't help them, no matter what we said they just kept crying. We visited them quite often, at least twice a month.

We just visited them without a programme, read newspapers with them, gave information about what is happening in the world and the conflict between Georgia and Abkhazia, and organised trainings for them. The women stopped crying and began to listen. And after a while they started to speak to us.

Some time passed and the women came to us at Fund Sukhumi and they started to give us information about their problems. They live under the poverty line and that is why they have benefits, but for some unknown reason they received no benefits for a few months. We discussed this with them and they wrote letters to several authorities asking to know why the benefits had stopped. They collected signatures from their local community and they sent the letters to their municipalities expecting to get a reply.

After ten days without reply they wrote letters to higher authorities with the original letter attached. It took these authorities a further ten days to inform them that the people who hadn't paid the benefits had been removed from office and those who didn't answer our letters had been reprimanded. The women received their benefits and were now walking with their heads held high with men praising them. They felt like heroines!

I couldn't believe that these were the same women who had just cried earlier. They could now demand their rights. And when there was a council election, more women than men were elected. In that community it is understood that women can do a lot more than just cook and wash."

**Alla Gamakharia,
Cultural-Humanitarian Fund
"Sukhumi", Kutaisi, Georgia**

2.4 Networking

ANOTHER IMPORTANT TOOL when building capacity is networking. It allows partner organisations to share information, as well as support each other in developing visions, strategic thinking and coordination with or towards other actors. The broad spectrum of partner organisations makes it possible to bring together experiences from different fields and levels of society for mutual learning and provide a platform for a new generation of women to become leaders and activists.

In conflict zones Kvinna till Kvinna supports efforts to create spaces where partner organisations can meet in a safe environment and network across conflict borders. These meetings challenge isolationist policies, fear and hatred.

"It has become more and more difficult to have contact with Palestinian organisations, which is part of our agenda. Kvinna till Kvinna has enabled those relationships."

**Slava Greenberg,
Haifa Feminist Centre, Israel**

The transfer of knowledge and experience between women's organisations in different countries and contexts strengthens our partner organisations as well as Kvinna till Kvinna internally. Mutual learning is also beneficial to outreach activities in our joint efforts for women's rights, peace and security on national and international levels.

"Kvinna till Kvinna has given a great deal to strengthen the women's movement, forming a network of women organisations and coalitions on certain activities by enabling the exchange of knowledge and experience. The Congo exchange is one good example[2]."

**Berjana Ackar,
Centre for Legal Assistance
for Women, Zenica,
Bosnia and Herzegovina**

This approach to cooperation and partnership that permeates the Kvinna till Kvinna operations is key to understanding how the Guidelines for making exit strategies have come about and what they contain.

Chapter 3
Growing Interest in Exit Strategies

A global and growing demand for aid effectiveness and sustainability has put new emphasis on the exit process. Many actors in the international development arena are going through the process of phasing out as a consequence of unilateral decisions by donor countries to focus bilateral resources on fewer countries.

THIS TRANSFORMATION has been intensified by commitments agreed upon in the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda of Action.[3] To achieve the Millennium Development Goals, ministers of developing and donor countries acknowledged that development resources and the impact of partnerships both need to be enhanced. Three major challenges have been identified; country ownership, being key, the need for more effective and inclusive partnerships, and openly accounting for achieved development results.

As the Paris Declaration is based on the perspectives of, and agreed upon by, states and institutions, the role of civil society was not incorporated. Prior to the meeting in Accra the role of civil society was therefore discussed among civil society organisations across the world, whose conclusions then led to civil society organisations being recognised as independent actors of great importance to development and aid effectiveness in the Accra Agenda of Action.

Today it is broadly acknowledged that democracy and respect for human rights require the voices of a strong civil society in the development process. Besides being an agent of aid, civil society organisations mobilise poor and marginalised people, influence democratic processes, review and monitor the state, and educate and promote a culture of solidarity and civic responsibility. However, less democratic states are at best not interested in and, in the worst scenario, work deliberately against these civil society watchdog initiatives.

Obviously, the priorities of states affect the work of Kvinna till Kvinna and other civil society organisations, and the turbulence created when countries move faster in and out of bilateral cooperation is likely to increase the interest in exit experiences.

A comprehensive study conducted by Jerve, A. & Slob, A. in 2008, and jointly undertaken by Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, evaluates the management of transformation processes in fourteen different bilateral exit cases.[4] The evaluation shows that all of the exit decisions were politically motiva-

ted, all except one were donor initiated, and in no case had the sustainability of supported activities been assessed before the decision was made. Most common was a model referred to as "natural phasing out", where ongoing commitments are respected and activities simply faded out at the end of a contract period. The authors of the study argue that a constant search for new entry points for aid has overshadowed the issue of exit for too long with the agenda to focus aid on fewer countries having been a contributing factor. The authors also identify an increasing need for exit management guidelines, and offer recommendations based on success factors. On an overall level they advise donors to develop guidelines that are sensitive to different contexts, conduct country specific pre-exit assessments, establish firmer "rules of the game" that protect the interests of both parties, and explore options for addressing exit already at entry. Specific recommendations are then made for different types of exit situations.[5]

These recommendations have influenced the Swe-

dish Ministry of Foreign Affairs' most recent guidelines on bilateral development cooperation[6] as well as the phase out strategies for specific countries[7]. A well-documented example is the Swedish exit from Nicaragua after 30 years of bilateral development cooperation. A concluding event was held after the phase out to share the Nicaragua exit experience. Brenda Killen from the OECD network on development (DAC) participated as a panellist in the final seminar. She expressed appreciation for the initiative while stating that: "How we work with phasing out is a learning process that we have only just begun[8]."

In the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency's manual for development cooperation strategies, sustainability issues are addressed and exit strategies are mentioned.[9] Nevertheless, a more systematic approach is currently being undertaken. The updated version of the manual will include an extended part about exit strategies, since they are considered an essential part of the main issue, namely sustainability.[10]

Chapter 4
Defining Sustainability

Sustainability is central in all discussions on phasing out. The main idea is that a well managed exit will enhance the chance of sustainability.

A FOOD SECURITY PROGRAMME in Zambia and Zimbabwe run by C-Safe developed exit strategies. According to the guidelines, sustainability is considered to be the why of having an exit strategy. The exit strategy is not valuable for its own sake but for ensuring sustainability after a programme ends, and might therefore just as well be called a "sustainability strategy".[11]

In the view of Kvinna till Kvinna there are several levels where sustainability is applicable. In our case it does not only have to do with sustainability of the women's organisations as such, but is also valid when it comes to individual women activists, on the level of a women's movement, as well as on results achieved at societal level.

For example, on the individual woman activist level there is a large number of women who have been active in the women's organisations, and who are now in new jobs. With their knowledge from the women's movement they are able to influence women's rights and violent attitudes in their workplace and society in general.

At the women's movement level, Kvinna till Kvinna has identified criteria for sustainability; the key indicators being when there is a certain level of information sharing, networking and cooperation between different women's organisations and activists who are ready and capable of mobilising around relevant issues when required. For example, before the 2008 local elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina a network of women organisations across the country mobilised to advocate jointly for increased representation of women candidates in the local elections. Generally, the election result was a setback for women's political representation everywhere, but in several of the municipalities where the network had been active women's representation increased.

Through our long-term support to women's organisations we are also convinced we will contribute to changes in society in the areas of women's rights and peace building. When considering exit, it is important to identify what we regard as the key issues/objectives that might in turn be indicators of sustainable change in the above-mentioned areas. One example is the outcomes achieved in several of the Western Balkan countries with regard to improved state mechanisms for the protection of women victims of violence.

Another example of the visibility of sustainability at two of these levels is found within Women's Studies in Zagreb, one of Kvinna till Kvinna's former partner organisations in Croatia. Several of the teachers, who over the years have provided alternative education for women at the centre, have started working at universities and have brought feminist theory into their respective fields of teaching: sociology, political science, ethnology and literature. Evidently, this can be viewed as sustainable outcomes of Kvinna till Kvinna's support, at individual as well as societal level.

> **KVINNA TILL KVINNA** defines the women's movement as follows: A women's movement can be a formalised network of women's organisations and it can be a number of activists ready and capable of mobilising around relevant issues when needed. The starting point of a women's movement, whatever structure it has, is women's solidarity and with an aim among actors to improve the situation for women.

Guiding Principles for Making Exit Strategies

Introduction

KVINNA TILL KVINNA SUPPORTS women's organisations in countries of war and conflict to increase women's power and influence. This partnership with women's organisations is based on common values and goals, and our programmes build on their problem analyses and strategies and how to address them. In this way local ownership is already secured and we do not need to hand over responsibility of the projects. It is, however, important to be clear about our aims and what is and is not Kvinna till Kvinna's responsibility from the beginning of a project. Even though we do not at entry have a set time limit for our programme we need to be clear about how we intend to make our programme sustainable, i.e. what our exit strategy is.

What is an exit strategy?

A PROGRAMME EXIT STRATEGY is a plan describing how we intend to phase out our programme while ensuring that the achievement of our programme goals are not jeopardised and that progress towards these goals will continue. When planned together with partner organisations well ahead of a phase out, an exit strategy increases the likelihood of sustainability.

When entering into a programme country we need to know which of our goals we wish to sustain. This can help clarify and define our role to local partner organisations as being time limited, thus reducing the potential for misunderstandings and future dependency. As the context changes over time, we also need to be flexible and ready to modify the strategy.

A well-managed exit includes careful consultation with all stakeholders, long-term planning, flexibility and good monitoring of results.

A Kvinna till Kvinna exit strategy includes:

1 exit criteria (see heading below)

2 measurable indicators of progress in meeting the criteria

3 a time line for the exit process

4 activities and a division of responsibilities

5 mechanisms to assess progress (monitoring system)

These principles are meant to be used as a guide when making exit strategies for our programmes. In a best case scenario we will be able to fully implement the strategy and do everything suggested in the manual (see Phase Out Manual p33).

Exit criteria

The decision on when to phase out should be decided by the following criteria:

- Goal achievement – although achieving the intended outcomes of a programme is often difficult within a limited timeframe, indicators of the outcomes we wish to sustain can be used as exit criteria. The indicators should also guide the timeline of the exit strategy.

- Funding – if an exit strategy is in place it gives us an opportunity to also plan ahead and find funding for our programme, thus facilitating a follow-through on our exit strategies. However, if we are unable to find sufficient financial resources we might have to phase out the programme earlier than planned. Additionally, we should be looking at the possibilities of alternative funding for our partner organisations, either from other international donors, domestic funds, or others.

- Context –regular updates of our context analyses affects our exit strategy. Developments could postpone, stop or speed up the possibility of following our plans.

- Our added value – it is important to analyze for how long it is important for Kvinna till Kvinna to contribute with political[12] and capacity building partnerships, in order to fulfil our program goals.

These criteria will together determine when and how we phase out from the various programme countries.

The decision to phase out is a strategic and political decision for which the Kvinna till Kvinna management is ultimately responsible. The final decision is communicated to our partner organisations as well as internally by the management group.

Post exit

Evaluating the exit strategy
IN ORDER TO LEARN from our phase out, an evaluation should be carried out when a period of time has elapsed following the exit.

New relationship with partner organisations
DURING THE PHASE OUT we should discuss with our partner organisations the kind of relationship that would be most useful when the phase out is completed. The relationship should be based on common values and goals.

Chapter 5
The Croatian Experience

Croatia was one of the first countries that Kvinna till Kvinna entered and where the first field office opened in the autumn of 1995. Croatia was also the first country from which Kvinna till Kvinna phased out all programme resources, ending in December 2006.

WITH EU MEMBERSHIP imminent, Croatia was no longer regarded as being in need of development aid. This also put external pressure on the Croatian government to improve the human rights situation in the country.

Due to the democratic development in Croatia prio-

rities changed for the Swedish bilateral development cooperation, and a complete exit was announced for 2004–06. When these changes were announced, Kvinna till Kvinna had already determined exit criteria for Croatia.

5.1 Open Dialogue

DEVELOPING THE PHASE out process in close dialogue with the partner organisations in Croatia was natural to Kvinna till Kvinna, given that local ownership is inherent to the method of cooperation applied throughout partnerships.

The earlier and more concrete our plans are communicated, the better the partner organisations will be prepared. Transparency about financial realities and a constant dialogue with the Kvinna till Kvinna field representative gave partner organisations in Croatia an opportunity to influence the process. It also provided space for partner organisations to plan ahead together. There was an open discussion on the implications of EU membership in terms of funding possibilities as well as the European environment for mobilising around women's rights issues.

In the final phases of the exit process Kvinna till Kvinna also made huge efforts to communicate with other stakeholders, including national authorities, about our phase out plans and about our partner organisations and their work. We believe this was an important success factor for the organisations when receiving funds from their domestic funding mechanisms.

"We never regarded Kvinna till Kvinna's field representative[13] in Croatia as someone to be afraid of. We could ask and discuss anything and also show how we didn't know everything. She influenced our vision through discussions not by telling us what to do."
Civil Organisation for Development, Dalj, Croatia

5.2 Phasing Out Financial Support

PHASING OUT IS AN expression that suggests steadily decreasing support. However, phasing out is additional to ongoing cooperation programmes and extra support and resources may be needed, a fact established in several exit evaluations. For instance, in an evaluation of UK development cooperation in Central Asia, South Caucasus and Moldova 2002–07, the evaluators recommended maintaining, or even increasing, the level of investment when approaching phase out, thus supporting country offices in prioritising the phasing out process.[14]

In Croatia Kvinna till Kvinna made strategic decisions on how to distribute available funds so as to achieve the objectives. For some partner organisations this meant increased support toward the end, while others experienced a continuous decrease of funds during the phase out. But the overall budget for Croatia was not lower in 2006 compared with 2004.

"You did it differently, the process was transparent. You cut some activities and supported some organisations more, some less."
Women Studies, Zagreb, Croatia

5.3 Flexibility and Realistic Timeframe

"Many donors don't phase out, they just go out."

Autonomous Women Centre, Zagreb, Croatia

ACCORDING TO THE JOINT assessment by Kvinna till Kvinna and partner organisations in Croatia, meeting the exit criteria would require continued presence at least over the 2007 election. However, Sida could not be persuaded to extend the support. At that point no alternative funding or human resources were available to explore other options, so the phase out plan was shortened by one year. It is difficult to assess as to whether one more year would have affected the outcome in the long-term. Kvinna till Kvinna was able to adapt plans to the conditions at hand, largely due to the participatory process.

To have a flexible timeline is considered a key to exit strategy success. In a report from 2005, Gardner, A. Greenblott, K. & Joubert, E. compiled experiences on exit strategies. The authors emphasised that phasing out is a step-by-step process, which needs continuous reassessments and measuring progress in achieving the goal.[15]

However, the time required to phase out in a way that ensures sustainability seems easy to underestimate. According to the previously mentioned comprehensive evaluation of exit processes made by Jerve, A. & Slob, A., alternative funding possibilities and the recipient's institutional capacity are the most important factors when assessing the appropriate length of the exit period. They point to the need of time-bound plans that can be adjusted along the way and the avoidance of short timeframes.[16] In addition, the Sida team involved in the Swedish exit from Nicaragua concludes that it is too late to consider sustainability when it is time to phase out.[17]

In their research into Liberia, Mozambique, the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste, Chand, S. & Coffman, R. (2008) suggest that post-conflict settings require long-term on-the-ground presence before a successful exit can take place. The authors argue that at least 15 to 27 years of on-the-ground presence is required in order to secure sustainable results on the country level.[18]

Kvinna till Kvinna's conclusion is that the time span between entry and exit should be guided by programme goals, funding possibilities, the context and our ability to add value. In addition, in conflict and post-conflict states, flexibility is necessary for a successful phase out due to the unpredictability of the situation in these countries. The actual exit process, however, requires a specified timeline and should be no shorter than two to three years.

5.4 Funding

DURING THE PHASE OUT in Croatia, Kvinna till Kvinna strived to make alternative donors aware of the importance of the work of partner organisations. Efforts were also made to put them in contact with external donors, and achieved results within the partner organisations were presented to potential donors.

Despite the democratic development in Croatia, the nature of work in Kvinna till Kvinna's partnerships, i.e. pushing for women's human rights, gender equality and peace and security, limits the number of potential donors. Advocacy and monitoring activities by partner organisations are often directed against state performance and those in power. Hence, when Kvinna till Kvinna closes programme interventions in a region, whatever the reason, the needs for women's activism remain and so does the need for continued funding.

The funding situation in the Western Balkans was discussed at a meeting organised by Kvinna till Kvinna in Budva, Montenegro, in early spring 2010. Partner organisations expressed concern over finding funds for advocacy work – especially when critical of their own Government – after Kvinna till Kvinna had phased out. In Croatia those kinds of concerns have been proved valid. Three years after Kvinna till Kvinna's phase out, 60-90 per cent of the partner organisations' funding came from domestic funds, a huge increase compared with pre-exit.[19]

For a majority of the organisations the National Foundation for Civil Society[20] was crucial in their survival as this was the only source of core funding. The

dependency on domestic funds had clearly affected their possibilities of being outspoken and critical of the Government.

"We are criticising our country from so many different angles that it becomes very difficult for us to raise money for these issues."
Slava Greenberg,
Haifa Feminist Centre, Israel

An independent evaluation of the support to civil society in the Western Balkans, carried out by Anger, J. Newkirk, J. Nilsson, A. in 2010, highlights the need for continued support to, and protection of, organisations that promote and defend human rights. Corruption levels remain high in the region, and there is a lack of transparency and accountability in both public and private spheres. Considering this, as well as the increasing state interference in the freedom of expression, unresolved ethnic conflicts and gross violations of human rights, the evaluators recommend continued support to human rights defenders in at least some of the Western Balkan countries, in spite of Swedish phase out plans.[21]

Inadequate funding for women's organising has been recognised as a global problem. The Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) has taken an international initiative to develop funding strategies for women's rights movements. They have also researched the status of funding for women's rights. Their research shows that financial resources focusing on women have decreased in the past decade even though development aid has increased globally during the same period, this despite the fact that studies confirm that support directed specifically to women in development countries is effective and leads to concrete results.[22]

Trends in the funding landscape affect the women's funds since part of their budget is based on funds driven by government priorities for bilateral cooperation. At the same time, long-term social change is not achieved overnight. Even long-standing democracies face challenges when it comes to safeguarding women's rights.[23]

A common experience for women's organisations is that it is easier to find donors for projects than core support. Recognising this, the international women's fund Mama Cash adapted its funding policy from initially offering funds for projects to providing mainly core support. They stress the importance of women's organisations finding the right donors. Becoming dependent on government funds may jeopardise independence and integrity of organisations that work on sensitive issues such as the rights of sexual minorities and sexual and gender-based violence.[24]

"Our main activity is providing free legal and psychological support. If we need to be paid for these services we would no longer be an NGO but a lawyers' office. We could demand that our municipality offer legal aid for all citizens, something they should do but do not today. Maybe we could do that, they cover the costs and we give the aid. But we want to continue to have our identity as a women's organisation. We do not want to lose that."
Centre for Legal Assistance for Women,
Zenica, Bosnia and Herzegovina

The kind of support that Kvinna till Kvinna provides, with strong local ownership and long-term cooperation, creates independent, capable organisations with own agendas that can achieve a good many results as long as the support is stable. Being the only or one of very few foundations providing that kind of support may however create dependency and a risk that all achieved programme goals will not be sustained.

"Before Kvinna till Kvinna left we applied for two big tenders so that when you left we didn't have such a hard time. We now find ourselves doing the things that donors want from us, which were not the case with Kvinna till Kvinna."
Women's Room, Zagreb, Croatia

5.5 Consolidating Results and Evaluating Exit

ONE PART OF THE PHASE out process is to analyse the current situation and consolidate achieved results. Based on this analysis it is then possible to set a more definite exit date. It is also an opportunity to view the achievements together with partner organisations and to turn a page and look ahead. In Croatia, Kvinna till Kvinna had an ongoing dialogue on achieved results and the current situation with partner organisations that enabled an exit date to be set.

The phase out process and cooperation between Swedish and Croatian civil society organisations, including Kvinna till Kvinna, was evaluated by Boman and Peck in 2007. The evaluation concluded that the model of cooperation had been appreciated and useful. In times when civil society was under strong governmental pressure foreign support was vital for the independence of civil society. Civil society had played a crucial role promoting human rights and democracy. Over the years, the contributions by Kvinna till Kvinna's partner organisations toward gender equality had been significant.[25]

At societal level in general the evaluation especially highlighted the progress made regarding gender equality. New legislation and policymaking had to a great extent been prepared by women's organisations. Women were more active in politics than during the post-war years and the women's movement was no longer confined to Zagreb. There were centres for women's research, gender and sexual rights and an important lobby for women's rights and gender equality issues.

"Our work made significant steps forward concerning domestic violence. Increasingly more institutions are now willing to cooperate, such as the police, social welfare people, etc. If you look back to the 1990s we were looked upon as traitors, but it's a different situation now. But it could also be dangerous because institutions could swallow us up. So we are trying to cooperate with them while still criticising them."
Autonomous Women Centre, Zagreb, Croatia

The evaluation affirms that Kvinna till Kvinna's support to women's organisations in Croatia had contributed to assisting thousands of women victims of war and improving mechanisms for gender-based violence and trafficking. The new gender legislation adopted in 2003 was to a great extent prepared by women's organisations. A national policy to promote gender equality had been adopted and institutions had been set up to work on gender issues in cooperation with civil society. The organisations had increased their capacity, some of them had become more visible and respected and acquired a broader network of contacts.[26]

However, since Kvinna till Kvinna's phase out of Croatia there has been more rhetoric than action by the authorities. While the legal framework for improving women's rights has been put in place, a lot remains to be done with regard to implementation.

Kvinna till Kvinna made a follow-up visit to Croatia in 2009, a couple of years after the phase out was completed. A team from Kvinna till Kvinna met with a majority of the women's organisations that had received support up until the end of 2006. The partner organisations were invited to air their views and concerns on how the phase out was managed.[27]

The follow-up showed that Kvinna till Kvinna's focus on core support up until the end helped create capable and stable organisations with the power to mobilise. Introducing them to alternative donors along with frequent and intense discussions with the field coordinator was also vital according to the organisations.

The first year after phase out was quite hard for several of the partner organisations. Despite feeling included in the process, Kvinna till Kvinna's absence still came as a bit of a shock. The networking had decreased substantially and they no longer had the sense of being part of a bigger movement. They also had less outreach outside Croatia since all material, including web pages, was now only in Croatian due to limited funding. Scarcity of funding had also created a climate of competition rather than cooperation.[28]

"It is difficult to see the EU presence in Croatia except when it comes to some pressure they made for developing documents. I think all these connections with EU helped in recognising the problems but the implementation is still difficult."
Women's Room, Zagreb, Croatia

Today the EU and the Croatian Government are the major sources of funding. As previously mentioned, the opportunities for domestic funding have been of vital importance for the survival of the majority of the organisations. These sources have however not made up for the withdrawal of foreign funds. The organisations have become less outspoken as a consequence of having to be approved for funding by donors that may not approve of their agenda or critique. Lidström further explores this issue in her research on the consequences of the exit strategies of international donors for civil society in Croatia. She concludes that not only is Croatian civil society dependent on the Croatian state and EU for funding, but there is little money for monitoring as a basis for a strong watchdog function. To overcome these problems organisations work above their human resources or try to fundraise for salaries and work double jobs.[29]

"It is very difficult to get EU funds. The government also provides some funding but getting it depends on how nice you are to them. [...] Of course you have to compromise."

BaBe, Zagreb, Croatia

5.6 Exploring New Forms of Cooperation

"You were good in marriage and good in divorce, but it will be nice to still be connected from time to time, in some structured way."
Women's Room, Zagreb, Croatia

THE END OF THE FUNDING relationship does not close the doors to other forms of partnership. Partner organisations in Croatia, as well as those interviewed in other regions for this report, have come up with ideas for continued cooperation based on the same values that guided the funded partnership. They have suggested, for instance, joint lobbying and advocating, regular contact and updates, creating a database with material funded through partnerships, continued networking activities, as well as making a list of the expertise of women's rights activists.

An often cited study on exit strategy conducted by Levinger, B. & McLeod, J. (2002) sees benefits in maintaining relationships and continuing cooperation with local actors. Adopting an advisory role or becoming more of a colleague is described as one way of allowing roles and relationships to evolve. Another way is to employ those trained in a programme partnership as trainers, thus recognising joint achievements and transforming capacity building into a resource for the funding organisation as it enters into new areas of cooperation. Remunerating former partner organisations when they serve as trainers can also be a way to help them ensure financial sustainability.[30] For

Kvinna till Kvinna one such example is an exchange between women human rights activists in the Western Balkans and DR Congo organised in 2009, where Croatian and Bosnian partner organisations contributed with their experiences in dealing with women victims of sexual violence during the Balkan war.

Continued cooperation does not necessarily require large amounts of funding. Making offices available for meetings or inviting formerly funded partner organisations to seminars, celebrations and other events are examples mentioned by aid foundations interviewed in another exit strategy report by GrantCraft (2007). Upholding relationships with partner organisations after exit is in this context viewed as a way to maximise the impact of funding.[31]

How to form the future relationship without presence, financial support and enhancing the joint influence on society locally and globally is something that Kvinna till Kvinna will continue to explore. Through the Croatia follow-up visit and the interviews with the partner organisations for this report, a first step has already been taken.

"For example, when it comes to election campaigns, etc., it would be good to get information on Sweden and maybe to think together about this or other issues."
Women's Group Brod, Slavonski Brod, Croatia

Chapter 6
Context Matters

"We know that Kvinna till Kvinna is aware that change takes time, but it is not reflected in your funding strategies. We have less and less general support and it is a big challenge when it comes to social change and feminist organisations working on change. We can't work only on a project basis. We need general support to be able to work long-term and also to make real change."

Nabila Espanioly,
Al Tufula, Nazareth, Israel

BEING PRESENT IN REGIONS with widely different pre-conditions, different histories of female emancipation and participation, and different conflict dynamics put new demands on Kvinna till Kvinna. Sustainability will have different implications in different regions and the exit guidelines will increasingly be incorporated in the process to align programme goals to phasing out activities, communicating those goals and making them measurable.

For example, the situation in the Middle East differs a great deal to Kvinna till Kvinna's experiences in the Western Balkans where Kvinna till Kvinna was among the first to arrive and became a major actor in the area of civil society and women's rights. The armed conflict also had a short life span in comparison.

There is a great need to discuss the goals that are expected to be achieved before preparing for exit and, depending on the context, defining the most important to sustain. The varying contexts in different countries and regions provide an opportunity for Kvinna till Kvinna to put the new guidelines to the test and to clarify the strategy and goals for our support. Even if an exit strategy is not precise, being able to express intentions creates space for strategic thinking.[32]

"We can do nothing during one year. If we think about prospects for the future we need 2 to 3-year projects. And it is very important that Kvinna till Kvinna's stay is sustainable."

Natella Akaba,
Association of Women of Abkhazia,
Sukhumi, Abkhazia

Chapter 7
From Exit to Entry

Even if there are many who, much like Kvinna till Kvinna, draw conclusions from experienced exits, it is very difficult to find examples where an exit strategy has actually been present from the entry point.

ONE SUCH CASE APPEARS in an article in the Journal of Microfinance from 2002. Development consultant Larry Hendricks writes about a bilateral microfinance project in China and how an exit strategy approach was applied. The project was still in the design phase and thinking exit had already raised several critical issues that needed to be addressed in order to promote sustainability.[33] When asked about it eight years later Hendricks recalls that the project was never followed through. He is still convinced of the benefits of early exit planning, but according to his experience from the field of microfinance, if exit strategies at all are taken into account, they are usually based on unrealistic expectations to reach sustainability in a very short timeframe.[34]

Nevertheless many evaluations of exit processes on different levels of international development cooperation and in different fields of support recommend building exit strategies into the design of programmes. The comprehensive study on aid exit management by Jerve, A. & Slob, A. (2008) recommends it in light of the fact that exit planning is so often left until the decision to exit has been taken.[35] Also the evaluation of civil society support in the Western Balkans, that includes support from Kvinna till Kvinna, recommends planning for an exit strategy at the start of a partnership.[36]

So why is exiting still often treated as an afterthought? The question highlights a chapter in the practical guide by GrantCraft (2007) for managing exits effectively. It is based on interviews with a large number of funding foundations within different fields. Some of them fear that specifying an exit strategy too early will establish limits and make it difficult to remain flexible. Others acknowledge feeling awkward just talking about exiting.[37]

However, the guide also provides examples of funders that do treat exiting as an inherent part of the funding cycle, making it clear that exiting sooner or later is inevitable. Those funders have found that honest conversations about the future exit can reduce tensions surrounding the issue and in some cases even lead to more interesting work being supported. One funding foundation stated that "We've funded lots of initiatives and investments in new ideas that only came up because exiting was on everyone's minds[38]."

During a food security seminar in southern Africa, the participants wanted to know how to overcome the fact that the exit strategy was not planned from the beginning. The answer was that you do not overcome it, but that it is beneficial to bring in exit thinking linked to sustainability concerns at any point in ongoing programmes and follow up activities.[39]

The Swedish development analyst Jerker Söderlund notes that while the Paris Agenda has led to an increased focus on phasing out and coordinating with other donors, there is little new on how to do it. He believes that planning the exit at the entry phase of a programme can be difficult – especially when the expected outcome is complicated to measure, like for instance capacity building. Still he maintains it can be worthwhile, precisely because it brings important sustainability issues to the surface.[40]

Kvinna till Kvinna's single largest contributor is the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). In recent years we have however steadily increased the share of funding from other donors. Early exit planning can perhaps make room for strategic thinking and actions that contribute to our ability to follow through an agenda regardless of the priorities of our main donor.

Interviewing partner organisations in regions where exit decisions have not yet been considered has served the purpose of bringing exit thinking into Kvinna till Kvinna's ongoing programmes. By asking questions about the prospect of an exit, important sustainability issues in the different regions have now been raised. The interviews will also be useful when we move from exit to entry, developing methods for exit thinking already at the entry phase.

There is no doubt a lot of support in theory for the value of early exit planning as a way of achieving sustainability. In practice, however, a lot remains to be done.

Chapter 8
Conclusions

NO ONE RECIPE will guarantee a successful exit and no two exits are the same but each one provides a learning opportunity. In the process of developing guidelines for making exit strategies Kvinna till Kvinna has been able to draw on its own experience of phasing out and that of others. We have seen that there are similar challenges for funders working in different fields. A common denominator for all exit strategies is the concept of sustainability.

The developments taking place on the international development arena with aid effectiveness at the centre influence all stakeholders, while the specific features of each organisation and the type of support provided will influence the choice of exit strategy approach.

Handing over ownership is often a key issue in exit strategies. Since Kvinna till Kvinna's partnership with women's organisations is based on common values and goals, and our programmes build on their problem analyses and strategies and how to address them, local ownership is already secured and we do not need to hand over responsibility of the projects.

Women's rights and equal representation in society are prerequisites for democracy and for a higher probability of lasting peace in post conflict zones. Kvinna till Kvinna sees strong and outspoken women's organisations as a prerequisite for bringing change forward. This focus is associated with strong resistance from those who do not want to see changes in existing power structures. For organisations like Kvinna till Kvinna it is therefore important to highlight the fact that it might be hard for organisations working with advocacy and as watchdogs to find domestic funds. This issue should be included in the exit strategy and addressed before leaving.

The following points have been important for us to increase sustainability when phasing out:

- **Goal achievement** – When considering exit, it is important to identify what your organisation regards as the key objectives that might in turn be indicators of sustainable change.

- **Funding** – Having an exit strategy provides opportunity to plan ahead and find funding for the programme, thus increasing the chances of following through on your strategies.

- **Context** – Especially in long-term partnerships and in volatile political situations many factors influencing sustainability will change over time. A flexible timeline is therefore necessary for a successful exit.

- **Our added value** – Focusing on what your organisation can contribute with will improve your strategic thinking and thus the chances of making achievements last.

In addition to these four points, having an open dialogue with partner organisations and other stakeholders in the process of developing the exit strategies will significantly improve the exit process and increase the chances for sustainability after phase out.

Our guidelines will help us achieve a more structured approach and early define what is to be sustained. It will also determine how our mandate should be interpreted in different phases of a programme, in different conflict settings and different donor environments.

In this report we have focused on the exit process. Now we will start working on defining our entry methodology, taking exit into account from the beginning of a programme. Kvinna till Kvinna hopes that this report can give inspiration to others. It is a learning process that has only just started.

"All other donor organisations came and went while Kvinna till Kvinna stuck it out and was the only one to provide continuous support to women groups and for women's human rights."

CURE, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina

Interviews and E-mail Correspondence

Interviews with Partner Organisations

Bosnia and Herzegovina, May 2010

Centre for Legal Assistance for Women, Zenica – *Berjama Ackar, Amira Kusundzija, Meliha Sendic, Jildura Pojskic, Selma Badzic, Jasmina Tica*

CURE, Sarajevo – *Berina Mehelic, Vedrana Frasto, Almina Omeragic, Berina Dzemailovic, Rada Sukara, Stela Kvacevic, Taida Horozovic*

Helsinki Citizens Assembly, Banja Luka – *Lidija Zivanovic, Stanislava Ninkovic*

United Women, Banja Luka – *Nada Golubic, Natalija Petric, Lana Jajcevic*

Zene Zenama, Sarajevo – *Nuna Zvizdic, Ronika Katalinski, Nefiza Dautovic*

Croatia, August 2009

Autonomous Women Centre, Zagreb – *Durdica Kolarec, Sanja Burlovic, Lidija Spancic*

BaBe, Zagreb – *Sanja Sarnavka, Renata Cuk*

Domino, Split – *Milijana Kucer, Nina Simunovic,*

Civil Organisation for Development, Dalj – *Jelka Borojevic, Jasmina Ilincic*

Women's Group Brod, Slavonski Brod – *Gordana Matanovic, Gordana Soroka, Stjepana Ugarkovic, Marija Pavlovic, Dubravka Zvacko*

Women's Room, Zagreb – *Maja Mamula, Paula Zore, Dalibor Stanic*

Women Studies, Zagreb – *Rada Boric, Jasminka Pesut, Sandra Prlanda, Ivana Cuk*

Israel and South Caucasus, September 2010

Al-Tufula Centre, Nazareth, Israel – *Nabila Espanioly, Ruba Sima'an*

Association of Women of Abkhazia, Sukhumi, Abkhazia – *Natella Akaba*

Cultural-Humanitarian Fund "Sukhumi", Kutaisi, Georgia – *Alla Gamakharia*

Isha L'Isha, Haifa, Israel – *Slava Greenberg*

The Community of Learning Women, Kufar Kara, Israel – *Mervat Omari*

Azerbaijan Feminist Group of Yuva Humanitarian Centre, Baku – *Rena Tahirova*

Focus Group Meeting in Montenegro, May 2010

Zene na Delu, Serbia – *Gudovic, Milica*

Agritra-Vizion Centre, Albania – *Hoxha, Majlinda*

Shelter Centre, Macedonia – *Kachakova, Nade*

SOS Niksic, Montenegro – *Medjedovic, Natasa*

Gender Studies, Kosovo – *Petric, Natalija Vuniqi, Luljeta*

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Hawkesworth, Ed – Senior Press Officer, UK Department for International Development. September 28, 2010

Hendricks, Larry – International Development Consultant, Hendricks and Associates. October 6-7, 2010

Hillar, Annie – Director of Programmes, Mama Cash. November 5, 2010

Jönsson, Boriana – Field Representative in Amman, Kvinna till Kvinna. October 21, 2010

Lidström, Anna – Field Representative Belgrade 2004 – 2010, Kvinna till Kvinna. October 27, 2010

McGeechan, Claire – Communications Section, AusAID. October 2, 2010

McMullen, Victoria – Media Relations Advisor, Canadian International Development Agency. September 20, 2010

Söderlund, Jerker – Development Analyst, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. October 12, 2010

Wennergren, Tove – Press officer, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. September 9, 13-14 and October 7-8, 2010

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Endnotes

1 The quote from *Agnes Allen* is well known and is called "Agnes Allen's law". The quote can be found in various American quotation books. Agnes Allen (1893 – 1986) was a writer and editor of Reader's Digest.

2 This refers to an exchange, initiated by Kvinna till Kvinna and PMU-Interlife in 2009, between women human rights activists from the Western Balkans and the DR Congo, all working on issues relating to sexual violence against women in conflict.

3 *The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness*, 2005, and the *Accra Agenda for Action*, 2008,
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4 *Jerve, A. & Slob, A*. (2008). *Managing Aid Exit and Transformation, Lessons from Botswana, Eritrea, India, Malawi and South Africa*, Synthesis Report, p. 13-14.

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10 Mail correspondance with *Tove Wennergren*. Press officer. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. October 7, 2010.

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12 Kvinna till Kvinna defines "political partnership" as having a continuous and stimulating political dialogue with our partner organisations, based on common values. We connect partner organisations with others and each other. We advocate and lobby for peace and women's organising on our own and together with partner organisations, pushing doors for them.

13 *Boriana Jönsson*, Kvinna till Kvinna field representative in Croatia 2002 – 2006, and currently in Jordan.

14 *Baatsen, P. Barr, J. Bennett, J. Thornton, P & Vailliant, C*. (2008). *Evaluation of DFID Country Programmes: Central Asia, South Caucasus and Moldova Region, 2002–2007*. EVSUM 686, p. 58-59.

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18 *Chand, S. & Coffman, R*. (2008). *How Soon can Donors Exit from Post-Conflict States?* Working Paper Number 141. Center for Global Development. www.cgdev.org/content/publications/detail/15464/

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[32] GrantCraft. (2007). *The Effective Exit – Managing the End of a Funding Relationship*, p. 3.

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[35] *Jerve, A. & Slob, A.* (2008). *Managing Aid Exit and Transformation, Lessons from Botswana, Eritrea, India, Malawi and South Africa*. Synthesis Report, p. 82-84.

[36] *Anger, J. Newkirk, J. Nilsson, A.* (2010). *Evaluation of Support to the Civil Society in the Western Balkans*. Final report, p. 22.

[37] GrantCraft. (2007). *The Effective Exit – Managing the End of a Funding Relationship*, p. 2-3. www.grantcraft.org

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[40] Interview with *Jerker Söderlund*. Development Analyst. Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. October 12, 2010.

◆▶ Phase Out Manual

This manual is meant to be used as a guide when planning for the exit process of a country programme. In a best case scenario we will be able to do everything suggested in the manual, but in many cases there will only be time and resources to implement parts of it.

Time line

THE TIME SPAN BETWEEN entry and exit will be guided by our programme goals, funding possibilities, the context, and our added value. We should, however, have a timeline for the actual exit process, which preferably should be five years, or a minimum of 2-3 years, in order to properly prepare for the exit.

Documentation of the process

DOCUMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES CONNECTED with phasing out, e.g. meetings with partners (individually or in a group) around this topic should be systemised throughout the whole phasing out process. This is particularly important to have available for new staff.

Flexibility

THE EXIT SHOULD BE conditioned by the context. It is necessary for Kvinna till Kvinna to make conscious strategic choices of how we should distribute our often decreasing funds to a programme country in order to be able to achieve our objectives. A step-wise reduction of funding gives the organisations a clear message that time is running out, but phasing out financial support does not necessarily mean a continuous decrease of funds to all partner organisations. If needed, our financial support can also be increased temporarily for the programme as well as to individual partner organisations. We might also consider supporting temporary initiatives and/or for us new women groups or organisations in the last phases of our presence in the programme country. The exit should be tailored to the context.

Communication

With our partner organisations

WE SHOULD HAVE AN open and continuous dialogue with our partner organisations about a future phase out, what we consider to be our responsibility, and what is not. A phase out plan, including a plan for communication, should be incorporated in our exit strategy for a country programme. The earlier and more concrete our plans are communicated, the better the organisations will be prepared.

In the last years of support to the organisations it is increasingly important to have an open dialogue and consult with them on what is most needed in this phase and how the funds should be distributed for best possible use. As soon as an exit date is set, the organisations should be informed.

Internally

IN THE LAST PHASES of presence in a country, as well as post exit, it is important to communicate our plans to the whole of Kvinna till Kvinna in order to mobilise joint efforts in the work with our partner organisations as well as in the external communication about our and our partner organisations' work in the country.

With stakeholders

ALL RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS should be informed of our phase out plans, as well as of the organisations that we are leaving behind. Such stakeholders could be funders like Side, EU, and other international organisations, as well as relevant domestic bodies and institutions like gender mechanisms or civil society mechanisms. This might increase the partner organisations' possibilities to advocate and get recognition, and to get funding.

Political partnership and capacity building

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS of presence in the programme country it is important to strengthen our political partnership with the women's organisations. This means that we will put more emphasis on communication, outreach, advocacy and networking on political issues, to some extent at the expense of our capacity building efforts.

Capacity building should take place throughout the cooperation with the partner organisations, and ought to respond to partner organisations' needs and requests for capacity building. The investments made in human resources, organisation, programme development, networks etc. will contribute to the sustainability of the organisations. When coming to the last stages of presence in a country the organisations should preferably have sufficient skills in organisational management including leadership and management of funds, project planning and result based management, fundraising, anti corruption measures, outreach/advocacy, human rights issues, and capacity to mobilise around particular issues. It is also important for the transfer of knowledge in the above-mentioned areas to be anchored within the organisations.

Fundraising

IN THE LAST FEW YEARS of support to the organisations we can assist them in increasing their possibilities to find other donors by:

- Mapping potential donors
- Organising trainings in fundraising, including how to find other donors
- Linking partner organisations with other donors
- Encouraging strategic planning for fundraising among partner organisations

In order to increase the possibilities for us and our partner organisations to find funding, especially in the last phases of support, we might be open for co-funding with our partner organisations depending on our resources to do so. One way would be to seek smaller funds together with them for specific projects during the time we are still in the country. In certain cases we could be prepared to be a funding partner for bigger EU-funds or similar. Co-funding might also open up for future cooperation, after we have phased out from a country. It is however important to emphasise that it is ultimately not Kvinna till Kvinna's responsibility to find additional or alternative funding for our partner organisations, but to provide tools for them to do it themselves.

Networking

THROUGHOUT OUR SUPPORT TO women's organisations we encourage networking nationally as well as internationally. After a few years in a country this often makes us an important window to the rest of the world for the organisations. Therefore, it is important that we in the last phase of presence in a programme country provide possibilities for the organisations to have solid connections and partnerships with organisations within and outside the country. This is done by increasing our efforts in facilitating contacts, also to others than women's organisations, such as peace organisations, institutions, or in other way relevant actors. Other ways to encourage networking could be done by channelling initiatives, looking out for events, and by providing financial support to travels for groups and individuals.

Consolidating results

ONE OR TWO YEARS before leaving a country it is important to evaluate what we, Kvinna till Kvinna, and our partner organisations have achieved together during our long term partnership. This can be done in different ways; for example by organising a seminar with partner organisations and experts, to analyse the situation and look at results achieved during the last ten years or more, and what remains to be done. This might also be an opportunity to meet with the most important donors and other stakeholders to give them an insight into what has been achieved and what is needed in the years to come.

It is advisable to travel back to the country some time after phase out in order to follow up on the progress of our partner organisations and the achievements in the areas of women's human rights and gender equality to see how sustainable these achievements have been. This is also an opportunity to evaluate the phase out.

Symbolic ending

OUR EXIT FROM a programme country/region should end with an event celebrating our long-term partnership with the organisations and our mutually achieved results. It is an opportunity to also invite other stakeholders.

Post phase out
– new types of cooperation

IN DIALOGUE WITH PARTNER organisations we should identify what will happen after phase out and how we would like to continue mutual communication and/or cooperation.

To facilitate mutual communication and/or cooperation with the organisations after phase out, it is important to build institutional memory within Kvinna till Kvinna about the women's organisations in the country from which we are phasing out.

KVINNA TILL KVINNA

The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation supports women in war and conflict in order to increase their power and influence.

   After more than ten years of supporting women's organisations in the Western Balkans, the process of phasing out our activities started. 2006 we closed our office in Croatia and since then we are gradually phasing out from the other countries in the region. In this process we have searched for successful ways of managing the phase out. With this report we would like to share our experiences made so far and to contribute to the learning process that has begun among development cooperation agencies.