

EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY MANAGEMENT
CENTRE EUROPÉEN DE GESTION DES POLITIQUES DE DÉVELOPPEMENT

Evaluation of the HORIZONT3000 TA Personnel Programme

Final Report

ECDPM

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Acknowledgments

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While this evaluation contains many inputs from the various stakeholders, the sole responsibility for any factual errors or omissions, the interpretation of the data and the analysis lies with the authors. Volker Hauck coordinated the evaluation, assisted by Julia Zinke (both ECDPM) and the consultants George Kasumba (Uganda), Frederik van Sluys (Costa Rica) and Flor de Maria Zuniga Garcia (Nicaragua). The country reviews were carried out by Volker Hauck, George Kasumba and Julia Zinke for Uganda, and Frederik van Sluys and Flor de Maria Zuniga Garcia for Nicaragua. Complementary interviews were conducted by Volker Hauck during a non-ADA assignment in Mozambique. Ms Heather Baser and Mr Anthony Land (both ECDPM Associate) also provided valuable comments to ensure the quality of the work.

How to read this report?

For those readers who wish to read more than the Executive Summary but do not have time to go through the entire document in detail, we would recommend to read the Conceptual Framework (Chapter 2), the Overall Assessment of HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme (Section 3.3) and the Recommendations (Chapter 5). Readers who would like to gain more insights into the respective country assessments should in addition read Sections 3.1 (on Uganda) and 3.2 (on Nicaragua). We decided to incorporate the details of the case studies into this report, instead of producing a separate annex summarizing the country results, as foreseen earlier.

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List of acronyms

A2N	Africa 2000 Network (NGO Uganda)
ACISAM	Asociacion de Capacitacion e Investigacion para la Salud Mental (Association for Training and Research for Mental Health), El Salvador
ACP	Africa, Caribbean and Pacific countries
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADP	Agricultural Development Project (Fort Portal, Uganda)
AfDB	African Development Bank
AGEH	Arbeitsgemeinschaft für Entwicklungshilfe (Germany)
AISPO	Associazione Italiana Per la Solidarietà fra i popoli (Italian Association for Solidarity among People)
AMC	Accion Medica Christiana (Christian Medical Action), Nicaragua
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BmeiA	Bundesministerium für europäische und internationale Angelegenheiten (Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs)
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
BS	Budget Support
BTC	Belgian Technical Cooperation
CAD	Comision Anti-Drogas (Anti Drugs Commission)
CCAD	Comision Centroamericana de Ambiente y Desarrollo (Central American Commission for Environment and Development)
CD	Capacity Development
CECALLI	Fundacion de Nicaragua de Promotores de Salud Comunitaria y Medio Ambiente (Nicaraguan Foundation of Promotors of Community Health and Environment)
CECIM	Centro de Educacion y Capacitacion Integral “Maura Clark” (Integrated Education and Training Centre `Maura Clark`), Nicaragua
CONPES	National Council of Social and Economic Planning, Nicaragua
CREEC	Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation (Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda)
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CVC	Italian NGO

DAC	Development Assistance Committee of the OECD
Danida	Danish International Development Agency, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs
DED	German Development Service
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DKA	Dreiköningsaktion der Katholischen Jungschar Österreichs (HORIZONT3000 member organisation)
ECDPM	European Centre for Development Policy Management (NL)
EFD	Education for Development
EU	European Union
FADCANIC	Fundacion para la Autonomia y Desarrollo de la Costa Atlantica de Nicaragua (Foundation for the Autonomy and Development of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua)
GBS	General Budget Support
GTZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
HRM	Human Resources Management
IFDI	Integrated Family Development Initiatives (NGO Uganda)
IIZ	Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (one of the predecessor organisations of HORIZONT3000)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDI	Integrated Rural Development Initiatives (NGO Uganda)
IRUDEKA	Integrated Rural Development Programme (Luweero, Uganda)
JEW	Jugend eine Welt (Austrian organisation)
JVP	Young People's Voluntary Programme (predecessor to SNV, NL)
KFBÖ	Katholische Frauenbewegung Österreichs (HORIZONT3000 member organisation)
KFS	Kofinanzierungsstelle für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (one of the predecessor organisations of HORIZONT3000)
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (Germany)
KMBÖ	Katholische Männerbewegung Österreichs (HORIZONT3000 member organisation)
KoBü	In-country Coordination Office, ADA
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
MS	Danish Association for International Co-operation (Danish NGO)
NDP	National Development Plan

NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSA	Non-State Actors
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
OED	Österreichischer Entwicklungsdienst (predecessor organisation of HORIZONT3000)
OEZA	Official Austrian Development Assistance
OPM	Oxford Policy Management (UK)
PBAs	Programme-based Approaches
PEAP	Poverty Eradication Action Plan (Uganda)
PHC	Primary healthcare
PIUs	Project Implementation Units
PND	Plan Nacional de Desarrollo (National Development Plan), Nicaragua
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAAN	Region Autonoma del Atlantico del Norte (North Atlantic Autonomous Region), Nicaragua
RAAS	Region Autonoma del Atlantico del Sur (South Atlantic Autonomous Region), Nicaragua
SC-UK	Save the Children, UK
SGPRS	Strengthened Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy, Nicaragua
SICA	Sistema de Integracion Centro Americana (Central American Integration System)
SILAIS	Sistemas Locales de Atencion en Salud (Local Systems of Health Attention)
SNV	Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers (NL)
SWApS	Sector-Wide Approaches
TA	Technical Assistance
TAs	Technical Advisors
ToR	Terms of Reference
UCPC	Uganda Cleaner Production Centre, Uganda
UJAS	Uganda Joint Assistance Strategy
UMVI	Uganda Martyrs Vocational Training Institute, Soroti, Uganda

UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
URACCAN	Universidad de las Regiones Autonomas de la Costa Caribe de Nicaragua (University of the Nicaraguan Caribbean Coast Autonomous Regions)
VSO	Voluntary Services Overseas
YSA	Youth Social-Work Association, Uganda

Executive summary

In 2006 the Austrian Development Agency (ADA) commissioned the European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) to carry out an evaluation of the technical assistance (TA) personnel programme run by HORIZONT3000, an Austrian NGO consisting of six member organisations of the Catholic Church in Austria. HORIZONT3000 receives a large proportion of its annual budget of some Euro 16 million from the Austrian Government (Euro 8.9 million in 2005), of which some Euro 2.6 million (this is the OEZA cofinancing part, altogether the personnel programme amounts up to 3,8 Mio) is spent on the personnel programme. The programme funds some 100 technical personnel per year, who are posted in 9 partner countries.¹

Chapter 1: Introduction discusses the background to this strategic evaluation, its scope, focus and objective, which is to: *“... assess the technical assistance personnel programme of HORIZONT3000 in the context of the current international discussion [on development cooperation] with a view to contribute to a new formulation of future technical assistance personnel programmes and for an improved alignment and harmonisation of this instrument with other instruments of development cooperation ...”*. As such, the evaluation has a dual purpose, which is (1) to evaluate the TA personnel programme as it has been implemented and (2) to stimulate debate on the future of TA personnel programmes in Austria in the context of the wider international discussion on development cooperation policy and practice. Chapter 1 also discusses the methodology used for assessing the programme. This consisted of a desk review of documentation, briefing meetings in Vienna with various stakeholders from ADA, HORIZONT3000 and the Austrian Foreign Ministry, two field studies in Uganda and Nicaragua and some complementary interviews in Mozambique, all of which fed into an inception and a draft final report which were discussed during meetings in Vienna. The study was also informed by ECDPM's broader ongoing work on technical assistance and capacity development.

Chapter 2: Developing the assessment framework provides a brief introduction to the wider international policy debate on TA and capacity development. This is linked to a presentation of the international discussion on demand for TA personnel, TA effectiveness and TA management in Annex 3. Chapter 2 also situates HORIZONT3000's TA provision on a continuum of approaches to aid provision and classifies it as a 'direct approach', whereby donors consult and engage with partners in a participatory manner but remain in control of the resources provided. The chapter also introduces two principal guiding questions for the evaluation, namely: (i) *Is HORIZONT3000 “doing things right”?* in terms of how it provides its capacity development assistance (ii) *Is it “doing the right things”?* in terms of the choices it makes for supporting capacity development in its partner countries. It introduces an assessment framework which sets the three levels of capacity development (individual, organisational and institutional capacity) which TA personnel can contribute to against the demand for TA personnel, TA effectiveness and TA management.

Chapter 3 discusses the **Relevance, Effectiveness and Management** of HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme based on the field studies in Uganda and Nicaragua (and Mozambique) of personnel assignments from 2000 to the present. It reports on the findings in Uganda and Nicaragua in separate sections, highlights factors contributing to success and failure of TA personnel provision in both countries, and provides an overall assessment of HORIZONT3000's personnel programme. A number of key messages emerge from this evaluation:

1. **HORIZONT3000 TA personnel supports capacity development at individual and organisational levels, not at institutional level:** At the level of individual capacity, staff in the partner organisations benefit from the experience of working with the TA personnel provided through the exposure to different knowledge, skills and attitudes. HORIZONT3000

¹ These are Kenya, Mozambique, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Papua New Guinea, Brazil and Nicaragua.

TA personnel is also good at supporting the organisational development of the partner organisations, of which many are NGOs operating at the meso level. However, HORIZONT3000 struggles to respond effectively to demands for very specific or higher-level expertise, which may in part be due to the conditions it can offer, and is less well placed to support institutional development and empowerment. It also has little comparative advantage in working with governments (at least in the case of Uganda). These findings imply a clear need to be realistic about the fact that HORIZONT3000 TA personnel, at least at present, can support capacity development up to a certain level, but not beyond.

2. **HORIZONT3000 overall is “doing things right” within the framework within which it operates:** Personnel provision generally responds to the demands of HORIZONT3000’s partner organisations, and the TA personnel provided overall is seen as good. The management of the programme also is generally done well, although there is scope for improvement, for instance as concerns reporting practices.
3. However, it can be argued that **HORIZONT3000 is not necessarily “doing the right things”:** This is because the current aid discourse and partner country policy context demand higher-level inputs, there is a need for coherence, complementarity and coordination at all levels of assistance, including at the level of HORIZONT3000’s partners at the meso level, and there is in fact, in many partner countries, a growing number of local human resources available to do the jobs carried out by HORIZONT3000’s TA personnel.
4. **Partners appreciate HORIZONT3000 technical assistance, but would be happy to receive more relevant/higher quality support:** Most partner organisations see HORIZONT3000 TA personnel as a useful complementary human resource in resource-poor environments. However, the quality and experience of the people provided is not always in line with their needs arising from a rapidly changing and complex development context. There is also a growing demand for specialists and for experienced (development) professionals, which HORIZONT3000 cannot easily address.
5. **There is a need for experienced development professionals:** As the Nicaragua programme shows, “long-timers” (as this evaluation calls them) with extensive country and development experience are in a better position to respond to more complex and specific demands and to provide higher-level capacity development support than “experienced newcomers” on their first assignment in a country (as are prevalent in the Uganda case). The latter category of personnel principally has good professional experience and is highly motivated, but also has several disadvantages, chief among which is the lack of development and relevant country experience. They also do not tend to have the strong links with development networks in Austria and Europe which the long-timers tend to provide. There is therefore a need for experienced TA personnel. The new contract policy, which limits the total number of contract years for TA personnel to five, creates a gap, which might lead to a decrease in the quality of assistance provided. This gap needs to be filled, through not necessarily through ‘long-timers’, as section 3.3.3 discusses. Rather, HORIZONT3000 and ADA might look into filling this gap through other means, for instance by creating a category of experienced advisors with a separate remuneration package, as suggested in the recommendations.
6. **A mix of ‘direct’ TA and ‘indirect’ financial support can be supportive to capacity development:** TA personnel provision should not be looked at in isolation, despite the current HORIZONT3000 practice of administrative and practical separation of personnel assignments and financial assistance. The provision of personnel and financial assistance to an organisation in combination can be supportive to its capacity development. Moreover, while the administrative support provided by HORIZONT3000’s country offices to its assistance projects seems to be mostly adequate, there is scope for better qualitative accompaniment of the assistance provided, and better knowledge sharing to support this.
7. **The HORIZONT3000 preparation course provides good value for money:** It is seen as useful both by the HORIZONT3000 TA personnel, including the “long-timers” in the Nicaragua programme, who see it as useful general introduction to their assignments, and

by the local partner organisations, who feel that the personnel tends to arrive well prepared. An area which could be improved, and in which the preparation course has a role to play, could be to inform participants on the wider debate on development cooperation, capacity development and aid effectiveness. This type of training could also benefit exciting HORIZONT3000 staff, to enable them to better follow the ongoing debates.

Chapter 4: The future of TA personnel programmes deals with the forward-looking aspects of this evaluation. It looks at the longer-term perspectives for TA personnel provision, and briefly presents four approaches emerging or already practiced in the international development community which can be used as a basis for the discussion of the future role of NGOs and TA providers such as HORIZONT3000 and their niche in the new aid agenda. The four perspectives are: TA personnel provision for the purpose of (i) connecting and bridging across levels, (ii) facilitation and creation of synergies, (iii) building inter-cultural communities and (iv) creating space for bottom-up capacity development. Chapter 4 also sets out some criteria and guiding principles for partnering on TA personnel, and links to a capacity assessment framework presented in Annex 7 (developed for a major development agency) which can be used as a basis for developing a framework specifically adapted to the Austrian NGO context. Finally, the chapter presents the practices of other (bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental) TA providers, covering a spectrum ranging from ‘volunteer organisations’ to ‘professional TA providers’, as a frame of reference for the discussion of HORIZONT3000’s TA personnel programme.

Chapter 5, finally, discusses the key **Recommendations** for the future orientation and management of HORIZONT3000 personnel programme emerging from this evaluation. Key among them is that the organisation should build on its existing comparative advantages. In doing so, HORIZONT3000, which at present is torn into many different directions and seems to be doing “a bit of everything”, will have to choose the direction in which it wants to orient its work in the future –a path towards greater professionalism or profiling itself as a volunteer organisation. We do not think this has to be a complete either/or choice, but believe that HORIZONT3000 would benefit from deciding on which ‘mode’ of TA personnel it wants to predominate. To inform this discussion, we make a number of recommendations for the TA personnel programme, both at headquarters and at country level.

Recommendations for the headquarters level include:

- To build on the organisation’s existing comparative advantage in working with NGOs
- To look at the options for providing better qualified/ more experienced TA personnel to partners, which is likely to have to include a revised remuneration policy
- To build up the organisation’s policy knowledge and become a better informed policy dialogue partner on international development cooperation
- To decentralise more responsibility to the country offices and build up more in-house capacity (sector knowledge) at country level
- To become more accountable towards Southern partners through more transparent reporting systems and procedures
- To become a ‘learning organisation’ and enhance the quality of the organisation’s advisory work
- To balance the demands of the “owner” organisations’ with the priorities emerging from national development strategies.

Key recommendations for the programme at the level of the country offices are:

- To recognise the changing country policy contexts and aim at more coherent, complementary and coordinated assistance and to focus interventions more
- To become a facilitator/play a bridging role in assisting partner organisations to overcome policy knowledge gaps, connect to the institutional environment, develop synergies, etc.
- To explore opportunities for working with local governments (“no meso-level development without government”)

- To continue with a mix of 'direct' TA personnel provision and 'indirect' financial assistance where needs and opportunities arise
- To continue to work in particularly deprived/ fragile areas where there is a greater need for 'direct' approaches to aid provision
- To continue to provide support to HORIZONT3000's "owner" organisations

Some implications of these recommendations for HORIZONT3000's role the partner countries reviewed (Nicaragua and Uganda) are highlighted in a table at the end of the chapter.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to this evaluation

HORIZONT3000 was founded in 2001 and emerged out of the restructuring of the former Austrian organisations OED, IIZ and KFS.² Its constituency are six principal organisations of the Catholic Church in Austria, namely the

- Dreikönigsaktion der Katholischen Jungschar Österreichs (DKA)
- Katholische Männerbewegung Österreichs (KMBÖ)
- Katholische Frauenbewegung Österreichs (KFBÖ)
- Caritas Österreich
- Welthaus Graz
- Referat der Erzdiözese Wien für Mission und Entwicklung.

HORIZONT3000 is the biggest Austrian non-governmental development organisation. Based on figures from 2005, it has an annual budget of some Euro 16 million, of which approximately 25% comes from private sources in Austria. The rest originates principally from the Austrian Government, nearly Euro 10 million, and the European Commission. The biggest share of the Austrian Government contribution to HORIZONT3000 is spent for financing projects (approximately Euro 7.3 million), the rest for the TA personnel programme (Euro 2.6 million).

The HORIZONT3000 TA personnel programme is the subject of this evaluation. The programme is the only programme of this kind in Austria, and contracts some 100 persons per year in nine partner countries.³ The TA personnel currently provided to partner organisations in the South are on average in their late 30s, have to have at least two years work experience (though most have more), and mostly have no previous work experience in a developing country context. Based on their professional background and experience, they are considered in the Austrian development cooperation context as experts (Fachkräfte). A particularity of HORIZONT3000's personnel programme is that the technical advisors do not manage or control financing projects. If financial support is given to a partner organisation, it is the partner organisation together with HORIZONT3000 which manages and monitors this resource supply.

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) – founded in 2004, owned by the federal government of Austria and represented by the Austrian Foreign Ministry – implements the Government's development cooperation programmes and projects and is the principal financing agency of HORIZONT3000 on behalf of the Austrian Government.

The European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM) was invited to undertake this evaluation. ECDPM is an independent foundation,⁴ based in Maastricht in the Netherlands, and has worked extensively on the issue of technical assistance over the recent years, as part of its work on aid effectiveness and the future of development cooperation. Its track record of policy relevant research and evaluations is contained in the literature list.

1.2 Scope and focus of the evaluation

In 2006, ADA formulated a TOR to evaluate HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme over the period 2000 - 2005 (see Annex 2).⁵ The overall objective of the evaluation is to

² Österreichischer Entwicklungsdienst (OED), Institut für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (IIZ), Kofinanzierungsstelle für Entwicklungszusammenarbeit (KFS)

³ These are Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Nicaragua, Brazil and Papua New Guinea

⁴ ECDPM's principal funders are The Netherlands, Sweden, Finland, Belgium, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Switzerland. For more information on ECDPM see its annual reports (www.ecdpm.org).

⁵ As agreed with ADA, this evaluation does not cover the effects and impact of former HORIZONT3000 technical

“... assess the technical assistance personnel programme of HORIZONT3000 in the context of the current international discussion [on development cooperation] with a view to contribute to a new formulation of future technical assistance personnel programmes and for an improved alignment and harmonisation of this instrument with other instruments of development cooperation ...”

The evaluation is launched at a time of important changes in international development cooperation policy and practice. The following commitments and trends are noted:

- The international commitment to achieving the MDGs
- Commitments to increasing the overall level of aid
- The Paris Declaration on harmonisation, alignment and results⁶
- The shift towards programme based approaches and budget support
- Adherence to national poverty reduction strategies
- Recognition of the centrality of capacity development to the above⁷
- The debate on the role of civil society and on micro/meso level interventions in the context of the above trends.⁸

The latter point is of particular relevance for this evaluation as the work of HORIZONT3000 is mainly carried out in organisations working at the micro and meso level of partner countries. The concerns as expressed in the overall objectives of the ToR need to be seen in this context. They address TA personnel issues which go beyond the specific levels of intervention at which HORIZONT3000 is active. ECDPM was invited to stimulate the **debate on the future of TA personnel programmes in Austria** and to contribute to the formulation of the guidelines on how Austrian cooperation with personnel sending organisations/ TA personnel providers should take place. We therefore see this evaluation having an implicit strategic objective which leads us to link the assessment of HORIZONT3000 with the wider international discussion on development cooperation and the future of TA personnel policy and practice in more general. **Chapter 2** presents some background on the related wider policy debate which helps to frame the discussion.

Chapter 3 broadly assesses HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme and looks at its relevance (the demand side of the TA programme), effectiveness (what has best worked and why) and efficiency (the management of TA programme). Where possible, outcomes and traces of impact are highlighted to show to what extent the interventions of HORIZONT3000 contributed to the intended development process and the objectives set. In doing this, the chapter also sheds light on the coherence and alignment of HORIZONT3000's programme with other instruments of the Austrian development cooperation. The assessment is based on country reviews in Uganda and Nicaragua, complementary interviews in Vienna and Mozambique and a desk study of relevant material. Uganda and Nicaragua were chosen as case studies because both are priority partner countries for official Austrian development cooperation in which HORIZONT3000 also has an active personnel programme. Some discussions relating to the provision of technical assistance personnel presented in this report

advisors relating to the awareness raising on global issues after returning to Austria or other countries in Europe. This will be dealt with by another evaluation under the guidance of ADA.

⁶ The Paris Declaration, endorsed on 2 March 2005, is an international agreement to which over one hundred Ministers, Heads of Agencies and other Senior Officials adhered and committed their countries and organisations to continue to increase efforts in harmonisation, alignment and managing aid for results with a set of monitorable actions and indicators (see: www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html)

⁷ As e.g. expressed in DAC Network on Governance: The Challenge of Capacity Development: Working towards Good Practice, February 2006.

⁸ We refer to three levels of intervention as follows:

- the micro level – the community level or level of the individual organisation
- the meso or intermediate level – the district/regional level of a country
- the macro-level – the national level

apply to both cases. We have chosen to present them more elaborately in the Uganda case study to avoid repetition.

Chapter 4 deals with the forward looking aspects of this evaluation. Within the resources provided for this evaluation, we will discuss and work out an orientation for the future direction of TA personnel programmes. ADA and HORIZONT3000 will need to decide to what extent these observations can be used for other country programmes as well. The chapter also formulates some relevant guiding principles for the operation of TA personnel programmes between organisations in Austria and local organisations, and makes reference to a tool which can be used to support the assessment of capacity development support to partner organisations, including the placement of TA personnel. Finally, the chapter presents information on the work of other technical assistance personnel providers which can help to compare the efficiency of any future Austrian TA personnel programme with those of peer organisations.

However, the main focus of the evaluation is HORIZONT3000's ongoing TA personnel programme. The findings of the evaluation, together with emerging views from the current international discussion and policy on TA personnel provide the input for answering the forward looking aspects of this review, as mentioned above, and feed into the concluding **Chapter 5**, which summarises the principal recommendations and expresses some views on the longer-term programmatic perspectives for the placement of TA personnel in Uganda and Nicaragua

1.3 Methodology

This evaluation was carried out between November 2006 and April 2007. It was undertaken along the following steps:

- Extensive briefing sessions at ADA, HORIZONT3000 and the Foreign Ministry in Vienna (November 2006)
- Exchange with HORIZONT3000 returnees in Vienna
- Desk study of relevant material (November 2006 to January 2007) - this study comprised the review of annual reports, web-sites, memoranda, contract forms, programme and project documentation and evaluation reports
- Development of methodology for field work (December 2006) – see Annex 4
- Interviews with ADA and HORIZONT3000 representatives during a mission to Mozambique (Maputo, Chimoio and Tete) which was not related to Austrian Development Cooperation (December 2006); these interviews were conducted in addition to what the contract asked us to do
- Writing of Inception Report and discussion of evaluation focus in Vienna (January 2007)
- Execution of field studies in Uganda and Nicaragua (February 2007) – for information on the organisations and projects visited in these two countries, see Annex 5
- Writing of draft report (March/ April 2007)
- Presentation of draft report to stakeholders of the Austrian development cooperation in Vienna (May 2007)

The evaluation was carried out in parallel to ongoing work of ECDPM on the subject of technical assistance.⁹ This was beneficial, as it provided complementary insights and cross-fertilisation at different levels. While the HORIZONT3000 evaluation provided information on the questions of TA provision at the micro and meso levels of developing countries, ECDPM's other work allowed us to connect this to the wider debate on aid reform issues which have been introduced to partner countries in the context of macro policy dialogue about the Millennium

⁹ ECDPM is currently undertaking a study on the *"Provision of Technical Assistance Personnel: What can we learn from promising experiences"* with country reviews in Vietnam, the Solomon Islands and Mozambique. This wider study is financed by the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Danida), AusAID and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Development Goals and the implementation of the Paris Declaration.

The organisations and projects selected for review represent a balance between (i) capital and rural areas; (ii) advanced development contexts and deprived and fragile areas; (iii) government/ regional government and non-governmental organisations; (iv) different sectors; (v) faith-based vs. secular organisations; (vi) with organisations where currently HORIZONT3000 TA work and organisations which had formerly received TA; (vii) Austrian cooperation head quarters, country offices and field operations; and (viii) Austrian and non-Austrian development organisations and its stakeholders. The selection of organisations to be visited was done in cooperation with HORIZONT3000, and took into account the available resources and time to visit places outside the capitals.

We held interviews and focus group discussions with some 88 informants. Technical advisors and their host organisations were interviewed separately. Besides the technical advisors and HORIZONT3000 and ADA representatives, informants originated from partner governments, civil society organisations and associations, research institutes, faith-based organisations, international NGOs, development agencies and embassies. Experiences came principally from the renewable energy sector, youth and social work, rural development, health, education and vocational training. In Uganda, an interim feed-back session to ADA representatives allowed us to cross-check our approach and to validate some first observations made.

The wide range of interviews held allowed us to capture a diversity of views and opinions as well as the concrete experiences of the various stakeholders, and enabled us to identify the patterns of relationships and effects that people associate with HORIZONT3000's intervention. The information was cross-checked through triangulation of data from interviews, observations and documentation to ensure the accuracy of the information. The review also made good use of the assessment of the HORIZONT3000's programme in Brazil and the evaluation on NGOs in Nicaragua to compare our results across countries.

While some of the issues are brought forward with considerable boldness, a word of modesty is required: We have been able to draw on earlier work on technical assistance done by ECDPM and were able to conduct in-depth interviews with a wide range of people. Despite this broad background, the review remains no more than a snap-shot of a rapidly changing context in the countries in which HORIZONT3000 operates. Moreover, the time and resources provided for this study permitted us to only scratch at the surface of an enormously complex and contested issue – the reader should take this into account and read this paper for what it is.

2 Developing the assessment framework

2.1 Demand, effectiveness and management

Recent years have witnessed important changes in development cooperation policy, culminating in the 2005 **Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness**. This declaration defines capacity development as the primary responsibility of developing countries, with donors playing a supportive role. It sees developing countries as leading the process by formulating their own strategies and setting specific objectives in their development plans, while donor strategies and activities are to be aligned with the development frameworks of partner countries and harmonisation and coordination between the donor community and partner countries in the South is to be enhanced. This has bearings on technical assistance, as TA is one of the key mechanisms used to support capacity development (see Box 1).¹⁰ But there is a big question

¹⁰ There are many definitions of capacity development. UNDP defines it as the process by which individuals, groups, institutions and organisations improve their ability to perform functions, identify and solve problems efficiently and to understand and deal with their development need in a broader context and in a sustainable manner. Closely linked is

about how capacity development and technical assistance should be done. Recent experiences and evaluations with the implementation of programme-based approaches,¹¹ in particular budget support (IDD and Associates 2006) and sector programmes, indicate a growing need for capacity development to make such aid modalities a success.

Box 1: Unpacking the concept of ‘Capacity’

ECDPM’s work in the context of the study on Capacity, Change and Performance¹² leads us to make the following distinctions in terminology:

- Competencies are the energy, skills and abilities of individuals;
- Capabilities are the broad range of collective skills that can be either technical, logistical, or generative (such as the ability to earn legitimacy, to adapt, and to create meaning and identity), and which allow groups, organisations and groups of organisations to be able to do something with intention, effectiveness and some sort of scale;
- Capacity is the overall ability of a system to create public value; and
- Capacity development is the process of enhancing, unleashing, and maintaining capacity.

ECDPM’s work has concentrated heavily on capabilities and particularly the soft or intangible issues such as learning, relationships and motivation and how they can contribute to the overall capacity of a system.

For the past half century, **technical assistance** and particularly the deployment of personnel, has been one of the most recognisable features of development cooperation and, for some donors, particularly the bilaterals, it has represented the **most common mechanism for promoting capacity development**. However, TA has also attracted a lot of criticism, especially the provision of long-term expatriate personnel. This criticism was ventilated in the late 1980s/ early 1990s already, as well as more recently.¹³ While most of the criticisms of technical assistance have had a general validity, technical assistance and the personnel associated with it have nonetheless made significant contributions in many countries and contexts. ECDPM’s study on *Promising Approaches to Technical Assistance Personnel*, mentioned above, shows, for example, that technical assistance can make positive contributions to helping a country moving out of destitution towards more stability and progress (Hauck and Souto 2007). The evaluation of a small-scale technical assistance programme financed by the Commonwealth Secretariat (ECDPM 2005) also shows that the provision of experts can help to define strategic direction and provide input to critical national debates, often of a political nature.

Given these substantial changes in how development cooperation is evolving, there is a need for agencies and TA providers, such as ADA and HORIZONT3000, to understand the demand for TA personnel from partner organisations and international development organisations. There is also a need to understand what has worked over the recent years and what technical assistance provision can build on to be effective in the future. Finally, changes in approaches to development support have bearings on how TA personnel provision should be managed, with a view to aligning and harmonising it more with local priorities and with what other partners do. Given the current policy discourse, these questions apply to reflections about assistance at the macro level, as well as to what should happen within individual partner organisations at the intermediate and micro levels. The country analysis for Uganda and Nicaragua is discussed in terms of these three dimensions. The current international discussion and policy on TA personnel with regard to demand, effectiveness and management is summarised in Annex 3 for

the understanding that capacity development is the overall process whereby people, organisations and society as a whole unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time (Morgan, Land and Baser - 2005).

¹¹ A programme based approach is a way of engaging in development cooperation based on the principles of coordinated support for a locally-owned programme of development, such as a national poverty reduction strategy, a sector programme, a thematic programme or a programme of a specific organisation (OECD, 2005).

¹² Forthcoming (www.ecdpm.org/dcc/capacitystudy)

¹³ See, for example, Berg (1993); ActionAid (2006); DFID (2005a; 2005b); Duncan (2006); IMF (2005); Lopes and Theisohn (2003); OECD/DAC (2006); Williams et al (2003); World Bank (2005)

reference.

Box 2: Understanding of technical assistance

In the following, technical assistance (TA) is understood¹⁴ as ‘the transfer, adaptation, mobilisation and utilisation of services, skills, knowledge and technology’. It includes both short- and long-term personnel from both national and foreign sources, plus training, support equipment, consultancies, study visits, seminars and various forms of linkage. This broad concept of TA comprising any form of non-financial aid aimed at supporting capacity development efforts is similar to the term technical cooperation.

2.2 Capacity development – framing our understanding and assessment

Within international cooperation, we would distinguish **four principal approaches to supporting the development of a partner**, as set out in Box 3, below. They can be situated along a continuum ranging from a situation where donors “do” the work themselves to the far end of the spectrum, the “hands-off” or “financing” approach, whereby development partners limit their intervention to pay for proven, measurable or demonstrated progress. In between is the so-called “direct” approach whereby donors and agencies are much more operational and in control, and “indirect” approaches where donors operate more from a distance and are less directly involved. Within the current discourse towards implementing the Paris Declaration, there is a clear push towards supporting endogenous initiatives whereby donor control is ideally absent, exercised from a distance, or gradually moving towards this.

Box 3: Four broad approaches guiding development cooperation

Broadly speaking, we can distinguish four principal approaches to support the development of a partner¹⁵ which reflect the current discourse in international development cooperation and which have a bearing on the type of TA supplied.

At one end of the spectrum are **donors who “do” the work themselves** in order to achieve results on the ground as expeditiously as possible. This approach is mostly prevalent in emergency or reconstruction situations whereby local systems and procedures are by-passed, or where governments are weak or non-existent, skilled nationals in short supply and fiduciary systems failing or not developed at all. The underlying assumption, to the extent that it is there at all, is that capacity will somehow develop through replication, modelling or osmosis. Activities are generally implemented through parallel project structures.

A second approach is more participatory, to the extent that donors try to engage with country partners through consultation, participation in planning, on-the-job training, discussing pre-designed development options, etc. In this so-called **“direct” approach**, donors supply resources, remain in control and plan the process of capacity development with the assumption that the partners will follow and eventually take over once the situation is mature enough for a handing-over in terms of procedures, organisational processes, thinking, etc. Activities are implemented through projects or programmes that are separate from but linked to local institutions. PIUs would be typically established within a Government department or agency.

Next on the spectrum is the **“indirect” approach** which very much underpins the argument of the Paris Declaration. Programme approaches or free-standing TA would be typically used in this Development partners are supposed to work with country processes, support endogenous initiatives and ideas. State and non-state actors remain in charge of the change process whereby external partners facilitate and accompany country participants in their learning, adaptation and self-organisation.¹⁶ This approach is built on a full understanding of country processes, politics and culture. Donor control and direction is ideally absent, or only exercised from a distance. Donor control and direction is ideally absent, or only exercised from a distance. Programme approaches or free-standing TA would be typically used in this scenario where resources are channelled and managed through local institutions within the framework of

¹⁴ DAC: <http://www.oecd.org/glossary/>

¹⁵ With inputs from Morgan, Land and Baser (2005), see also: www.ecdpm.org/dcc/capacitystudy

¹⁶ For a detailed discussion of “direct” and “indirect” approaches to capacity development, see David Ellerman (2006)

programme agreements.

Finally, at the far end of the spectrum, is the “**hands-off**” approach whereby development partners limit their intervention to paying for proven, measurable or demonstrated progress on the part of country institutions, and which is based primarily on an independently audited statement reporting. At the extreme end, payments are not linked to the implementation of any particular policies, any other intermediate outputs, or “tied” to purchase from particular suppliers or companies (see Barder and Birdsall 2006).

As set out in its strategy (see Box 4), **HORIZONT3000’s work can be broadly situated within the “direct” approach** in which the supporting organisation engages with country partners through consultation, participation in planning, on-the-job training, discussing pre-designed development options, etc. In this so-called “direct” approach, donors supply resources, remain in control and plan the process of capacity development with the assumption that the partners will follow and eventually take over once the situation is mature enough for a handing-over in terms of procedures, organisational processes, thinking, etc.

Box 4: Projects and Programs in the Partner Countries of the South: Our Strategy

“We design our projects and programs according to the demands and problems of our partner organizations in the South and East. All together solutions are being evolved: through the means of a constructive dialogue we seek the best way, optimal correspondence of all interests. HORIZONT3000 supports and co-ordinates the procuring of resources, the administration and the project management. The principles in the current development policy of HORIZONT3000 and its supporting organizations as well as of private and public donors represent the basis for that.

Professionalism and quality-securing are the main preconditions of the success of HORIZONT3000. Efficiency and effectiveness of our projects are guaranteed through regular evaluation and critical monitoring. Qualitative and quantitative measurements as well as empiric data are used as indicators. The transparency we provide not only our donors and partner organizations but also the general public with, plays a major role in our success strategy.

HORIZONT3000 policy is to be responsive to issues of development while, at the same time, striving for cultural sensitivity and gender justice. Of equal importance is the sustainability of our projects and the cost-effective and appropriate use of funds. By guaranteeing the social and ecological viability of our activities, HORIZONT3000 endeavours to contribute to the maintenance of peace and the building of democracy.

Permanent dialogue and exchange with civil society organizations and decision-makers in the target countries, mutual respect, co-operative working climate, participative approach and the interest in reciprocal learning are self-evident for us. Only by ensuring these conditions, HORIZONT3000 can fully respond to the needs and demands of the target group. Concerning their requests, we regard ourselves as a dynamic critical voice in the continuously rapidly changing world.

HORIZONT3000 assigns technically qualified and socially competent staff to several projects/ programs and provides them not only with project-specific training, but also with an in-depth intercultural preparation. Project assistance within HORIZONT3000 means: building bridges between different cultures!”

Source: HORIZONT3000 web-site, March 2007

This approach can be valid when the organisational and conceptual capacities of partners are weak, they have difficulty formulating demands clearly or they have limited ability to manage resources effectively. Our assessment of HORIZONT3000 thus zooms in on:

- (i) the organisation’s provision of TA personnel which is executed in line with this “direct” approach, and
- (ii) a broader review of how the support provided fits within the wider developments of a partner country context.

Two principal guiding questions associated with (i) and (ii), respectively, accompany us through

this assessment: First, **is HORIZONT3000 “doing things right”** in terms of the capacity development of its partners and given the framework within which it provides TA, and second, **is HORIZONT3000 “doing the right things”** with regard to the capacity development choices it makes in the context of a rapidly evolving aid environment.

The following framework helps us in this assessment. Capacity Development is central to sustainable development, but also the area that poses the greatest challenges as concerns longer-term impact. In the context of this evaluation, we look at **capacity development at three levels**: (i) individual knowledge, skills and attitudes of human resources, (ii) organisational, and (iii) institutional.¹⁷ A fourth, (iv) the physical working environment, is usually linked with organisational development. We will therefore not discuss it separately.

Individual capacity development focuses on the creation of knowledge, skills and attitudes of individuals through training programmes, on the job counselling, mentoring, etc.

Organisational capacity development looks at a partner's structure/ organisation, task priorities, internal management and communications, incentive systems and other aspects of how the organisation ensures that its staff carry out their key tasks well. This also includes developing a new "corporate culture", which itself takes time.

Institutional capacity development goes beyond this. It includes the legal framework of the organisation and its relationship with the environment in which it functions, linking the organisation to various forms of networks and associations and positioning it in the wider institutional landscape which is often characterised by rapid changes and uncertainty. Strategic reflection, choice and planning, dealing with policy issues and addressing those within the organisation but also with peers would fall into this dimension as well.

TA personnel can play a role in all of these, for example: individual capacity development – in providing formal training and informal mentoring; organisational capacity development – in helping to set up internal management systems or structures which help the organisation to execute its services; and institutional capacity development – encouraging in constructing strategic relationships of the organisation with its environment and help it to cope with changes in the external institutional landscape.

The chart below sets these levels against the demand for TA personnel, its effectiveness and management and provides a mental model to help us looking at HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme.

Table 1: Levels of Capacity

	Individual capacity	Organisational capacity	Institutional capacity
Demand			
Effectiveness			
Management*	* We do not see a direct correlation of the management work of HORIZONT3000 with the different capacity levels. We will therefore assess to what extent the management of HORIZONT3000 supports overall the different capacity levels.		

¹⁷ We can also relate these three levels to the concept of capacity, presented above. *Individual capacity development* can be seen as the development of “competencies”, *organisational capacity development* as the development of “capabilities”, and *institutional capacity development* as the development of an overall “capacity”.

3 Relevance, effectiveness and management

This chapter presents our assessment of HORIZONT3000's TA programme based on the country reviews from Uganda and Nicaragua and a number of additional observations from our visit to Mozambique and the review of documentation. The sections on Uganda and Nicaragua aim to inform the overall assessment by extracting salient points relevant to understanding demand, effectiveness and management of HORIZONT3000's TA programme. As such, they do not represent specific country programme reviews. In reading the respective sub-sections, we would like to alert the reader to the fact that there are obvious overlaps between what can be discussed under the three dimensions demand, effectiveness and management. Some of the points emerging could thus also be discussed under different headings. Finally, we generally do not comment on particular projects, but do refer to individual organisations or experiences where this is necessary to bring out a particular message.

3.1 Uganda

3.1.1 Context

Uganda's development strategy

The **Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP)** is Uganda's poverty reduction strategy (PRS). It is the national planning framework guiding medium-term sector plans and district plans, and sets country-specific development targets which are broadly in line with the MDGs. There are various **sector strategies** in place, including for education, health, water and sanitation, social development, roads, the private sector, a plan for the modernization of agriculture, and a strategic exports programme.¹⁸

External assistance is being aligned with the PEAP under the **Uganda Joint Assistance Strategy (UJAS)**, covering the period 2005 to 2009, which seven external development partners finalised in December 2005 and which others have since joined. Current partners include AfDB, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK, the World Bank, Austria, the European Commission, Denmark and Ireland.¹⁹

Coordination among the donors and between the donors and the government is very good, and there is a division of labour under UJAS. There are some 20 to 30 sector and donor working groups, of which Austria, since October 2006, leads the sector group on water and sanitation.

Austrian development assistance to Uganda

Uganda is an OEZA priority partner country. Official Austrian development cooperation (OEZA) with Uganda started in 1991 (then managed by the Foreign Ministry).

The current focus of Austria's development cooperation with Uganda is laid out in two strategy papers, the **Country Programme Uganda** (version 2004, revised version in preparation) and the Strategy for Engagement of the Austrian Development Cooperation in Northern Uganda (2004-2006). The Country Programme defines **three focal sectors**, (1) **Water Supply and Sanitation**, (2) **Private Sector** and (3) **Governance and Decentralisation**.

Austrian development cooperation in Uganda is represented by the coordination office (KoBü), which has a small number of staff (including the Head and three programme officers for the focal sectors) and has responsibility for cooperation with 5 countries (Uganda, Kenya,

¹⁸ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CDFINTRANET/Overview/21140399/UgandaFINALNovember272006.doc>

¹⁹ <http://siteresources.worldbank.org/CDFINTRANET/Overview/21140399/UgandaFINALNovember272006.doc>

Tanzania, Rwanda and Burundi). In comparison to other donors, Austrian assistance is not very decentralised and decisions on programming are taken in Vienna.

Cooperation between the KoBü and HORIZONT3000's country office is good, on the basis of good personal relations. They discuss HORIZONT3000 programming together before proposals are sent to headquarters, but this concerns mainly the financing projects implemented by HORIZONT3000 (from its framework programme and in the context of the ADA country programme and co-financing). It happens less as regards HORIZONT3000-funded personnel assignments.

Despite good relations HORIZONT3000 does not speak for the KoBü/ADA, in donor coordination fora, or participate therein (in the way the DED can speak for German cooperation where it is appointed as a sector coordinator for German assistance). Rather, HORIZONT3000 acts as an Austrian NGO, although many actors do in fact perceive it to be part and parcel of broader Austrian development assistance, or, as its publicity materials state, as an *Austrian organisation for development cooperation*.

HORIZONT3000's assistance to Uganda

HORIZONT3000's cooperation with Uganda goes back to 1988 (its predecessor organisation, the ÖED, started working in Uganda, in Fort Portal, before official Austrian development cooperation arrived in 1991). From this early history, HORIZONT3000 and its predecessor organisations have built up a network of cooperation partners, particularly among the Catholic dioceses in various locations.

HORIZONT3000's current strategy of engagement in Uganda is defined by the **Country Strategy Uganda** (July 2004). With the aim of greater concentration, this defines three focal sectors (1) **Sustainable use of natural resources**, (2) **(Integrated) rural development** and (3) **Peacebuilding and human rights/Conflict prevention**, moving away from assistance in the area of vocational training and in the medical field that traditionally formed a large part of HORIZONT3000's/the OED's assistance.²⁰ In practice, the greater concentration on a limited number of sectors is still an ongoing process, as activities are ongoing and programming responds to opportunities that arise and the demand of the partners, albeit within the framework of the CSP. As a result, HORIZONT3000 still seems to be present in a wide range of different areas in Uganda, from the sample of activities reviewed for this study.²¹

HORIZONT3000 is represented in Uganda by its local office in Kampala. This has 15 staff in total, of whom 5 are working in non-administrative/non-logistical functions. 3 are international staff, namely the overall head of the office, also responsible for the Uganda programme, and the programme officers for Kenya and Tanzania. The office oversees HORIZONT3000's activities in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania, and assists in overseeing the activities of HORIZONT3000's member organisations, none of whom are represented in Uganda.

At present, the Kampala office oversees some 23 financing projects in Uganda²², and has responsibility for 17 personnel projects in the country. These are provided to some 20 partner

²⁰ The CSP originally identified *Humanitarian Aid* to Northern Uganda as a fourth sector, but this was not implemented. Rather, we were informed, HORIZONT3000's activities in Northern Uganda fall almost exclusively under the sector *Peacebuilding and human rights/Conflict prevention*.

²¹ As the table of TA projects in Annex 5 indicates, the sample of HORIZONT3000 TA projects reviewed in Uganda beyond the activities in the areas of *Sustainable use of natural resources/energy* (Sector 1) and *Rural development* (Sector 2) includes cases in: (i) vocational training (including the current technical assistance to SJTI Fort Portal), (ii) health (TA to Caritas Luweero), (iii) the justice sector (the two completed projects at the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Gender) and (iv) social work (YSA, Caritas Gulu). This does not take into account the sector distribution of financing projects.

²² 2005 data, see HORIZONT3000. 2006. *Jahresbericht 2005*. page 55-56. Of the 23, 8 were financing projects financed from HORIZONT3000's framework programme.

organisations²³, and cover some 6 sectors each, as defined by Horizont 3000.²⁴

HORIZONT3000 technical assistance in Uganda

The bulk of HORIZONT3000's personnel assistance in Uganda (some 80%, according to HORIZONT3000 estimates) has been provided to **CSOs and church based organisations**.

- Assistance to the different Catholic dioceses includes technical assistance to Diocesan vocational training schools, TA to rural development projects run by the dioceses (in connection with financial assistance to the programmes) and assistance to Diocesan development commissions.
- Assistance to CSOs has taken the form of TA to new and small, but growing, NGOs or similar types of organisations (some of which were formed when previous donor-government development projects ended), normally without any significant financial assistance from HORIZONT3000 being provided in addition.
- Only two TA activities which we are aware of took place in government ministries.²⁵

As this listing indicates, HORIZONT3000's partner organisations work at different levels, ranging from organisations working at **community level** (what we would call the **micro level**) to organisations working at **district/regional level** (the **meso level**) and organisations working **nationally** or at ministerial level (the **macro level**).

There are a number of **synergies** between HORIZONT3000 personnel assistance and other development assistance (mostly financial assistance): A number of the organisation hosting HORIZONT 3000 development workers also receive financial assistance from HORIZONT3000, the Austrian government through ADA's country programme or other sources. Many of the Catholic dioceses, for instance, host financing projects funded by HORIZONT3000 or its member organisations,²⁶ while other HORIZONT3000 partner organisations, like A2N and YSA, receive funding for particular activities from the ADA country programme. However, there seems to be no deliberate strategy to combine HORIZONT's personnel and financing projects more, in part, we were told, because HORIZONT feels that the closer a TA works to a financing project, the bigger is the risk that s/he is used to manage that project or to monitor funds, a role which is seen to conflict with the advisory/ organisation development role that TAs are expected to play. There are also a number of cases where HORIZONT3000 TA in fact complements financial assistance provided in the context of a broader donor project.²⁷ HORIZONT3000 technical advisors do not, however, work in ADA projects/programmes, except for two activities where HORIZONT3000 implements these after it won the tender.²⁸ However, in both cases the personnel are locally contracted expatriates, and not development workers supplied through the personnel programme, and as far as HORIZONT3000 is concerned, the project managing role played by its personnel in these projects is totally different from the envisaged advisory/ organisation development focus of assignments in the context of the personnel programme.

²³ Estimate based on project lists provided in HORIZONT3000. 2006. *Jahresbericht 2005*.

²⁴ Source: HORIZONT3000. 2006. *Jahresbericht 2005*. Pages 45 and 57.

²⁵ A full list of the personnel assignments in Uganda reviewed for this study is available in Annex 5.

²⁶ The Catholic dioceses of Fort Portal and Kasana-Luweero for instance host the ADP and IRUDEKA rural development projects funded by HORIZONT3000 and its member organisations, and Horizont/its predecessor's past assistance to Soroti diocese for building the vocational training school (UMVI) included significant amounts of funding.

²⁷ This is the case for the personnel assignments in CREEC, IFDI, IRDI, UCPC, which complement the assistance provided by GTZ in the context of the Energy Advisory Project.

²⁸ These cases are the timber-based batch production project in Uganda and an assignment in the context of an ADA-project in Tanzania.

3.1.2 Relevance

Relevance of the personnel programme: The different demands for HORIZONT3000 technical assistance

When discussing the relevance of HORIZONT3000's TA programme in the Ugandan context, it is useful to discuss the different demands for technical assistance and where they come from.

Taking **Uganda's national development plan**, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP), as the point of departure, HORIZONT3000 assistance is broadly in line with the priorities expressed in this document. HORIZONT3000 supports the sustainable use of natural resources, integrated rural development and peace building and human rights with a view to conflict prevention. Support is given to organisations which work in these areas, and this helps to strengthen the development efforts within a given sector or region.

From the perspective of **HORIZONT3000's partner organisations** - who work in the sectors and areas covered by the PEAP - HORIZONT3000 technical assistance also responds to a real demand for assistance, a demand which is not surprising given that in most organisations resources, including human resources, are scarce. HORIZONT3000 enables such organisations to make use of the supplied human resources -the technical advisors- who, in most cases, provide very welcome assistance to the strengthening and further development of the organisations concerned. The degree of effectiveness varies, as we discuss further below, but broadly speaking, HORIZONT3000 TA responds to the demands of its partners.

The question of whether HORIZONT3000 TA responds to an expressed demand would be more debatable if we took the **Uganda Joint Assistance Strategy (UJAS)** as the starting point. UJAS, which bundles the assistance of a number of donors with a view to supporting the PEAP more effectively, aims to better harmonise the assistance provided by the different development partners and to align it with country priorities. If we were to conclude from this that **all Austrian assistance** should be focused in particular sectors or areas of work - the DAC Peer Review could be understood in this way (OECD/DAC, 2004) - then HORIZONT3000's technical assistance would have to be assessed differently. Looking at the sectors in which both Austrian actors, ADA and HORIZONT3000, support Uganda, there are linkages and complementarities between the focal areas of both organisations (presented above), but they are not identical.

The question, however, is whether the focal areas of ADA and HORIZONT3000 should be identical and addressed in the way in which, for instance, assistance from the different German organisations is currently structured.²⁹ This is a fundamental question which goes beyond the scope of this evaluation, but needs to be addressed. If HORIZONT3000 is seen as an experienced organisation in its own right with sufficient knowledge of the development priorities of the country and its local development actors, then it should have some independence in its priority setting. If, on the other hand, one finds that HORIZONT3000's activities are not focused enough, then the judgement will be different.

In the eyes of the KoBü in Kampala, as we understood this, the focal areas of both ADA and HORIZONT3000 respond to Uganda's national development objectives, as laid out in the Poverty Eradication Action Plan. The KoBü – in exchange with its national partners - works with different NGOs, including HORIZONT3000, to contribute to the development of selected development areas. Those which are best suited to do the job are chosen. The principal criterion is whether an organisation has a comparative advantage in doing the job. HORIZONT3000, in turn, offers its services to national partners in selected areas falling within the overall priorities set by the national government and thereby contributes to their

²⁹ There is a policy in place which asks KfW, GTZ and DED to increasingly join forces within the same focal area or sector which are coordinated by a so-called focal sector coordinator (Sektorschwerpunktkoordinator).

development, whereby financing is solicited from ADA but also from other financing organisations like the EU. In some cases, such as in the energy sector, HORIZONT3000's input is closely linked to assistance financed by German cooperation and is seen as a very useful contribution by the national partners. Hence, looking from the perspective of Ugandan development planning, there is nothing wrong with the approaches chosen by both, HORIZONT3000 and ADA in the country.

If the Austrian Development Administration wanted more visibility, another approach – comparable to the German approach – should be discussed. This could avoid situations such as that in the Ugandan energy sector where German cooperation is valued in the Ministry of Energy but there is comparably little visibility of Austria's indirect yet highly complementary inputs through HORIZONT3000 to national NGOs in the same sector.³⁰ Given the Paris Declaration's aim to fit the various inputs provided by external supporters into a national development framework, the question is which is more important - national development strategies or donor visibility. The Declaration clearly provides an answer in favour of the first. One should also reflect, whether an Austrian country programme like the Uganda programme, could mobilise sufficient resources to engage simultaneously at different levels with sufficient weight. Several comments received from interviews with Austrian development experts, international development partners and government representatives point out that this would be rather difficult given the aid volume which Austria can mobilise for Uganda.

There is one issue, however, which can provide an argument for closer cooperation of ADA and HORIZONT3000 in a partner country. As seen in the UJAS, there is a strong move among the external development partners and government to jointly discuss the policy priorities within broad policy frameworks such as sector strategies. Such policy frameworks and their subsequent implementation arrangements are discussed in various **coordination meetings and joint donor working groups** in which, from the Austrian side, only ADA (as the bilateral development agency) takes part, while HORIZONT3000 is absent. It would seem appropriate that the **KoBü briefs and orients HORIZONT3000 on these discussions and their implications**. This "service" of the KoBü would help HORIZONT3000 to ensure that its assistance is better integrated into the consolidated development effort of the different development partners and responds more effectively to the combined demands of the different partners.³¹ A parallel involvement of HORIZONT3000 in donor coordination groups, on the other hand, would not be advisable as it would undermine the efforts of the development community to have focused policy dialogue with national partners involving a limited number of external contributors. The overhead costs for a small organisation like HORIZONT3000 would also be overwhelming. To facilitate this exchange on policy matters of the KoBü and the various organisations it works with, ADA might want to consider strengthening its policy capacities in its KoBü in Kampala.

Summarising this discussion, one can argue that HORIZONT3000 is responding to the demands of development partners³² in Uganda, but that its assistance could gain more relevance if it was more linked to the policy discussions between the donor community and the Ugandan Government. More informed long-term choices could then be made in supporting particular sectors, areas of work and organisations working within them. This said however, it should not mean that HORIZONT3000 needs to follow blindly the policies and priorities which ADA is setting out. Both ADA and HORIZONT3000 have relevant development expertise in-house which needs to be recognised. A regular dialogue between the two organisations would

³⁰ HORIZONT3000 provides organisational support to several national NGOs at the intermediate level which successfully implement development programmes of the energy sector.

³¹ As witnessed in the cooperation of HORIZONT3000 with GTZ in the energy sector, one could argue that the exchange on policies is sufficiently guaranteed. However, GTZ might be forced to work in close cooperation with DED in the future because of the German development policy to bundle the assistance of all German actors into the priority sectors of German Cooperation (*"Kooperation aus einem Guss"*). HORIZONT3000 would then be sidelined and would need to build new networks and new access to policy circles.

³² These are the external agencies which provide financial and technical assistance to the country.

be required so that the work which HORIZONT3000 is involved in is adequately taken account of by ADA as well.

Relevance of individual TA assignments

When assessing the relevance of the individual TA assignments for the context in which the advisors work, it is not easy to provide a simple answer. This mirrors some of our discussions above.

Most local partner organisations expressed **broad satisfaction** with the technical advisors provided by HORIZONT3000. Most valued the opportunity to receive free-standing TAs as complementary resources in their organisations but without automatic links to HORIZONT3000 financing arrangements. They also appreciated the option of receiving financing from HORIZONT3000, managed and monitored by themselves and the HORIZONT3000 office and not controlled by a technical advisor. Most partner organisations also expressed the wish to continue working with HORIZONT3000 in the future, or indeed expressed regret where the cooperation has ended³³.

Digging a bit deeper during the interviews, the picture became more diverse. Many interviewees, especially from **Kampala-based partner organisations**, felt that they could find people with similar qualifications from the national labour market or from surrounding countries if they had funds at their disposition. This clearly is a sign of the fact that the educational level in Uganda and elsewhere in the region has increased substantially over the recent years and that there are more and more people available with knowledge of project management, planning and monitoring, computer literacy and other organisational development skills. There are also regional newspapers in which organisations could advertise, and recruitment agencies which offer their services. Most of HORIZONT3000's partner organisations have little or no experience of working with such recruitment mechanisms, but would like to explore such options and build their capacities in this regard as well.

These interviewees recognised that personnel recruited through local/regional channels might not have experience of working in a western context, and might have less knowledge of the latest approaches or technological developments. However, they felt that working with a person from the region brings other advantages, such as cultural awareness or the possibility of South-South exchange. Moreover, the use of internet, scholarships or family visits outside Africa increasingly permits well-educated local and regional professionals to connect with the outside world and to get acquainted with relevant professional developments.

Nevertheless, despite the plea for greater use of local and regional professionals - where suitably qualified - the overall message even of our Kampala-based respondents was not that HORIZONT 3000 TA personnel is or will become unnecessary. Rather, partner organisations seem to have an **increasing need for TA personnel on two fronts**: First, for people with **particular specialisations** in a given professional field and sector, e.g. for professionals with knowledge of particular aspects in a specific area of the energy sector, and, second, for people who are **knowledgeable about and experienced in working in a rapidly changing and increasingly complex development and policy context**. Organisations are increasingly asked to link up with their environment, and experienced and qualified advisors can assist them in their strategic thinking on how to link up with other organisations, responding to questions on the positioning in the sector, bridging the policy-implementation divide, liaising between macro-level discussions and meso- and micro-level implementation, etc. Advisors with such skills are rare, but can help partner organisations to think through a number of longer-term institutional development questions in a highly competitive aid environment.

³³ This was the case in Soroti Diocese, where cooperation with Horizont 3000 ended in 2006, much to the regret of the diocese.

Partner organisations working at the district/regional or meso level gave some different answers to the question of how relevant HORIZONT3000-provided TA personnel is to them today. In the fragile and capacity-poor Northern part of Uganda, for example, many national and international NGOs compete for qualified staff in a heavily project- and programme-funded environment. Given that local organisations in this region do not have easy access to the various recruitment channels which their colleagues in Kampala can utilise, and given the remoteness and different tribal background of the region, such organisations find it more difficult to find professionals who are willing to work there, or to pay the fees they demand. Instead of hiring comparatively expensive national professionals, international TAs then can be a better alternative for the organisations concerned. A similar picture emerges from the health sector, where the massive flow of funding for HIV/AIDS prevention programmes by organisations such as the Bill Gates foundation, for example, attracts many national professionals to work in vertically operating programmes at the expense of local institutions and national service providers.³⁴

There are also many **demands for technical assistance from individual organisations or organisations at the community level (the micro level)**, to assist in vocational training or to help with the implementation of service delivery activities. While HORIZONT3000 inputs can be highly relevant for individual organisations, the question is whether the scarce resources which the organisation can provide should not be used for qualitative higher inputs, for example by joining coordinated efforts designed at the national level which address such problems more structurally and country-wide. Our view is that more efforts should be made to better link up with such coordinated initiatives instead of providing too many fragmented inputs spread thinly into different areas. The work in the energy sector, linked to a wider assistance programme of another donor, could be a possible model for work in other areas. Though one should discuss whether the TAs which HORIZONT3000 can provide is always able to respond to the demands for specialised inputs, or the growing complexities in which these organisations have to function (see our discussion above).

All the organisations we have talked to mentioned in addition the following points why TAs from HORIZONT3000 can be of relevance: (i) the wish to establish a link with an international organisation with contacts to other networks and partners; (ii) the possibility of getting access to sources of funding; (iii) TA as an in-kind resource which the organisation could otherwise not afford; (iv) the wish to bring in different views, work ethics and approaches.

Assessing relevance and demand

Given the variety of demands for technical assistance, it is not surprising that like many other TA providers HORIZONT3000 struggles with the question of how to assess demand and where to post its TA personnel.

At present, TA programming seems to **respond to opportunities as they arise** – based on long-standing relations with partner organisations (e.g. the dioceses), arising out of other cooperation projects or because partners are referred to HORIZONT3000 by word of mouth. In responding to this demand, HORIZONT3000 uses clear guidelines and formats to help its staff and partners assess the need for technical advisors, how the person should fit in, the objectives for which TA can be provided, what focus TA should have, etc. These guidelines are in line with those of other TA providers. The HORIZONT3000 Coordinator in Kampala is also open to suggestions for improvement and innovation in the entire TA programming exercise. HORIZONT3000 also maintains regular contacts with the organisations receiving technical assistance and their representatives, who are generally closely involved in the formulation of the TA positions and job descriptions.

³⁴ The Kampala-based Ugandan Catholic Missionary Bureau, for example, had to advertise twice for a mid-career health professional. The first advertisement did not result in any application, the second advertisement in just four CVs sent. The changing local labour market has an immense influence on the demand for international TAs and local professionals, respectively.

Like other TA providers, HORIZONT3000 faces the problem that the **local organisations most in need of technical assistance often do not have the capacity to formulate their demands properly**, which is one of the most difficult challenges in international cooperation. In such a situation, a TA provider such as HORIZONT3000 in Uganda has to rely on common sense, secondary sources and general impressions and observations for assessing what kind of TA might be relevant where. Good formats can serve as a useful tool for requesting partner organisations to think through the demand for assistance, but as long as the request does not arise out of a well thought-through development plan of the organisation concerned, the full details on what kind of TA is needed will often remain absent. It is no surprise then that many technical advisors - HORIZONT 3000 advisors and those provided by other organisations - arrive for a job which was formulated in general terms only and which has to be specified only once the TA is in post. Given this contextual situation, our assessment is that HORIZONT3000's country office tries its best to find a TA personnel 'matching' the partner organisations' needs, and in several projects visited by the study team seems to be doing fairly well on this.

Given the difficulty of finding adequate partners there is a **risk**, however, that there are too many concessions in the assessment and **that HORIZONT3000 is not critical enough in choosing its partners on the right grounds**. We have, for example, noted that there are some TA personnel assignments which originate from long-term relationships and result in sequential TA inputs. Technical assistance to Fort Portal Diocese, the oldest partner organisation of HORIZONT3000 in Uganda, could be mentioned in this context, though this is not necessarily the only case. Such assignments should be looked at carefully against the priorities as formulated in HORIZONT3000's country programme and the partner's willingness to be serious about change and improvement without having to rely continuously on HORIZONT3000 technical assistance.

3.1.3 Effectiveness

The term effectiveness raises the question of '**effective at or for what**'. There are different perspectives on what can be understood as effective TA, and the discussion of whether technical assistance assignments are seen as effective or successful is linked to the kind of roles the advisors are expected to play (effective at what?), their fit with the organisation (was the right person selected?), the 'receptiveness' of the organisation (is the partner organisation ready and willing to use TA), the contextual environment (does the broader context allow TAs to do the work they are supposed to do), and a host of other factors. Effectiveness thus has many facets, and is complex to assess.

This section aims to draw out some of the issues related to HORIZONT3000 TA effectiveness in Uganda. It is based on anecdotal information which we have cross-checked to the extent this was possible in the context of this assignment. It starts with a general overview of the perceived effectiveness of HORIZONT3000 TA personnel in Uganda, and then goes on to discuss different TA roles, different perspectives on HORIZONT3000 TA provision and the sustainability of HORIZONT3000 TA results. The contribution of HORIZONT3000 TA to capacity development is discussed in Section 3.3.1 (Overall assessment _ HORIZONT3000's contribution to capacity development).

Satisfaction with HORIZONT3000 technical assistance

In general, HORIZONT3000's partner organisations do seem to consider the **personnel assignments to be broadly successful and 'effective', with some variations in the degree of satisfaction and with some exceptions**. Partner organisations were generally, though not always, satisfied with the quality of people provided through HORIZONT3000, their level of motivation and technical skills and often, though again not always, their fit with the organisation. There were some concerns relating to the amount or relevance of the experience of individual

advisors, or their ability and willingness to share their skills with others. In nearly all cases though, and especially where HORIZONT3000 seems to have had difficulties in sourcing advisors, partner organisations tended to be aware of the limitations encountered by HORIZONT3000 in finding advisors (given the conditions it can offer, for instance), and pragmatically tried to make best use of the person provided.

Where the TA assignments could be deemed less successful or effective, this seems to have been caused by a number of problems, including the posting of the ‘wrong’ person for an assignment and organisation (in terms of experience and skills), TA’s not fitting in the partner organisations (personality and cultural differences), unclear expectations on both sides and problems in or faced by the host organisation (e.g. a delay in the passing of legislation).

Roles played by HORIZONT3000 TA personnel

There are many questions internationally about the roles which experts do play and those that they should play to provide effective support to the recipient. To respond to these questions, it is helpful to look at a number of generic roles which TAs might be required to perform (see Box 5).

Box 5: Different roles of TA personnel

There are a variety of different roles which TA personnel might be required to perform. The list below does not necessarily cover all of them. From broader research, we should note that there is generally no adviser who performs one role exclusively. However, in most cases there is one role which dominates. Some are of an exclusive controlling nature while others are more process facilitation oriented or a mix of both. In all of the roles identified advisors perform a certain level of gap filling. We distinguish the following roles which TA personnel play;

- **Controlling:** These are experts working in the area of finance, or experts who have a project management role to perform, usually combined with the provision of technical advice.
- **Engaging in policy dialogue:** These are mostly active at the macro level to accompany sector reforms, or wider institutional change. They operate from within key government institutions or out of embassies and development agencies. With the decentralisation taking momentum in many countries, there is an increasing demand for policy knowledge within provinces and organisations working at the intermediate levels to help translate institutional and sectoral reform initiatives to lower levels of a country.
- **Providing technical advice:** The provision of technical advice is generally in high demand everywhere. Advisers confirm that their sharing of technical knowledge in a particular discipline shapes legitimacy and is a precondition for performing a function effectively and – if it is done on a longer term – with trust.
- **Facilitating organisational change and reform:** Advisers often have a task of facilitating organisational reform and to help adapt an organisation’s work environment to a continuously changing institutional landscape. Where this task is not explicitly formulated, the presence of a technical adviser often provokes the organisation to restructure or change, which demands facilitation skills.
- **Innovating/ exploring:** There are also advisers whose primary task is to test new approaches or to explore a new field of work. However, innovation and exploration are also part of advisors’ work in environments where regulations, orientations or procedures are commonly absent or not applied.
- **Protecting/ buffering:** Advisers can help to protect their host organisation from harmful outside influences, such as new policies formulated at headquarters level of development agencies which might not be suitable to a specific country situation, or institutions which might impact on the organisation negatively or draw its attention into a wrong direction. The protecting and buffering function of TA personnel becomes particularly relevant for young or inexperienced organisations which are often overloaded with very ambitious tasks and responsibilities.
- **Gap filling/ implementing:** Partners often want specialist assistance to support them in producing results quickly, as there is great pressure from the government and development partners for results on the ground. Where there are no suitable nationals to work with the international expert, TA personnel are commonly drawn into (high-level) gap filling positions, and many end up working in line positions.

From ongoing ECDPM research

From what we have seen in Uganda, the HORIZONT3000 TA programme reflects a strong focus on different kinds of **capacity development activities**, such as **technical advice**, **facilitation of organisational change** and some **innovation and exploration**. All these activities are fully focused at the organisations which the TAs work in, and are interwoven with day-to-day gap filling which help partners become effective organisations and help the advisors to establish their legitimacy in the partner organisation. Pure gap filling activities are more prominent in some organisations than in others. They are sometimes linked to the personality of the TAs, but often also to the way in which the partners chooses to utilise the human resource provided. In one case, Fort Portal, a TA was placed for gap filling purposes, but this is a very particular situation which is currently being addressed. This picture clearly contrasts with the past, when HORIZONT3000 and the predecessor organisations provided doctors, nurses or craftsmen to its partner organisations (especially the dioceses) for gap filling.

HORIZONT3000 has a policy which **avoids charging advisors provided through the personnel programme with project management and implementation responsibilities**. From the feedback received during the interviews in Uganda, this policy seems to be generally followed at present, with some exceptions.³⁵ Thus, any HORIZONT3000 funding to host organisations normally is managed by the partner organisation itself, and monitored out of the HORIZONT3000 country office. Sometimes HORIZONT3000 provides accompanying micro-funds of some Euro 2,000 to the host organisations,³⁶ which are used to support community activities in areas where the host organisation works. The use of these funds is overseen by HORIZONT3000 TAs, but given the magnitude of the funding this should not be considered as project funding. We can thus observe that, in general, present HORIZONT3000 TA personnel do not perform financial control or management functions.

As is discussed further in the section below, in some cases, partner organisations welcome HORIZONT3000 technical advisors as a **complementary human resource** to get services provided to their stakeholders or clients, in particular where they have service contracts to fulfil.³⁷ In such cases, the advisors' knowledge and skills tend to be shared with a variety of individuals in the partner organisations. In other cases, HORIZONT3000 TA assignments might lead to some organisational restructuring or to new systems being introduced. In some other cases, again, TAs are directly assigned to a particular individual who is trained with a view to take over the job after the departure of the TA. Next to this, they provide some day-to-day assistance to assist with ongoing work.

Perspectives on the effectiveness of TA personnel

Different country partners have different perspectives on the effectiveness of TA personnel provided by HORIZONT3000, that is on what they consider to be effective TA for their organisation. We present these below and highlight partners' appreciation of HORIZONT3000 technical assistance, and also make some critical observations.

A first perspective on TA effectiveness is the perspective of the manager looking for **human resources to keep an organisation running**. In the absence of own funds, TA from HORIZONT3000 is seen as a welcome source for providing experienced people to an organisation, to help overcome weaknesses through capacity development inputs and to reinforce the functioning of the organisation. This is a pragmatic approach and characterises the majority of organisations with whom HORIZONT3000 works in Uganda. Requests for TA in

³⁵ The TAs in the ADP project in Fort Portal have had financial and project management responsibilities, as did the administrator at UMVI Soroti. While in the latter case this fact which was deeply resented by at least some members of the host diocese (who felt that it negatively affected the development of the school) and seems to have caused problems, the role of a TA as a 'financial controllers' was also mentioned as a positive and legitimate one by interview partners in some organisations.

³⁶ In one case, this was beyond at Euro 8,000.

³⁷ Examples are the CSOs working in the energy sector.

such cases are formulated broadly, and leave sufficient space for the person to be ‘fitted into’ the organisation to do a useful job. Usually, organisations looking for such technical assistance have needs at different fronts which allow for effective TA inputs. Managers of such organisations also tend to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of different TA providers, and, for instance, compare the demands of HORIZONT3000 to the host organisation with those of other providers (For example, we met local managers who prefer HORIZONT3000 TA to volunteers from VSO because the latter requests a monthly co-contribution to the TA’s remuneration from the partner organisation, while HORIZONT3000 only requires accommodation). – In such organisations, HORIZONT3000 technical assistance is seen as an effective resource to help with the organisational development and to share knowledge and skills on the job with national staff.

A second perspective on TA effectiveness is that of the manager who needs a **TA with a particular specialisation, or with particular professional experience** combined with a strategic understanding of the environment in which the organisation has to function. Not surprisingly, the more specific the requests are, the more difficult it is to find the right persons. Quite clearly, the international labour market defines their availability and finding adequate experts costs money. As HORIZONT3000 is not able to pay much beyond what a volunteer organisation can remunerate, the organisation has difficulties in responding to these types of demands. However, to the extent we could assess, there are relatively few demands of this kind. – When HORIZONT3000 recruits TAs for such positions, it is therefore quite likely that the person found is not as effective as the partner organisation had wished him/ her to be.

A third perspective on TA effectiveness is that of a manager who sees **TA as a contribution to global exchange and meeting of “communities of human beings”**, as one manager put it. International TAs are welcomed as a way of opening up perspectives for local staff on what happens outside Uganda. The focus of such assignments is on the transformation of individual behaviour (in the partner organisation) through shaping awareness for change, accompanied by the provision of technical advice, sharing of knowledge and development of skills. HORIZONT3000 is seen as an organisation which can respond effectively to this kind of demand, and is able to send motivated persons. This perspective was expressed primarily by faith-based organisations.

Finally there is the perspective of donor representatives. They see HORIZONT3000 as a reliable partner, able to provide qualified individuals for more **sophisticated operational and organisational support work**. Amongst this group there are different views, though to what extent HORIZONT3000 technical advisors should be called “experts”. Other development organisations use this term very selectively and apply it only to experienced individuals who have reached a certain age and have a substantial amount of knowledge and skills and relevant work experience in countries overseas. – Looking at HORIZONT3000 from the perspective of a donor representative or manager, HORIZONT3000 falls into a particular niche in Uganda where it supplies effectively functioning TA for positions which are too difficult to fill with national staff (according to their perception) or for which other providers do not have a comparative advantage.³⁸

This brings us to a final point the effectiveness of HORIZONT3000 TA: from the sample of assignments reviewed and discussion with different interview partners, the **strength of HORIZONT3000 technical assistance lies very much at the micro and meso level** covered by the churches, NGOs and similar types of organisations. This seems to be a reflection of a number of factors, such as the network of partners HORIZONT3000 and its predecessors have established at these levels over the years, or the people the organisation can attract to work

³⁸ For example, GTZ cannot work with DED technical advisors in all areas as DED does not yet work in all the sectors in which GTZ works. HORIZONT3000 is then a welcome alternative, also because of the German language background of its TA. On the other side, HORIZONT3000 in Uganda at present is not seen as a primary partner for positions with local government, as it is perceived as an organisation with experience in NGO rather than local governance work.

under the conditions it can offer.

Needless to say, that HORIZONT3000 is working in a very competitive environment where there are many other TA providers offering their services to organisations working at the intermediate level. HORIZONT3000 focuses at the local NGOs which work at the intermediate level, though there are also a limited number of governmental or semi-governmental organisations which receive TA. HORIZONT3000 provides in many cases **organisational development support** with a view to help their partners implementing the servicing of sectors like health or energy more effectively. HORIZONT3000 has made good efforts to profile itself in this area. HORIZONT3000's activities do not, however, go beyond this, and do not, for instance, include the strengthening of the partner's capacity for policy dialogue, their understanding of how the aid machinery functions or the linking of organisations, support which we see as contributing to institutional capacity development and empowerment.

Sustainability of results

The sustainability of results achieved through technical assistance is difficult to assess, given the practical difficulty of finding relevant interview partners for completed assignments, the fact that many organisations that have received TAs in the past continue to do so today, and, of course, also given the 'intangibility' of a lot of the work done by advisors, e.g. their influence on others, etc. Nevertheless, a visit to one location – the Diocese of Soroti – where HORIZONT3000 (and previously the OED) has provided a number of technical advisors in the past but no longer does so today (the last assignment was completed in July 2006), and discussions on past and completed assignments during other interviews, provide some basis for judging the sustainability of HORIZONT3000 TA results, albeit for a limited sample.

From the sample of HORIZONT3000 TA assignments reviewed in Uganda, it seems that the sustainability of the results achieved by the technical advisors is **mixed**, depending on what type of work they did, and how they did it, whether the assignments actually achieved their immediate objectives, and whether, crucially, there were/are staff in the partner organisation able and willing to continue or take over the work. Thus, in Soroti for instance the carpentry workshop set up with the help of two technical advisors is running extremely well and renowned as a centre of excellence in the region, while the garage set up by technical advisors is struggling. Our interview respondents attributed this fact to a host of factors, chief among which was whether or not the technical advisors empowered their colleagues and whether a suitable successor was in place. In the same diocese, the vocational training school set up through Austrian assistance is running (though there are some concerns whether the administrative system set up by the 'administrator' TA is in fact adequate).

Generally speaking, the assignment of one of several HORIZONT3000 TAs to partner organisations in Uganda therefore does seem to have created a lasting impact on some of the organisations to which personnel has been provided, while in other cases, partly due to the way in which the advisors worked or the role they were asked to play (e.g. gap filling roles with no local staff to work with) only a limited sustainable impact on the partner organisation can be observed.

3.1.4 Management

Efficient management of technical assistance is one of the factors influencing TA effectiveness. This section discusses the preparation programme, recruitment, reporting and accountability, the support the country office provides, conditions of service, relationship management and the place which the HORIZONT3000 TA programme has within the overall work of HORIZONT3000 in Uganda.

Induction/ preparation

Overall, the HORIZONT3000 TAs sent to Uganda seem to be well prepared. This message comes from TAs as well as from country partners. The course in Vienna is rated quite highly and the in-country preparation before the work starts is commented on satisfactorily. It should not come as a surprise that some TAs expressed the wish to get more context specific and tailored preparation, but there is also awareness that the course needs to find a balance between broad issues, relevant to everybody, and the more targeted preparation. Given the fact that most TAs did not have prior work and living experience outside Europe, the length of the course and the topics chosen seem to be generally justified. In terms of language knowledge, there was no TA we met who had difficulties to adapt. HORIZONT3000 headquarters also confirmed that most TAs nowadays are proficient in English, and therefore do not normally require additional language training.

One specific suggestion made regarding the in-country training was to hold it, or some of it, after development workers have seen and at least briefly acquainted themselves with their place of work (especially those posted outside Kampala), to allow them to ask for advice on specific issues. Another suggestions raised by a number of advisors and partner interviewees was that the hosting partner organisations also need to be prepared for what it entails to host and supervise technical advisors.

In view of the fact highlighted by the Austrian Foreign Ministry and ADA that one (at least implicit) role of the HORIZONT3000 personnel programme is to develop capable people for future development experts in Austria, the training course seems to be an important first preparatory step for possible future cadre. Several of the people we met in ADA have worked with HORIZONT3000 before, or with one of its predecessor organisations.³⁹

Recruitment of TA personnel

Efforts should be made to increase the involvement of local partners in the recruitment process and to provide more possibilities for “choice”. We have learnt that there are partner organisations which had received just one CV. Obviously, the broader the job description was formulated the easier it is to get several CVs. But where demands are specific, HORIZONT3000 should either make an effort to make minimally three CVs available or accept that another organisation might be better placed to serve the needs of the partner. The next step in the recruitment procedure should be a video conference whereby a panel of HORIZONT3000 and partner organisation representatives exchange with a candidate wherever the person might be. Given the current relatively cheap communication technologies, one should not hesitate and update procedures to international standards. Our interviews showed that local partners would highly appreciate such an intensified involvement and choice.

Management of TA personnel, reporting and accountability

The day-to-day monitoring of the work and performance of the TA personnel is generally done by the country partner, but the final assessment of their work is done by HORIZONT3000 after consultation with the country partner. Several of the TAs we met are working with outdated job descriptions. The new HORIZONT3000 Country Coordinator sees updating the job descriptions of the TA personnel as a priority.

The technical advisors report to the HORIZONT3000 country office and via the office to headquarters. Despite new guidelines from the Kampala office which stipulate that assignment reports should be shared with the partner, there seems to be no procedure to systematically copy all official communication from a technical advisor to HORIZONT3000 to the country

³⁹ While we refer specifically to the preparation course here, we recognise that it is the entire experience of providing technical assistance through HORIZONT3000 which prepares people for becoming valuable staff members in the Austrian aid administration or in other development organisations.

partner. Nevertheless, our interviews indicate that in some organisations reports are copied to the partner organisation for information. The intermediate reports (which used to be submitted to ADA) are mostly written in German, while the principal (end-of-year) reports are written in English. Quite a few country partners raised complaints about the reporting practice, which they felt is not transparent enough. They further expressed the wish that TAs should not only be formally accountable to HORIZONT3000, but also to the partner organisation.

There is scope for improvement. HORIZONT3000 should rethink the reporting and accountability relationships in line with the current thinking on capacity development and the wish of country partners to get more say over resource use and assessment. It is understandable that HORIZONT3000 wants to be fully in the picture on what the TA has to report, but the same applies to the partner. There are TA providers which have introduced a double reporting and accountability system which is worth looking at. Danida, for example, formulates with the arrival of the TA at his/ her duty station a performance framework, signed by the TA, the partner and the Danish Embassy. This framework is looked at by all three parties after one year to assess what has been realised, what the blockages were and what measures need to be taken in order to make the TA more effective. It has become a useful tool, not for control, but for dialogue, mutual learning, general improvement of the working environment and organisational change.

The other advantage is that the formulation of this framework allows correcting outdated job descriptions. These are often formulated more than 6 months, sometimes even one year before the TA arrives. The introduction of such a framework could be a response to the often heard complaint that the recruitment of TAs takes too long and that the actual job requirements have evolved because of changes in the recipient organisation.

Country office/ local support of TA personnel

Without any doubt, there are a broad range of activities to be addressed by HORIZONT3000's Kampala office, reflecting the diversity of the organisation's mandate and portfolios. We will discuss this in more detail below. Interviews with HORIZONT3000 staff and visits to the office premises indicate that the country office is very busy, but obviously just well enough staffed to provide essential support to the variety of tasks to be performed.

Talking to technical advisors and partner organisations, there are two principal messages. First, there is a good enough administrative and logistical support to accompany the TA (though some procedures are considered to be too complex)⁴⁰. The second is that programme support, i.e. support to accompany the TAs content-wise in their work, could be better although efforts are made to respond to these needs. This is not to point at the staff at the country office. It is a structural problem. HORIZONT3000 has only a restricted number of persons in-house or among TAs who could provide qualitative inputs to strengthen the work of HORIZONT3000's advisers.

The country office has recognised this and tries to address the issue to the extent possible, for example through regular dialogue with the KoBü. Attempts are also made to create knowledge networks among TAs to facilitate exchange and learning, but there is no funding programmed into the country activities to address this with vigour or more systematically like other TA providers do. Job descriptions for TAs do not demand for a regular work in this area which could be useful to exchange experiences on organisational change, sharing of tools or other activities which makes the work of advisors more effective. There are annual meetings which allow TAs to exchange, but we have questions whether this is enough to address professional issues and questions with enough focus.

⁴⁰ An example of this is the apparent need to re-submit requests for funding from the Work Support Fund, which development workers can draw on to cover some running costs, every three months (and by a given deadline), even if the request remains the same.

Some technical advisors, linked to the GTZ support to the Ministry of Energy, are part of a network of peers and have the possibility to exchange. HORIZONT3000's Head of Delegation has also recruited an assistant to do more procedural work which allows her to focus more on programming and content. And informal meetings are used to exchange to the extent possible. These are very useful attempts to address the structural problems mentioned, but there is scope for improvement if HORIZONT3000 wants to qualify as an organisation which is providing quality advice to a highly demanding and rapidly changing environment.

Conditions of service

As described earlier in this document, many of the TAs recruited by HORIZONT3000 generally have several years of work experience but have not worked outside Europe before. We would call them “experienced newcomers” to development cooperation. Many are attracted by the wish to do something different during their professional and personal life, some of them with the option to change career and to work with other development organisations if opportunities arise. HORIZONT3000 offers such possibilities and clearly states what the conditions of service are. TAs expressed that they had no problems with these during preparation in Vienna. Upon arrival in the country, however, they start comparing HORIZONT3000 with other TA providers and their advisers. When they find out that these organisations support similar work as they do but with a better reward package and better working conditions they start thinking to leave HORIZONT3000 for “greener pastures” after the two year contract or to let other priorities prevail, e.g. to follow a spouse if he/ she gets a new assignment.

Many of the technical advisors we spoke to, irrespective of the age group, stated the intention of leaving HORIZONT3000 after gaining their first work experience in a developing country. While quite a few stay on for some extra months, few extend their contracts by a full two years, a fact which is confirmed by the statistics reflected in Table 2 below. The average contract duration is 2.7 years, which is not very long if one considers that effective technical assistance work tends to start in the third year only. Experience shows that an “experienced newcomer” needs on average one full year to get into the job and a second year to show added value, to build relationships and to gain trust. It is only as of then that the person can become fully operational as an adviser. This fact should be of concern to the entire Austrian development cooperation system.

Table 2: HORIZONT3000 technical advisors in Uganda and Kenya (2000-2005)

Age	< 30	31 – 40	> 41
No. of persons*	9	27	21
Average contract duration/ years	2	3	2.7
Overall average contract duration/ years	2.7		
* total = 57; women = 38.6%, men = 61.4%; 11 persons started before 2000			

Our respondents expressed several other complaints about the conditions of service, many of which related to the secondary conditions such as pension contributions, home leave or the availability of transport. Currently, the provisions made to build up **pension rights** are seen as highly inadequate. A younger person can live with this more easily than an older one. However, even younger TAs expressed the view that they can accept a two-year period without ‘proper’ arrangements and see this period as an investment in their career, but not longer. There were also complaints that **home leave travel** is only paid after two years under the condition that a full two-year extension is signed. If a person expresses the wish to extend for less, then all costs for any home travel have to be covered by the TA. This disincentive is clearly shaped with a view to save costs, but not with a partner-oriented capacity development view orientation in mind. One could easily correct this, for example, by compensating the travel of a TA proportionally (e.g., one year extension, 50% of travel is paid). Another issue is the well-known

problem of **local transport**. Some TAs get cars provided, others do not. For some advisors, the argument used is that the person needs it for work, for others that the family situation of the advisor demands that a car is provided. However, there are no clear criteria, as far as we could assess, which stipulate under which condition a person gets a car or not, and this causes some resentment among the development workers. Several TAs we met have bought transport with their own funds, but expressed unhappiness about what they saw as an unbalanced situation. A further issue raised in the interviews relates to access to the **work support fund**. Many development workers were unclear about what this can and cannot be used for, and the rules for accessing the fund were deemed inflexible.

These are just some salient points emerging on this topic from the interviews. There are others. But they highlight that the conditions offered shape a climate of “we have to invest from our own resources” (which many development workers do in financial terms), which does not bind individuals sufficiently long to HORIZONT3000 and to their partner organisation. Consequently, capacities and a good degree of professionalism of what HORIZONT3000 can provide is lost and needs to be critically compared with the aim of the organisation to provide advisers who can make a significant difference to the development course of their partners.

Relationship management

From our interviews, there is evidence that HORIZONT3000 maintains good relations with the different organisations it works with.

Relationships between the HORIZONT3000 country office and **KoBü** especially are very collegial and constructive. For the KoBü, HORIZONT3000 is a development organisation which provides good financing channels to Ugandan organisations and which compares well with other development organisations. They do not have the view that ADA and HORIZONT3000 should have a special relationship, or obligation to work together because they are of Austrian origin. Of prime importance, according to KoBü, are the priorities and demands expressed from the Ugandan side. If HORIZONT3000 is an adequate partner to respond to these then HORIZONT3000 should be taken, if not other possibilities should be explored. The KoBü has no direct view on the TAs provided by HORIZONT3000 and also does not see a role in overseeing this as TAs are provided as advisers, and not linked to financing projects. One criticism raised by some partner organisations and technical advisors was the information and communication flow between HORIZONT 3000 and ADA (in Vienna) is perceived as slow and insufficient.⁴¹

Relationships of HORIZONT3000 with **government, with partner organisations and with other development organisations** are generally equally well managed. HORIZONT3000 is perceived as a reliable and trusted partner, maintaining open channels of communication and making a serious effort to provide the best possible TA they can mobilise. However, the criticism of insufficient communication and information flows between partners and HORIZONT3000 was also raised here. There are some cases where our interviews indicate that HORIZONT3000 speaks to a too narrow range of staff in the TA hosting organisations, as a result of which it does not get the full picture of the partner's situation or ignores or is unaware of critical voices.

The country office follows up on requests by the HORIZONT3000 **owner organisations** to provide assistance during field visits and to provide information to their partners and stakeholders in Uganda as well as in Austria. If the engagement of an owner organisation falls into the work area of an adviser, the person is involved and provides support. Relationship management is a subject during the preparation course and is part of the job description of a

⁴¹ Several respondents in different partner organisations (TAs and partner organisation representatives) mentioned perceived weaknesses in communication flows throughout, between their organisations and Horizont 3000, but especially between Horizont and ADA in Vienna. The latter seems to concern among others new project requests where, so we were told, months might pass without partners receiving any feedback.

TA. It takes a modest amount of time of the TA as well as the country office and is important to feed back information to an Austrian community which funds a substantial amount of HORIZONT3000s annual budget.⁴²

The place of HORIZONT3000's TA programme within overall HORIZONT3000 operations in Uganda

We will take with us from this review of HORIZONT3000's TA programme in Uganda the following observation. It takes place within an organisation – the HORIZONT3000 Kampala office - which performs a very wide spectrum of activities. There is a long list of activities and programmes, which is probably not even exhaustive:

- Provision of TA (financed out of the “Rahmenpersonalprogramm”) - Uganda
- Financing of organisations (financed out of the “Rahmenfinanzierungsprogramm”) - Uganda
- Provision of TA (financed out of the “Rahmenpersonalprogramm”) - Tanzania
- Financing of organisations (financed out of the “Rahmenfinanzierungsprogramm”) - Tanzania
- Provision of TA (financed out of the “Rahmenpersonalprogramm”) - Kenya
- Financing of organisations (financed out of the “Rahmenfinanzierungsprogramm”) - Kenya
- Responding for call for proposals (ADA and other donor financing)⁴³
- Participation in the implementation of the Water Facility Fund of the AfDB (with funding from the EU); HORIZONT3000 functions as a broker which channels funds into a Kenyan NGO which demands resources for coordination, monitoring and control
- Management of the demands of the owners of the HORIZONT3000; though these seem to be limited, the country office is required to carefully manage these relations as well
- Being a contact office in the region for Austrian organisations who are having activities in the region, e.g. students from Graz (not a big task, but in view of few Austrian field organisations present in the region, HORIZONT3000 is an obvious contact point)
- Managing micro-projects and small project funds – through TAs
- Functioning as a personnel development organisations for individuals which are potentially relevant for the Austrian development administration (e.g., organisation of in-country orientation courses, knowledge exchange events, etc.)

This must raise questions whether there is actually not too much loaded on the shoulders of this organisation, by its own management or by other partners, and whether there are sufficient resources to accompany the TA personnel work sufficiently content-wise. Our observations concerning the communication with partners as well as HORIZONT3000's accompaniment of content work should be noted in this regard. We will address this in more detail further below.

3.1.5 Overall assessment of HORIZONT3000's TA programme in Uganda

Contribution to capacity development

The matrix set out in Section 2.2 of this report helps to provide an overview of the contribution of HORIZONT3000's TA programme to the capacity development of its partners. As this is not an in-depth country evaluation, we will limit ourselves here to some key pointers.

The findings outlined above on demand, effectiveness and management suggest that HORIZONT3000's TA programme does contribute to the organisational development of its partner organisations as well as to the capacity of the staff working within these organisations.

⁴² HORIZONT3000's owner organisations perceive the coordination role played by HORIZONT3000 in the partner countries as generally positive. The organisation was formed as a necessary coordination system which helps to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the assistance provided, and therefore increases its quality.

⁴³ In one case, a locally-recruited HORIZONT3000 employee (not provided through the personnel programme) manages a project and reports to HORIZONT3000's Kampala office (timber-based batch production).

There is a clear demand for this type of assistance from within the organisations, TAs are in general effective at what they do and management of the personnel assignments is broadly speaking good. We should note, however, that HORIZONT3000 can only respond to particular types of requests as it has difficulties finding TAs with a considerable degree of specialisation, country knowledge and/ or development experience. In terms of management, the HORIZONT3000 country office is doing a serious and reliable job given the budgetary and conceptual framework within which HORIZONT3000's TA programme is executed. There is scope for improvement, and we have made some critical comments in the sections above. But there is a limit to what can be done at the country level. Proposals for system improvement need to be addressed at the policy level at HORIZONT3000's headquarters. We will come back to this in more detail in Chapter 4.

In contrast to the relative success of HORIZONT3000 TA in supporting individual and organisational capacity development, we did not find evidence that HORIZONT3000's technical assistance in Uganda has made a significant contribution institutional capacity development as outlined in our framework in Section 2.2. The contribution of technical advisors is very much focused on the more immediate capacity constraints of partner organisations and their staff. However, at least for the activities we saw the work of the technical advisors does not go beyond this level to encourage broader institutional capacity development through the construction of strategic relationships and helping organisations cope with the changing external institutional landscape. This should not come as a surprise, given that "experienced newcomers" can contribute good professional knowledge in a particular discipline, but not much experience on how organisations in a certain development context should relate to their institutional environment, get involved in policy processes, or position themselves in a broader sector reform context, etc. To address those more strategic issues, technical advisors, in our opinion, require at least two to three years work experience in a development context before they can become effective.

Table 3: Contribution to capacity development – a rough mapping

	individual capacity	organisational capacity	institutional capacity
Demand	✓	✓	×
Effectiveness	✓	(✓)	×
Management		(✓)	
✓ = positive; (✓) = positive but with some doubts or constraints; × = negative			

HORIZONT3000 focuses primarily on NGOs and has carved out a well-regarded niche among those organisations. There is some direct cooperation with central government, though one should question whether this should be expanded given that many other donors which have a comparative advantage in this area. If HORIZONT3000 is planning to focus its work more on (integrated) rural development, as its country programme spells out, then some in-house capacity development would be needed on decentralisation and local governance. Rural development can no longer be addressed solely through working with NGOs.

As regards gender balance and the gender sensitive work of HORIZONT3000's TA programme – looking into which was an additional request by ADA headquarters to the evaluation team – we note the following. There are no specific gender projects which HORIZONT3000 supports through its TA programme in Uganda, nor are any planned, as far as we learned. There were also no remarks or observations from partners noted which would justify a recommendation that HORIZONT3000 should work particularly in this area. However, we would recommend that HORIZONT3000 should be alert and respond should specific demands emerge. In terms of the gender balance of the TA personnel recruited, the Uganda TA programme reflects a rough division of 60% men and 40% women. The management and deputy-management of the regional office of HORIZONT3000 is executed by two women.

Factors of success / factors of failure – a summary

The following list is provided to provide an overview of factors which make HORIZONT3000 TA programme a success and which contribute to failures. The list does not aim to be exhaustive.

Table 4: Factors contributing to and hindering successful TA provision - Uganda

Factors contributing to successful TA provision	Factors hindering successful TA provision
TAs are generally well prepared for assignments	
TAs have several years work experience and are of a mature age	It is difficult to find individuals with work experience overseas and/or specific country experience
	TAs have little experience with the complex policy processes in which organisations are involved (e.g., sector reforms)
	Remuneration and secondary employment conditions do not always allow HORIZONT3000 finding specialists with sufficient or relevant specialist experience
TAs have willingness to assist people in deprived areas and are motivated to do development work	
TAs are appreciated for their willingness to adapt and for their flexibility	
TA's personality fits with the partner organisation	Personality/cultural differences hinder effective working relations
TOR/Job descriptions originate in the partner organisations	Some partner organisations have limited capacity to adequately conceive their TA needs. This limits the productivity of some TA assignments and can result in TAs playing very trivial roles.
Partner organisations are prepared for and committed to hosting and working with the TAs,	There is no real demand
Partners have systems in place to monitor the assignment (checks and balances)	National partners are not fully involved in managing and assessing TAs
HORIZONT3000 is seen as a trusted and reliable partner; TAs are consequently well received and incorporated	Direct approach may not be sustainable
Assignments are not linked/ conditional to financing	Where partner organisations and TAs lack sufficient complementary project funding, TAs are not always as effective as wished
TAs are generally well supported administratively and logistically by the country office	HORIZONT3000 does not have sector advisors/ or elaborate sector expertise in country who could can guide and accompany TAs
	There is no policy which pro-actively stimulates knowledge exchange and learning
TAs from HORIZONT3000 are considered relatively cheap and therefore preferred over some other TA providers	Several TAs expressed the view that a 2-years contract under the conditions HORIZONT3000 offers is enough

3.2 Nicaragua

3.2.1 Context

Nicaragua's development strategy

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in the Central American region. It was one of the first countries regionally to elaborate a **Strengthened Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy** (SGPRS), lasting from 2001 to 2004. Through consultations with civil society and international

development partners, the SGPRS functioned as a reference to elaborate a **National Development Plan** (NDP), which has been in place since 2004. This coincided with the HIPC debt reduction initiative.

The SGPRS and the NDP aim to reduce poverty through broad based economic growth, social sector support, investment in human capital and social protection, greater protection of vulnerable groups, institutional development and support to good governance. This includes anti-corruption campaigns and transparency through an Institutional Reform Programme of the State and citizen participation. There are three crosscutting themes: equity, ecological and environmental vulnerability and decentralization.

In the context of international development cooperation, there are efforts made to harmonise and align assistance around a number of priority areas. SWApS have been established for education and health, rural development, micro enterprise and competitiveness, environmental and natural resources, social protection and governance and justice. For the autonomous Caribbean regions (RAAN, RAAS) a special reference is made to the elaboration of a regional system of education and health and a special programme on drugs prevention.

Austrian development assistance to Nicaragua

The history of Austrian development cooperation with Nicaragua dates back to the late 1970s and reflects the economic and political history of the country. It was partly motivated by political-ideological beliefs and partly by religious and humanitarian solidarity. Support was then provided through the OED, and HORIZONT3000's work in Nicaragua today still has these original motivations at its roots. Austrian cooperation accompanied its partners through the periods of the revolution and the Sandinista government in the 1980s, subsequent conservative-liberal governments of Violeta Barrios de Chamorro (1990/1996), Arnoldo Alemán (1997/2002) and Enrique Bolaños (2002/2006). With the new Sandinista government, in office as of January 2007, new challenges arise though it is too early to assess what consequences this might have on the future cooperation between the two countries.

Similar to other development partners and their agencies, bilateral Austrian development cooperation followed the trends and policy changes of international development cooperation. It provided humanitarian assistance as well as support to monetary and macroeconomic reform in the context of structural adjustment programmes. With the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and the HIPC initiative, Austria provides support to the health sector reform programme, together with the Netherlands, Finland and Sweden. This includes the provision of sector budget support.

Nicaragua became a priority country for official Austrian development cooperation in 1992. According to ADA's three year Programme (2003-2006), OEZA activities focus on (1) the promotion of **rural development**, (2) **small and medium-sized enterprises** and (3) support to **education and health**.

In 2006, Austria hosted a high level forum on harmonisation and alignment with the EU, international donors and the Central American countries in Vienna. This was coordinated with the Central American Integration System (SICA) to discuss improved coordination of regional development plans and international development aid.⁴⁴ Austria also contributes to the Energy and Environment Partnership within the framework of the Central American Commission on Environmental Development (CCAD), as one of the first activities implementing its new regional programme.

Crosscutting themes in bilateral Austrian development assistance in Nicaragua include gender and women's rights and the strengthening of civil society organizations with a view to

⁴⁴ Austria had already invested Euro 105 million for programmes in Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador.

strengthening democratisation and citizen participation, as well as poverty reduction and protection of the environment and of natural resources. ADA is represented by the regional coordination office in Managua (the KoBü) which monitors the implementation of Austria's assistance to Nicaragua, Guatemala and El Salvador. The KoBü has a small number of staff and maintains a very good relationship with HORIZONT3000, the biggest NGO it supports in the region. It provides more than 70% of HORIZONT3000's budget in Nicaragua.

HORIZONT3000's assistance to Nicaragua

HORIZONT3000's assistance to Nicaragua is laid out in its **country strategy paper** (2004–2006, updated 2005–2007). This was elaborated by HORIZONT3000 headquarters, with inputs from the country office especially on the sector strategies for **health** and **education** and for the **productive sector** (agriculture). By some accounts, the final formulation of the country strategy was strongly influenced by HORIZONT3000's Austrian owner organisations. The CSP responds to the expressed needs within the regions and at community level to support local partner organisations through **human capacity development and institutional strengthening**. Since colonial times, the Atlantic Region has been neglected, with relatively few investments by central government and few incentives given to attract workers from Nicaragua's Pacific Zone.

Currently, HORIZONT3000 has some 34 financing projects in the Caribbean region, which include support to:

- *Education* (adult education; alphabetisation; vocational training; university education);
- *Health* (HIV/ AIDS, preventive health; primary healthcare; reproductive health; traditional and natural medicines; drug abuse and prevention; rehabilitation war casualties; water and sanitation);
- *Informal education of youth* (integrated personality development; artistic development; community work; etc.)
- *Women's support programmes* (defence of women's rights);
- *Agricultural development* (organic agriculture and marketing);
- Promotion of *solidarity activities between Nicaraguan and Austrian society* (solidarity groups and networks, etc.)
- *Human rights and democratisation*
- *Education in a multicultural context*
- *Intra-familial violence*
- *Working with indigenous women*

The HORIZONT3000 coordination office aims to restructure the country programmes for the region along the following lines: (1) evolution from projects to a programme approach where by cluster of activities are addressed; (2) concentration on particular sectors and territories; and (3) focussing on a selected number of crosscutting themes such as gender and ecological and environmental vulnerability. The latter will particularly address risk management for natural disasters.

The HORIZONT3000 office in Managua coordinates work in Nicaragua and represents the country programmes of El Salvador and Guatemala vis-a-vis ADA, the EC and other institutions based in Managua.⁴⁵ The office is staffed with one international coordinator and two international and two national project staff, who manage the financing projects and support the TA programme. It also has 8 local staff working in administrative functions.

⁴⁵ It has no coordination function towards the HORIZONT3000 offices in Guatemala and El Salvador.

HORIZONT3000 technical assistance in Nicaragua

In the 1990s, the total number of HORIZONT3000 TA personnel working in Nicaragua was 35. This dropped to 17 persons in total over the last 5 years period, a number which excludes the three staff working in HORIZONT3000's coordination office in Managua. During the visit of the mission in February 2007, six TA personnel were in country, all of them placed within organisations which also receive medium and long-term financing. Two of the technical advisors could be characterised as what we have called “**experienced newcomers**”. The four others are what we call “**long-timers**”, people with a long working record in Nicaragua, mostly dating back to the 1980s. Some have been working through HORIZONT3000 or one of its predecessor organisations, or with similar TA providers.

Technical assistance to Nicaragua has been provided to a broad range of partners, namely (1) **CSOs**, (2) **private national foundations and associations** and, to a lesser extent to (3) **governmental organisations** such as the Ministry of Health (as in the case of the SILAIS) and to organisations related to the autonomous regional government of the Atlantic Zone. The listing of all personnel assignments in Nicaragua reviewed presented in Annex 5 indicates that, as in Uganda, HORIZONT3000's partner organisations in Nicaragua **work at different levels**, ranging from organisations working at the **micro level** to organisations working at the **meso and macro levels**.

Without this being a formal strategy, HORIZONT3000's **policy in Nicaragua is to combine the provision of TA personnel and the financing of projects** at partner organisations. In contrast to the situation in Uganda, there is no fear that the close relationship between technical assistance and financing projects could create a conflict as regards the advisors' 'advisory and technical assistance' role versus that of managing projects or monitoring funds. Thus, with the exception of one advisor (provided to the Jagwood Association), all TA personnel in Nicaragua work in partner organisations to whom HORIZONT3000 also provides project financing, while the country office watches carefully that they do not take on any project management or financial monitoring responsibility. HORIZONT3000 project financing is in most cases complemented by funding from its owner organisations, such as DKA, KMB and KFB.

In some cases, HORIZONT3000 TA personnel is also involved in a broader donor-funded project. This is the case, for example, in the EU-funded project on reproductive and sexual health in the frontier zones with Honduras, after HORIZONT3000 together with European and national organisations and consultancy firms won a tender. HORIZONT3000 has also locally contracted some expatriates who have been living and working in Nicaragua as technical advisor (for instance the TA who facilitates the systematising and exchange of experiences).

For the Nicaragua case, the sections below focus on elements and points which we have not already addressed in the section on Uganda. Most of the issues mentioned apply to both situations. We emphasise aspects which confirm or complement some elements discussed before, or which stress the differences to the Uganda case.

3.2.2 Relevance

Relevance of the personnel programme: Responding to nationally formulated demand

At the policy level ADA and HORIZONT3000 respond to the strategic themes and development priorities of the **SGPRS** and the **NDP**. ADA provides support to rural development in order to strengthen broad based economic growth and it helps small and medium size enterprises. Other focal areas are the education and health sectors, as explained above. HORIZONT3000 emphasises the development of organisational and human capital in the education and health sectors, the protection of vulnerable groups, good governance and institutional development.

ADA and HORIZONT3000 work together closely in Nicaragua, and as one of the biggest

Austrian NGOs in the country HORIZONT3000 receives more than 70 % of its funding from ADA. HORIZONT3000's approach in Nicaragua is to provide TA personnel to organisations which also receive HORIZONT3000 funding, a strategy which our respondents considered beneficial. Both types of assistance are not related, and are managed out of the Managua office. While there are good synergies in the work of both ADA and HORIZONT3000, their entry points are different. ADA supports the central government's Health Ministry and the regional governments, but also the strengthening of civil society and NGOs which implement the bulk of its assistance. HORIZONT3000 supports only a comparatively small number of projects within government institutions at national and regional level, such as, for example, the primary health care project SILAIS at the Regional Ministry of Health in Somoto.

Most of HORIZONT3000's partner organisations are NGOs or foundations, which reflects the focus of HORIZONT3000's strategy on **strengthening civil society** and its organisations at regional and community level. HORIZONT3000 also concentrates on the **Caribbean Region**, also referred to as the Atlantic Region, where it strengthens the institutional development of the Regional Autonomous Councils (RAAN and RAAS). National partners in the country, in particular the governmental NGO department and members of the donor community, such as DFID, very much appreciate HORIZONT3000's focus. They see the intense work of HORIZONT3000 with civil society in different parts of the country as a way of **counterbalancing the weaknesses of central government**. The same accounts for HORIZONT3000's support to the historically marginalised Atlantic Region and its autonomous councils which maintain a certain strained relationship with central government.

HORIZONT3000, in consortium with a number of national NGOs, receives additional funding from the EU as well as from other EU member states, e.g. the UK (DFID). This funding from Europe is fully in line with the priorities of the national policy framework.⁴⁶ Besides, HORIZONT3000 can pursue a limited number of projects which do not fully fall within the SGPRS and the NDP. This provides space for HORIZONT3000 to respond to demands emerging bottom-up. This flexibility is appreciated by partners and should be maintained as national planning can never foresee all needs. Some 15% of HORIZONT3000's budget in Nicaragua can be used for bottom-up formulated requests, and originates from the owner organisations of HORIZONT3000.

ADA and HORIZONT3000 already work together closely, for instance in the health sector, but there are **opportunities for further intensification of the relationship** with a view to enhancing the overall relevance of their assistance within the national context, at different levels and to different social and institutional actors. Both organisations already use their staff expertise to complement each other, and this can be built on to promote further synergies. For instance, ADA has expertise at the national and Central American level in the area of economic and enterprise development, while HORIZONT3000 concentrates on the social themes within the Caribbean/ Atlantic region. By entering into a more strategic relationship with ADA, **HORIZONT3000 could become a useful translator and bridge builder between regional concerns and organisations operating at low levels and at the national level**. HORIZONT3000's work in the health sector should be complimented and used as a reference point for future more programme-based programming.

Relevance of TA assignments to partner organisations

Since HORIZONT3000 technical advisors in Nicaragua are always delivered as complements, it is difficult to assess the relevance of the TA personnel independent from the financing projects or from the performance of the partner organisations. Most partner organisations which have, or have had, TA personnel still see it as a necessity, despite the increasing number of

⁴⁶ The EU is becoming an increasingly important funder for HORIZONT3000. The HORIZONT3000 country office foresees a Euro 11 million budget for the coming years, including a Euro 2 million project on sexual reproduction in which HORIZONT3000 forms part of a Nicaraguan/ European consortium.

trained people in Nicaragua, technical assistance is still a necessity for most partner organisations. Key reasons given for the use of expatriate technical assistance personnel are: more up to date technical or academic skills and knowledge; political sensitivity on how to deal with complex institutional development processes; and good social competencies, such as openness to listening and reflection. Partner organisations frequently stated that their programmes would not have advanced as quickly without the technical assistance provided. The advisors help to link up with new organisations, provide access to the experience of other countries and can create opportunities for additional funding. The de-linking of technical advisors from the financial management responsibilities of HORIZONT3000 projects was also highly appreciated, as it puts the advisor in a more independent and fully advisory position. Finally, TA personnel can help to explore the potential for the combined participation of HORIZONT3000 and partner organisations in calls for proposals, as can be seen in the existing consortium of HORIZONT3000 with the Italian NGO CVC, the national Foundation Xochiquetzal and Christian Medical Action working under the Ministry of Health with funding from the EU.

In the Caribbean Region, Austrian NGO assistance dates back some 18 years and there is a special recognition of the support and relevance of HORIZONT3000 financing projects and the related TA personnel provided. International TA personnel is seen as very relevant for most of the partner organisations because of the shortage of trained human resources, especially by comparison with the Pacific area. Some local partner organisations in the Caribbean region also indicated a preference for expatriates to Nicaraguans from the Pacific area because of concerns about adaptation of the latter to a multicultural context – though one should question why a person from Europe should adapt more easily than a Nicaraguan from the Pacific region. Probably a more important issue at stake is the deeply rooted mistrust of many members of the indigenous peoples of the Atlantic regions that dates back to colonial times and the historical negligence and discrimination of the Atlantic regions by the Pacific-based elites.

We note that most of the perceptions mentioned above come from local partners who have worked, or are working, with very experienced HORIZONT3000 TA personnel. Some of these technical advisors have been resident in Nicaragua since the 1980s, and their experience is highly relevant for their partner organisations. Instead of recruiting such technical advisors through HORIZONT3000, funding could be provided to the organisation concerned to keep these persons in the job and to manage them locally. Alternatively, organisations with an own revenue base – like the Timber Wood Association – could recruit the highly appreciated expertise on their own, or at least co-fund the person.

Assessing relevance and demand

Overall, the demands for TA in Nicaragua are well identified and formulated. This relates to several factors. In most cases a **long term relationship exists between the partner organisation and HORIZONT3000 programme and project staff**. Several of them have worked within these partner organisations in the past. Both sides understand each other's arguments easily, which facilitates the formulation of the ToRs.

An important selection criterion for HORIZONT3000 is that TA personnel should only be sent to reasonably well structured and managed programmes and organisations. This is not only to ensure the optimal deployment of the advisor, but also to avoid a situation in which s/he can dominate, or manipulate the organisation where its management capabilities are weak. The other rationale is that the TA can function as a catalyser in such contexts which will lead to the development of new capacities, and to changing demands and new fields of expertise within the partner organisation over time.

3.2.3 Effectiveness

Roles played by HORIZONT3000 TA personnel

According to the classification of TA roles listed in Box 5, above, the TA personnel in Nicaragua provides a **mix of technical expertise, facilitation for organisational change and reform and innovation/ exploration**. All of this is combined with some level of day-to-day gap filling, though advisory work is the focus.⁴⁷ This profile has clearly evolved, from a situation in the 1980s when the input of a technical advisor was primarily of a gap filling nature. The roles of TA personnel in the partner organisations are generally well defined and understood. The fact that they are not tied to financing, and not charged with financing management responsibilities, is seen as an important reason for their effectiveness.⁴⁸

Almost all experienced technical advisors in Nicaragua play an important role in innovation, exploration and the provision of more strategic advice to their partners. While their national colleagues are developing their technical and management capabilities, the TAs concentrate on training, address more specialised work and engage in stimulating learning and exchange of experiences. Another new role mentioned is the support to partner organisations who want to respond to a call for proposals in project formulation. Such support comes from the most experienced TAs. We have learnt that these persons are also supporting HORIZONT3000's Managua office in the formulation of financing proposals for health and education. In some cases, they have also provided technical support to the HORIZONT3000 office and other TAs working on health sector reform for activities financed by ADA.

Effectiveness of TA personnel

This section provides an overview of the effectiveness of HORIZONT3000 TA personnel in Nicaragua along four categories of TA activities, namely “organisational development/ process support”, “networking/ learning”, “organisational/ economic development” and “specific technical support”. One of these activities was predominant in each of the cases we looked at, and we cluster the partner organisations accordingly.

“Organisational development/ process support”: There are several organisations to which a technical advisor has been provided almost permanently, or sequential technical assistance was provided over a long period of time. They accompanied the partner organisations in their gradual development and maturation and helped to identify new needs, challenges and initiatives over time. The TAs were able to educate, train, coach and mentor their national colleagues and contributed significantly to the strengthening of the human resources base of the organisation. An important characteristic of this type of TA is that the technical advisors were able to feed into the different stages of the development of the organisation and assisted in the formulation of projects or activities which challenged the organisation to move to a next stage. In some cases, the TAs adapted to the needs of the partner organisation, acquired new competencies and grew with it over time. In other words, the TAs became an integral part of the organisation.

Examples:

- * The SILAIS project on primary healthcare (Somoto, Madriz) - Almost permanent technical advisor.
- * The primary healthcare project with the Ministry of Health (Atlantic Zone, Rosita) - Different technical advisors provided over a long period of time
- * National Foundation, CECALLI - Different technical advisors provided according to the changing needs.

⁴⁷ A degree of gap filling, in the sense of helping out, is quite common in the work of many technical advisors across the world. It helps advisors to establish their legitimacy in an organisation, and to show that they are working alongside their local colleagues

⁴⁸ Very much like in Uganda, TA personnel in Nicaragua sometimes oversee micro funds provided by HORIZONT3000 to their host organisation to support specific activities in their direct working environment and within the partner organisation.

“Networking/ learning”: Another category of technical assistance was where the advisors facilitated the systematisation and exchange of experiences of the partner organisation and its network of peers, co-operators and partners working on the same theme. Networking, learning and synergies were realised in the region but also beyond, at the national level. National colleagues of the TA were actively involved in this process, and were able to build their capabilities. This type of advisor requires a high level of specialisation and technical and social skills to adapt and adjust to the different conditions of each one of the network partners.

Examples:

- * URRACAN and FADCANIC - Organisations with TA personnel for systematising and exchanging experiences

“Organisational/ economic development”: There are also organisations where the technical advisor contributed significantly to the economic sustainability of the partner organisation and its members, and the professional development of its staff. In such cases, the specialised advisors were crucial beyond the mere technical needs of the organisations concerned, as they also supported the broader institutional strengthening of the partner organisations, including the development of their organisational culture and human relations. This type of TA is becoming more and more important as development agencies demand professional organisations to become economically sustainable.⁴⁹

Examples:

- * Jagwood timber wood association - Several contracts for one technical advisor
- * CECALLI project (last stage) on Primary healthcare and Traditional medicine, medicinal plants - Different technical advisors provided at different stages of the organisation’s development

“Specific technical support”: Finally, there are the well structured programmes and partner organisations where technical advisors play a more specific role. The effectiveness of this type of TA, in comparison with the cases involving long-term experienced personnel, is generally limited to specific sub-programmes of the partner organisations, to which the advisors make important contributions in terms of technical and methodological innovation and institutional development. Most of the TA’s operating in this type of programmes, the so-called “experienced newcomers”, see themselves working and living in Nicaragua only temporarily, and foresee returning to their home countries when their contract has ended.

Examples:

- * Local Foundation, CECIM, special education - Experienced newcomer
- * Regional Atlantic Zone Foundation, FADCANIC, Special multi-cultural education.- Experienced newcomer

Sustainability of results

The information we have received is primarily anecdotal though there is clear evidence in one case that the input of HORIZONT3000’s TA personnel has contributed to the introduction of a system and way of working which have remained and were further developed after the departure of the advisor. This was the case in the SILAIS project on Primary Healthcare of the Ministry of Health, Rosita, which today is a model for the region (RAAN). At SILAIS in Madriz, the approach was equally taken over by the partner organisation, though one HORIZONT3000 TA is still around to accompany the work.

Other indications that HORIZONT3000’s technical assistance has made a difference can be traced from the interviews with partner organisations. There is a substantial number of people

⁴⁹ In discussing such demands there were doubts expressed by the ADA office whether this is a feasible future avenue for HORIZONT3000 which has a comparative advantage in working with social programmes and less so in economic development.

who have worked with technical advisors from HORIZONT3000 and have benefited from on-the-job training, counselling, mentoring, skills development and the transfer of knowledge. This capacity development at the individual level, which has also reinforced the organisation as a whole, is highly appreciated, and has led to success stories such as Jackwood or Cecalli.

Of concern, however, should be the high turnover of staff in some of the partner organisations, in particular within governmental organisations where sustainability is not guaranteed because of changes in government. This is the possible case with higher level staff at SILAIS in Madriz. While attempts were made to reinforce the functioning of the organisation and their relationship with their network of partners and the wider institutional environment, the effects of the HORIZONT3000 TA inputs are likely to vanish because of the disappearance of Nicaraguan colleagues to “greener pastures”. This is particularly the case where inputs were relatively short. When assistance is provided over a longer period, HORIZONT3000 TA personnel functions as a stabiliser and institutional memory to help bridge such staff turnovers. Partner organisations also emphasised the importance of training and the development of training material or manuals, together with the documenting of experiences, to cope with this situation.

The picture is different in organisations where a technical advisor was in place over many years and where worked jointly with local colleagues to strengthen the organisation through different phases of its development. In such cases, the TA inputs were absorbed and integrated gradually, and this led to a more thorough strengthening of the organisation with more sustainable results. Examples are the SILAIS of Rosita where a public health team, including trained community workers, is well in place. This is the case also in the more stable foundations such as CECALLI, and to a certain extent at SILAIS, Madriz, at the level of medium and lower level personnel.

3.2.4 Management

Induction/ preparation

The preparation programme in Austria and in Nicaragua is regarded positively by both technical advisors and partner organisations. Positive comments were made in particular regarding the attention paid to the political and socio-cultural aspects of the Atlantic Zone. The training, combined with the technical advisors’ professional backgrounds and social skills, makes it possible for them to adapt to new roles and to the changing needs of the partner organisation. The principle of living with a Nicaraguan family during the training period is also considered an important opportunity for TA personnel to familiarise themselves with the cultural and social context and to master the Spanish language, which is a major limitation for most of the newcomers. Technical advisors who had lived in Nicaragua before being contracted by HORIZONT3000 appreciated the course in Austria as an opportunity to exchange experiences with TAs from other countries, and to gain up-to-date knowledge on relevant development policies and methodologies. For newcomers, the orientation visits to HORIZONT3000 projects and TA personnel posted in the field are considered most useful, in particular the visits to the technical advisors with long experience in the country.

It is estimated that it takes on average up to ten months before a new technical advisor can first start adding value to a partner organisation. After this period, it still takes a full year with the organisation for an advisor to become fully operational.

Country office/ local support of TA personnel

Overall HORIZONT3000’s country office is seen to give **good administrative and logistical support** to TA personnel. Project staff in the country office stated that the “long-timers” “can manage themselves”, which considerably reduces the work load of the HORIZONT3000 office. Approximately 10% HORIZONT3000 project staff time is devoted to the support of TA personnel. The general coordinator devotes some 15 to 20% of her time to the support of

technical advisors. The four HORIZONT3000 project officials accompany, respectively, health care, gender and women's rights, rural development and (special) education. The HORIZONT3000 coordinator and the two international project officials have extensive professional experience in Nicaragua, as they started working there as volunteers in the 1980s.

For **content and professional questions**, however, there is an expressed **need to improve mutual learning and exchange of experiences** between the different projects (financing projects and TA) and partner organisations. This would enhance the overall professional quality of HORIZONT3000's work, and could help to make the programme approach of HORIZONT3000 in a certain sector more transparent, show the linkages, reinforce contacts with the partners, etc. Such systematising and exchange of experiences should be pursued more strongly by HORIZONT3000 and should be incorporated into the regular work programme of the organisation. It could be complemented by other mechanisms for professional exchange, such as peer group meetings, networks and special workshops, etc.

Management of TA personnel, reporting and accountability

Although HORIZONT3000 puts stress on working in a participatory manner, in particular with regard to monitoring and evaluation, there are concerns and complaints about the obligation of the technical advisors to report in German. This prevents full transparency in the relationship with the partner organisation and local colleagues and does not allow for accountability to the national partners. Moreover, we are aware of several strategic papers of the HORIZONT3000 programme which could be useful for information and discussion with local partners but which are available only in German.⁵⁰

HORIZONT3000's participative monitoring and evaluation methodology, in contrast, are well received by all parties involved. They are frequently taken as an example for other programmes or activities of the partner organisations.⁵¹ There are also other cases, however, where the partner organisation use their own monitoring and evaluation instruments which they consider better or more elaborate (e.g. Jagwood). The participative mechanisms are seen as important tools for mutual learning, dialogue and improving working conditions and to identify new challenges for new initiatives of the partner organisation.

Conditions of service

The majority of technical advisors we met in Nicaragua are long-time residents of the country and clearly different from many of the advisors working in Uganda. Several arrived with a solidarity and humanitarian motivation in mind, and in the meantime have made Nicaragua their permanent base. This is also reflected in Table 5 below, which shows a higher average number of years under contract for the advisors than the comparable figure in Uganda. The remaining "long-timers" in Nicaragua explain why the statistics are different: More than 50% of the technical advisors working in the country in the past five years had Nicaraguan spouses and family.

There were few complaints from this group about the conditions of service. To the contrary, many of them would like to extend their contracts but feel that there is **lack of recognition for their long-term commitment** now that the new contract policy limits the maximum number of years to five. It is evident that advisors with family are concerned about their economic situation, living conditions and the schooling of their children, and for this group the new contract policy creates a level of insecurity about staying in Nicaragua or returning to their home countries. There are basically no perspectives to build a career within HORIZONT3000.

⁵⁰ This refers, for example, to the country strategy papers, policy papers from headquarters, evaluation reports and also to the reporting by TAs to Vienna headquarters.

⁵¹ This refers to the formats used for the joint quarterly monitoring of performance by both the technical advisors and the partner organisations, which is then discussed with the HORIZONT3000 coordination office. It also applies to the yearly assessment and the final evaluation of a TA assignment in which all parties are involved.

However, for several advisors, the return option is also not very feasible anymore, which reduces their motivation and leads them to look for other possibilities. We are aware of one case where the person has started doing consultancies on an occasional basis next to the HORIZONT3000 contract.

In contrast, the few experienced newcomers do not have the same background as the former group and are fully aware of the new conditions and future perspectives. They see their staying in Nicaragua as a temporary experience and contribution to their further personal and professional development before returning home or moving elsewhere.

Table 5: HORIZONT3000 technical advisors in Nicaragua (2000-2005)

Age	< 30	31 – 40	> 41
No. of persons*	2	8	8
Average contract duration/ years	2,4	4,7	3,7
Overall average contract duration/ years	4		
* total = 18: women = 50%. men = 50%: 6 persons started before 2000			

Relationship management

HORIZONT3000's good existing relationship with **partner organisations** was mentioned several times during the interviews. HORIZONT3000 seems to be able to cope well with changing conditions and makes use of new opportunities for financing, including participation in call for tenders.

The relationship with the **KoBü** is also collegial and collaborative, which provides an opportunity for developing a stronger professional partnership between the ADA- and HORIZONT3000-programmes. With growing opportunities for alternative funding, such as funding from the EU, ADA will not be the only option for funding in the future.

HORIZONT3000 also has a good (and historic) relationship with its **owner organisations**, although they only provide 15% of HORIZONT3000's budget. This relationship is reflected in the time given to their representatives or groups during visits from Austria, and by the fact that information is freely and happily shared. As the apparently strong influence of the interests of HORIZONT3000's owner organisation in the formulation of the country strategy for Nicaragua indicates, the role of the owner organisations in HORIZONT3000 strategy formulation might have to be taken account of in the context of future planning as well.

Place of HORIZONT3000 TA programme within overall HORIZONT3000 operations

The rather wide range of activities of HORIZONT3000 in the Central American region raises the question of **whether HORIZONT3000's Managua office is sufficiently prepared and equipped to accompany the TA programme in the future**, as it does at present. The office has a heavy workload. In addition to activities and programmes listed in the Uganda case above, which in general terms are similar for Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, we can add the following tasks which the office has to deal with:

- Supporting ADA in its contributions to the (health) sector reform programmes;
- Coordination with ADA activities falling within the framework of the Central American Integration System;
- Promoting the development of expertise in and the exchange of experiences between HORIZONT3000 financing projects and partner organisations, and with other development agencies.

3.2.5 Overall assessment of HORIZONT3000's TA programme in Nicaragua

Contribution to capacity development

HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme in Nicaragua clearly differs from its engagement in Uganda. The programme is strongly influenced by its historic roots and the persons who arrived during the Sandinista period in the 1980s. While new people have arrived to fill several HORIZONT3000 vacancies, there is still a critical mass of HORIZONT3000 "long-timers" in Nicaragua with in-depth knowledge of the country, extended networks and close ties with a variety of organisations in Nicaragua and abroad. The local partners as well as ADA benefit from these capacities and new partners, such as the EU, recognise the value of HORIZONT3000 and its local partner organisations. The expected new funding over the next years is a testament to this.

Looking at relevance and effectiveness of the current personnel programme, our assessment shows that there are different levels of appreciation. There are **"experienced newcomers"** sent to partners to help with particular parts of an organisation's development, or to assist in the realisation of a sub-section of a programme. Such technical advisors can have an impact on the strengthening of the organisation, but knowledge of the wider context is missing, which prevents them from becoming a more strategic resource for the partner. In contrast, **technical advisors with long-term experience** in a context such as Nicaragua can address more complex issues and help organisations to better link up with their partners and their institutional environment. The quality of such technical advisors, with many years of experience in Nicaragua, is comparable to that of regional or international experts of bi-lateral development agencies. Both, HORIZONT3000 and ADA have benefited from these persons, in particular where the activities are linked to a wider reform context such as in the health sector. If these "long-timers" can not be kept, essential capacities and experience are lost or need to be purchased elsewhere.

In terms of management, HORIZONT3000 is doing well on administrative and logistic matters. In terms of content and knowledge of the 'ins and outs' of the country, HORIZONT3000 can draw on the experience of the "long-timers", working inside its country office or with partner organisations. This keeps management costs at bay. With the use of new and non-experienced advisors, **investments need to be made to compensate for this loss of long-term experience** so that the new personnel provided can be well accompanied in their work and the level of services provided by HORIZONT3000 can be maintained.

With the growing level of capacity in Nicaragua, and the higher level of development compared to HORIZONT3000's African partner countries Uganda and Mozambique,⁵² **new demands for more specific types of expertise**, for which no suitable persons can be found in Nicaragua, will be brought to the attention of HORIZONT3000. Examples would be enterprise development or risk management for natural disasters. It remains to be seen to what extent HORIZONT3000 can mobilise such expertise, given the international labour market in such fields and the competition with other TA providers who can offer better conditions of service.⁵³ In any case, what seems clear is that the profile of people applying for HORIZONT3000 positions today is different compared to that of the past. New HORIZONT3000 technical advisors tend to be willing to stay for a limited period of time only, with a view to moving on to other professional and personal challenges thereafter.

As regards the contribution to capacity development of HORIZONT3000's personnel

⁵² The UN Human Development Report of 2005 lists Nicaragua as number 112, Uganda 144 and Mozambique 168 on its Human Development Indicator. While such rankings are always debatable, they do reflect the nationwide situation, irrespective of the big inequalities and differences in context within the countries.

⁵³ Critical observations in this regard were already made in the evaluation of the role of NGOs as partners of the Austrian Development Cooperation in Nicaragua (INBAS/L und R Social Research 2005: 2)

programme in Nicaragua, Table 6 below provides a broad ranking, based on the matrix set out in Section 2.2. While this is fairly arbitrary and non-scientific, it does provide some indication on where the country programme stands, and can serve as a basis for discussion.

As in Uganda, the HORIZONT3000 TA programme in Nicaragua **contributes to the capacity development of the individuals** working in the programmes or partner organisations supported, as well as to the **organisational development** of the partners concerned. However, because of the “long-timers”, HORIZONT3000 TA personnel in Nicaragua has **also made contributions to** what we have defined as **institutional capacity development**. This was the case particularly in the health sector at the regional level of the Atlantic Zone, as well at national level in primary health care. Development results were achieved by bringing actors of the civil society (NGO’s and foundations and associations) together with regional and central government. Synergies with central government were strengthened through linking up with ADA, which provides support to the national health sector reform programme. With the departure of the ‘long-timers’, this dimension of capacity development is likely to disappear. Another element which is disappearing are the long-time direct contacts of technical advisors with support groups in their home countries. To partly compensate for this loss of expertise, HORIZONT3000 could try to intensify knowledge building and exchange mechanisms among staff, across countries and with partner organisations.

Table 6: Contribution to capacity development – a rough mapping

	individual capacity	organisational capacity	institutional capacity
Demand	✓	✓	(✓)
Effectiveness	✓	(✓)	(✓)
Management		(✓)	
✓ = positive; (✓) = positive but with some doubts or constraints; ✗ = negative			

In terms of **gender**, HORIZONT3000’s Nicaragua programme addresses this as part of its country strategy. It finances organisations working in this area, but no personnel is supplied to gender projects as Nicaragua is considered to have sufficient expertise in this field. There is one staff member in the HORIZONT3000 country office who takes care of gender sensitive and women’s rights related work. Broadly speaking, there is a balance of men and women working in HORIZONT3000’s personnel programme, and in the country office. The HORIZONT3000 coordinator is a woman.

Factors of success and failure – a summary

Further to the factors mentioned in the section on Uganda, the Nicaragua case provides the following additions:

Table 7: Factors contributing to and hindering successful TA provision - Nicaragua

Factors contributing to successful TA provision	Factors hindering successful TA provision
Strong solidarity and identification of the TA personnel with the partners’ contexts, as many arrived during the Sandinista revolution and have extensive experience of working and living in the country	Insufficient provisions made to ensure that key capacities and knowledge within the TA programme are retained
Personnel programme’s combination of long-time and experienced TA and “experienced newcomers”	New contract policy creates insecurity among long-time technical advisors
	Lack of HORIZONT3000 career perspective and strategy for professional development
Combination of technical skills with social skills and positive attitudes	

Combination of TA with financing project	
Informed selection of partner organisations, based on long institutional and personal relationships	
Good definition of demand between HORIZONT3000 office and partner organisation	Turn-over of staff or counterparts in the partner organisations
Good use of participatory methodologies for monitoring and evaluation	
Open attitude of partner organisations towards TA personnel, regarded as members of their teams or staff	

3.3 Assessing HORIZONT3000's personnel programme

Building on the country assessments provided above and making use of complementary information from other evaluations on HORIZONT3000 and from the interviews held in Mozambique and Vienna, this section presents an overall summary of our assessment of HORIZONT3000's TA programme.

3.3.1 HORIZONT3000's contribution to capacity development

HORIZONT3000 is heavily pressed to **change** and forced to respond to the **new demands** and expectations emerging in the context of a world-wide change in development cooperation to which Austrian Development Cooperation subscribes. We have made reference above to the Paris Declaration and to the international discussion on aid effectiveness which are both motivating this momentum for policy change. HORIZONT3000's TA Framework Programme 2007, submitted in October 2006, shows that the organisation is making **major efforts to respond adequately**. It sets out three levels of capacity development – individual, organisational and the empowering structures of civil society⁵⁴ - which it wants to support with the provision of TA personnel (see Box 6 below).

The evaluation suggests that this will be an uphill battle. While we have indications that HORIZONT3000 can respond reasonably well to the first two levels, there is evidence that the third level, as well as the specific requests for particular technical know-how and expertise, cannot be addressed adequately with the human resources which HORIZONT3000 is able to mobilise. We discuss this assessment in two steps:

- On **specific technical know-how and expertise**, we can generally share the observation made in the INBAS/ L&R Social Research evaluation (2005, p. 2) that: *"HORIZONT3000 works usually with smaller local communities, groups and NGOs and sees its key competency in supporting these institutions in their initial start-up and growth phases. ... Yet, the more advanced and established local project partners felt that ... HORIZONT3000 ... had [not] offered them a great deal of specialised and first-rate technical know-how and expertise in areas relevant to more advanced project phases."*
- One can argue, as some interviewees did, that this should not be the core focus of HORIZONT3000's work and that **organisational development and empowerment** should be at the centre of attention instead. There is a rationale for this, as other development agencies, TA providers or recruitment offices might be better placed to find such specialists. Hence, HORIZONT3000 might be advised to stay away from such demands and concentrate on its defined core business, i.e. support to civil society organisations and their

⁵⁴ This follows a framework used increasingly in international cooperation to conceptualise capacity development, which is presented in Chapter 2.

relating structures, such as associations, networks, platforms, etc. (TA Framework Programme 2007).

- Support to the third capacity level, **institutional development and empowerment**, would require a level of expertise which HORIZONT3000 already has difficulties providing. There is a natural limit to the expertise that the “experienced newcomers” can bring. Yet TA without solid expertise can be of little value added for partner organisations trying to find their way in an increasingly complex and constantly changing policy environment, to ‘voice’ their demands and those of stakeholders, with a multitude of ambitious players around. There is a growing need for strategic advice on how to position themselves towards government institutions and demanding development agencies and the wider development context.

According to HORIZONT3000’s TA Framework Programme 2007, the organisation expects from its support at the third level, that *“local organisations and parts of civil society are able to implement poverty alleviation projects on their own and in a sustainable manner”*. While this is an important task, we do not see this as a contribution to ‘empowerment’ as defined earlier in the document (see also Box 6) but rather as the development of organisational capacity to implement projects.

Box 6: Auslegung des Begriffs ‘capacity development’

HORIZONT3000 folgt in seiner Auslegung des Begriffs dem Modell der GTZ, die CapDev als Ziel, Methode und Aktivität sieht, anwendbar auf drei Ebenen:

- der Ebene von Individuen (Hebung des Bildungsniveaus, Stärkung von Selbstbestimmtheit, Eigenverantwortung, Potentiale zur Initiierung und Umsetzung von Entwicklungsprozessen, ...)
- der Ebene von Organisationen (Organisationsentwicklung OE: Reflexion, Positionierung, Aufbau von Strukturen, Ablauforganisation, ...)
- der Ebene von Gesellschaften (Empowerment der zivilen Gesellschaft, ihre Rechte geltend zu machen, ebenso wie die Stärkung politischer Institutionen und der Verwaltung in der Wahrnehmung ihrer Agenden).

From: HORIZONT3000 TA Framework Programme 2007

This point merits in-depth discussion because the organisation needs to have a clear picture of what it can deliver in terms of capacity development. There is an obvious limit to what it can realise with the resources it has at its disposition. Potential pressures from policy makers, or certain trends in development cooperation which might suggest that HORIZONT3000 should play a more active role in sector reforms at all levels, from the national level down, should be carefully reviewed. Given its current operational framework, HORIZONT3000 can make an important contribution to reforms at lower levels, especially where the organisational capacity development of NGO service providers is the target. It does not at this time have the capacity to get involved at higher levels.

3.3.2 “Doing things right” vs. “doing the right things”

Generally speaking, **HORIZONT3000 is “doing things right”** if one looks at what the organisation is doing in a more narrow sense, i.e. the response to the demand from organisations, the effectiveness of the TA personnel for their host organisation and how the TA programme is managed. There are certainly several **aspects which can be improved** and we have alluded to them in the previous sections. HORIZONT3000 is **keen to learn about new developments, open to change and adaptation** and **trying to overcome some of the legacies from its past**, rooted in volunteering and solidarity. It has also made efforts to keep up with international standards set by other TA providers. Its preparation course for TAs bears witness to this, as do its country strategy papers, the implementation of management procedures and assessment formats and the participatory manner through which it engages with stakeholders. This list is not complete. There are others.

But HORIZONT3000 is not necessarily “doing the right things” if one looks at the current international aid discourse. As the DAC Peer Review of Austria indicated, there is scope to reduce fragmentation and to work in greater complementarity. There should also be awareness that today’s **demands from partner countries and partner organisations have changed significantly**. There are more and more trained people available locally, who could be used for certain types of jobs for which HORIZONT3000 provides technical advisors at present. And there is a growing demand for specialists, as well as for experts who can provide “higher-level advice. The Nicaragua programme seems to be more advanced and able to respond to such demands, from what we have seen in the health sector, for example, than the Uganda programme.

We do not feel that it is justified to be very critical about HORIZONT3000 “*doing the right things*”. There is a **joint responsibility** which both **HORIZONT3000** and its **funding organisations** need to face. Given the current framework and resources under which HORIZONT3000 operates, there is little more it can do. The salary and secondary employment conditions are very close to what a volunteer organisation offers, as we show in more detail in Chapter 4. The resources allotted to HORIZONT3000 to engage in knowledge-sharing and exchange are also inadequate. And the content support which HORIZONT3000’s country offices can give to its technical advisors is limited. In order to become a more professional organisation which can provide TA personnel at the level of ‘real’ advisors, as understood internationally, more investment is needed.

In discussing “*doing the right things*” there is one HORIZONT3000-practice which we would like to highlight and which is in line with current thinking on capacity development and empowering the partners. HORIZONT3000’s experience with development processes have led it to pursue a policy whereby the **provision of financing is not tied to the recruitment of TA personnel**. This allows a partner organisation to mobilise resources according to its own priorities and to manage them at the organisational level. The use of resources is monitored from a distance by the HORIZONT3000 country office, while the advisor, if provided to the organisation, can focus on technical advice and other capacity development activities of the organisation, without being forced to manage and control funds. Despite certain misuse of funds reported to the evaluation team in some projects during field visits, this approach to resource provision should be continued. The approach requires, however, that country offices be strengthened with a view to better monitoring the use of such financing.

3.3.3 Long-timers vs. experienced newcomers

The Nicaragua programme of HORIZONT3000 seems to be better placed to respond to more profound demands. We relate this to the presence of a number of experienced “long-timers” who have also been of benefit to the KoBü in Managua. With their imminent departure, following the new TA personnel contract policy, **in-depth knowledge of the country and its development actors risks disappearing**.

This positive assessment of the “long-timers” is also reflected in the evaluation of HORIZONT3000’s Brazil programme (Fiege 2007) and should not come as a surprise. With many years in country and long experience in development activities, such “development workers” (as the Brazil evaluation calls them) are naturally better placed to respond to more complex and specific demands. The evaluation underlines moreover that these “long-timers” maintain active contact with solidarity groups and third world networks in Austria. This contributes to awareness creation about global issues and intercultural understanding in Europe. The same applies for the “long-timers” working in Nicaragua. With the departure of this type of TA, there is much less probability that this networking will continue, despite some rhetoric that this will not be the case.

We do not present these points to make a plea for changing the contract policy and trying to keep such “long-timers” with HORIZONT3000. If such people are valuable to partner organisations, then they need to explore other channels, possibly through direct contracting. But the messages emerging from Nicaragua and Brazil tell us that the new policy, combined with a continuation of the existing conditions of service, will not always keep advisors on the job long enough to make a valuable contribution. The statistics on Uganda, where the average stay is 2.7 years, should be looked at carefully, as it is generally only from the third year that an advisor can really add value. Partner organisations were less concerned about time frames of assignments and seem to welcome any resources provided to their resource-poor environments. We have discussed this in more detail in the Uganda section. But questions should be raised as to whether or not the placement of TA personnel for such lower-level demands is always the best use of resources, as compared to other options.

The results from our review as well as from other evaluations also show that there are **demands for specialised and experienced technical advisors**. The question is to what extent HORIZONT3000 can address such demands, as opposed to other Austrian TA providers or agencies and other international and local organisations with which ADA cooperates. We look at this in the next section.

4 The future of TA personnel programmes

4.1 *Longer-term perspectives – an orientation*

4.1.1 Context

Technical assistance in the sense of movement of people and skills from one country or region to another to **exchange information and technology** is a human activity dating back many centuries and practiced in all countries. Arguably, the most famous example is Peter the Great’s recruitment of artisans from Western Europe to help build St. Petersburg. Technical assistance is not confined to the development community and, in the private sector, is an expanding and well appreciated global phenomenon, particularly within multinationals. Although its reputation is more contested in the international development community, technical assistance to developing countries still continues at high levels. Although there are many reasons for this, one is the need for developing countries to meet the information challenges of a rapidly changing world.

The international aid discourse calls for the **resources channelled into developing countries to support national priorities and demands**. The Paris Declaration, the main elements of which are outlined in the Box 7 below, lays out principles to guide the agreed process of aligning to national goals and harmonising procedures. It also provides indicators to monitor actions of the signatories. Although the Declaration focuses primarily on government-to-government cooperation, it does have implications for all actors mobilising inputs into a national development context at the macro, meso (intermediate) and micro levels.

Box 7: The five partnership commitments of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness

- *Ownership*: Partner countries exercise effective leadership over their development policies, and strategies and coordinate development actions
- *Alignment*: Donors base their support on partner countries’ national development strategies, institutions and procedures
- *Harmonisation*: Donors’ actions are more harmonised, transparent and collectively effective
- *Managing for Results*: Managing resources and improving decision-making for results
- *Mutual accountability*: Donors and partners are accountable for development results

This new way of working endorsed by the Paris Declaration, which builds on earlier principles of coherence, complementarity and coordination in development cooperation,⁵⁵ **implies the use of new aid modalities** such as poverty reduction budget support and programme-based approaches. Some development agencies have adopted these wholeheartedly, others are experimenting, while yet others refuse or are unable to adopt new mechanisms. All agencies continue with projects although their importance varies greatly among different agencies.

4.1.2 The importance of the intermediate levels

This new way of working has revealed some problems. First, the *DAC Evaluation of General Budget Support* (IDD and Associates 2006) notes that the heavy focus on financing means that there is **insufficient recognition of the need for capacity development** to allow the partners to become comfortable with new aid modalities.⁵⁶ A second problem is the **heavy focus on macro-level reforms** with insufficient attention to linking them to implementation at lower levels, where capacities are scarce. This capacity shortage applies to local NGOs operating at intermediate and lower levels, as well as to regional and local governments. A third issue is that there has been **little thinking about the type and mix of TA needed outside capitals** in order to transform macro reforms into well functioning operations.

These new developments should be taken seriously, and shape an agenda for TA providers, in particular those working at the intermediate and micro levels. There is a **demand for building vertical and horizontal linkages among organisations** involved in a sector, bridging capacity divides, such as knowledge on how to engage in constructive dialogue, and taking on activities which complement those of other organisations. These functions are in particularly short supply in sector reform programmes like health and education where government and non-state actors, including the private sector, are challenged to work together to achieve results. This does not come automatically. It needs to be facilitated, accompanied and brokered with new types of skills and capacities (see Box 8). For local organisations working at the implementation level, it means that **issues need to be addressed which go beyond the internal strengthening of the organisation**. There is **demand for better informed and higher-quality interactions with their networks and the wider institutional environment**. And there is a demand for gradually phasing out the external assistance at the implementation level so that the local actors themselves, through interaction with their national institutional environment, i.e. government and parliament, professional associations, private sector, etc., can become the leaders of the development process. The four broad development approaches, as presented in Box 3 in Chapter 2, apply equally to the support of non-state actors and of lower levels of government.

Box 8: Top ten capacity needs of organisations working at the intermediate level

- Better and up-to-date **information on national (sector) policies, rules and procedures**.
- **Management skills** (e.g., organisational management; financial accountability; planning ahead; monitoring, etc.)
- **Antenna skills** (e.g., how to find information, on the internet or elsewhere; how to disseminate information; how to feed into policy dialogue at the right moment, right format to the right people)
- **Motivational skills** (e.g., how to motivate people to get involved; how to convince them that being united means being stronger)
- **Networking skills** (e.g., how to link up with other organisations; how to negotiate)

⁵⁵ For European development cooperation, these were embedded in the Treaty of Maastricht (Art. 130u-y) already.

⁵⁶ This "Joint Evaluation of General Budget Support" was carried out for the period 1994-2004, with country studies in Burkina Faso, Malawi, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda, Uganda, Vietnam.

- **Leadership/ dialogue skills** (how to take the lead on an issue; how to link up with the authorities; how to present a case to political leaders, experts, etc.; how to follow it up)
- **Representative structures** (e.g., how to build platforms that take into account diverse organisation's views, and represent them in a common voice vis-à-vis the authorities and/ or development partners)
- **Literacy training, writing skills** (e.g., particularly in writing project and funding proposals)
- **Analytical skills** (e.g. what do policy papers/ legal texts actually mean; how to improve an organisation's strategy)
- **Encouraging institutional learning** (e.g., how to avoid the situation that if key persons leave, a large part of the organisation's knowledge goes with them)

Adapted from: A User's Guide for Non-State Actors (2003)

4.1.3 Four perspectives on TA personnel provision

So what messages do these developments carry for the future of TA personnel provision? What are the longer-term perspectives emerging? We set out four broad approaches which are currently proposed or already practiced within the international development community. They are not exclusive and they might not be the only ones. They can be applied with varying degrees of intensity to NGOs working as service providers, or as advocates.

Given the **growing focus in international cooperation to see NGOs as service providers** which can respond to increasing professional demands from the 'market', the **potential tensions with a possible advocacy role** of the partner organisations needs to be taken into account. TA providers to those organisations then have a role in assisting their colleagues to engage in framework contracts and implement projects, while simultaneously accompanying them in their policy- or advocacy-related work in a way which does not endanger the very existence of the organisation.

We briefly present the four different **perspectives on TA personnel provision** below to stimulate discussion. Time does not permit to work them out in more detail.

- **Connecting and bridging across levels:** There is a growing demand for complementarity and coherence emerging from the new aid approaches, as outlined above. This requires organisations at the intermediate levels to orient their attention more broadly and to better connect with their institutional environment. For NGOs, this means being aware of whom to liaise with among peer organisations, knowing how to create coalitions, engaging in communities of practice for knowledge sharing, etc.

We have included in Annex 6 a ranking of non-state actors, captured in a pyramid with four levels of organisations. The first level constitutes grass-roots and community based organisations, the second level are formally constituted organisations (mainly service delivery oriented), the third level represents umbrella organisations, such as associations and thematic networks, and the fourth level are platforms or fora for policy dialogue. These levels interact with their wider institutional environment horizontally and vertically with varying levels of intensity.

There are growing demands to TA providers such as HORIZONT3000, who work with NGO partners primarily at the second level, to help making those connections: to assist in mapping the institutional environment in which organisations function, to identify strategic partners, to help organisation position themselves within a wider network of actors, and to bridge across boundaries with a view to more productively interacting with government and other development partners.

- **Facilitation and creation of synergies:** Closely related to the above is facilitation and the creation of synergies, though with a somewhat different idea in mind. The Dutch SNV has

put this at the centre of its capacity development approach and structured its entire organisation and operations around a concept whereby the focus is on facilitation, linking and the creation of synergies between actors (SNV, no date). The advisors provided by SNV are not attached to particular organisations or programmes but function “in between” to help connecting actor groups which are very often working in parallel without coordination, joint work programming, etc. SNV formulates advisor contracts with, for example, local governments, NGO associations or agricultural producer groups with the objective of stimulating “joint action”. This is accompanied by a strong focus on learning and knowledge creation to continuously build the quality of its advisors. See for example, Klinken (2003).

- ***Building intercultural communities:*** The evaluation of the Danish MS suggests to engage much more in intercultural exchange and to construct real partnerships between actors in the South and the North through TA personnel (Danida 2003). The proposals made would imply significant changes. They would mean “opening the door” to MS’ partners in the South and allowing them to influence the cooperation through joint policy fora, the participation in planning for South-related activities and full representation in the supervising mechanisms of MS’ operations. The proposals would also imply that MS should promote South-South exchanges, help to build strategic linkages and to identify networks, contacts and exchange opportunities.

Such radical changes would require the organisation to become much more international, to recruit staff internationally and to restate and reformulate its vision and their contribution to global change. While MS’ management expressed cautiousness about following this path, the proposals reflect a growing stream of thinking from organisations in the South to become fully recognised partners in an increasingly changing and globalising world with which they want to link up, for which they need the assistance international partners. Organisations like MS, whose principal contacts are organisations working at the intermediate levels, are seen as natural partners to help Southern organisations to overcome the existing asymmetries in international relations and development.

- ***Creating “space” for bottom-up capacity development:*** While there is an international momentum for harmonisation and alignment, one needs to recognise that not everything can be designed through dialogue and planning at the higher levels, for example in the context of multi-actor sector strategy working groups. Non-state actors can be involved at this level, and have to be involved in order to bring in “voices” from destitute areas or disadvantaged populations. But there is a limit to what can be achieved at those levels. A certain level of independence is needed to allow for bottom-up growth, the piloting of alternatives and for experimentation.

TA personnel provision at lower levels can to a certain extent help to complement top-down approaches and to create “space” for local actors and initiatives to unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time.⁵⁷ VSO has put this at the centre of its vision which states that *“it works for, and often directly with, disadvantaged people in the poorest countries ... and ... builds partnerships with organisations that benefit disadvantaged people, and bring people together to share skills, creativity and learning to build a fairer world”* (www.vso.org.uk).

These perspectives can open a discussion on the future role of Austrian NGOs and TA providers such as HORIZONT3000, and their niche in this new aid agenda. Given its experience, contacts and structure, HORIZONT3000 has a comparative advantage in working with organisations at the intermediate level, in particular with NGOs supporting service delivery

⁵⁷ This notion of complementing top-down development planning with bottom-up development approaches is well known in development thinking - see for example Avina (1993). It gets again considerable attention in the context of the ongoing discussion on capacity development. (see Section 2.1 above)

to a poverty reduction sector. It can bring these into coordinated efforts to support the development of priority sectors and increase the relevance and effectiveness of the assistance provided. HORIZONT3000 moreover has the potential to provide higher-level advice and to assist its partners linking up to more complex development processes and the wider institutional environment. We will come back to this in our recommendations in Chapter 5.

4.2 Criteria and guiding principles for partnering on TA personnel

The TOR ask us to point out some key parameters for a partnership-based relationship to guide TA personnel programmes between organisations in Austria and their partners in the South. Based on our discussions of the inception report we agreed to focus here on key criteria and guiding principles on these programmes should be designed, formulated, implemented and monitored.

To frame this debate, we would like to refer to the four broad approaches to development cooperation which we have presented in Chapter 2, Box 3. As noted in Chapter 2, we see **HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme** falling under the **“direct” approach**, in which the supporting organisation engages with country partners in a participatory manner, supplies resources, and controls the planning and monitoring process, with the assumption that the partners will follow and gradually take over. The challenge is to **enable partners to develop their capacities** with a view to taking over more responsibilities **so that the support can become more “indirect”**, possibly also “hands-off”, and eventually not necessary at all.

By providing financing for its partners rather than goods in-kind, HORIZONT3000 is working towards a hands-off approach.⁵⁸ Similar efforts should be made to support a move from a “direct” to an “indirect” approach to technical assistance so that the partner can eventually continue without external inputs. The following **guiding principles** could help HORIZONT3000 and other TA personnel programmes in Austria to pursue this path. Some of the points mentioned are already practiced by HORIZONT3000 and other Austrian NGOs, while others could be discussed as a means of improving their capacity development support. The list is built on past and current work on improving aid effectiveness, including ECDPM's recent work on capacity development and technical assistance. It suggests several reinforcing conditions which enhance the effectiveness of technical assistance;

- **Demand-driven** – Assistance needs to be built on genuine demand for TA which is able to feed into the development process, with priorities set by the partner. Where such demand is unclear, the funding partner should make an effort to gradually build up capacities which enable an expression of demands, but without dominating the agenda.
- **Management by the partner** – When the partner organisation wants specific support and is engaged from the beginning in its identification, formulation and management, it is more likely to feel a commitment to ensuring that the outcomes from the assignment of personnel are relevant, applied and maintained
- **Incorporating into local processes** – TA is part of the organisational structure and reports to national partners. The partner organisation is thus in charge.
- **Collegial relationship** – When the two parties work together on common issues in a cooperative way, the partner is more likely to feel a sense of empowerment that enhances the commitment to the joint activities.
- **Durable relationship** – This implies that the funding partner is involved over the long haul and that staff build both a solid knowledge of the country, the organisation and the issues as well as enduring personal relationships. These relationships usually require that staff be relatively stable and stay in their positions for long enough periods to make a difference.

⁵⁸ We have seen this for example during our study on Lacor Hospital in Uganda (Hauck 2004), which receives highly appreciated financial support from HORIZONT3000 for which programming, implementation and monitoring is principally done by the management of the hospital.

- **Reliability** – When the funding partner is seen as willing to stick with the partner over the unavoidable ups and downs of a relationship, the partner is more likely to trust it and to ask for advice. Requested advice is more likely to be heeded than unsolicited advice.
- **Flexibility** – Funding partners that can respond quickly and flexibly to requests for technical assistance reinforce their reputation for reliability.
- **Non-conditional nature** – TA that is not a condition of other forms of assistance or is untied or not linked to one funding partner is often seen as unbiased and hence is better accepted, especially in areas of political sensitivity.
- **Gaining legitimacy and trust** – The partner is more likely to gain trust in the advice received if it is based on solid knowledge, skills and the right attitude. But showing solidarity with national colleagues who are often under high pressure to perform and to help filling gaps also shapes collegiality and to “open ears and eyes”.
- **Ownership through transfer of accountability** - TA personnel are more effective in a context of full ownership and where the adviser is accountable to partners or steering committees under local leadership. Where there is ownership emerging but it is still too weak to manage the TA, mixed forms of accountability might be required whereby representatives of the funding agency stay at a distance but are able to intervene when necessary.
- **Transparency** – Both partners need to be fully transparent throughout the assistance. The principle needs to be clearly discussed and agreed upon before a technical advisor is assigned to a partner organisation.
- **Availability of peer and back-up mechanisms** – Effective advice needs to be embedded in a context where complementary knowledge and skills can be mobilised through professional networks, peer learning and monitoring mechanisms. This might also require inputs from complementary short-term inputs.
- **Reciprocity** – A relationship can be reinforced if there is awareness that both sides need each other. A technical advisor can function as a bridge between the local partner and the Austrian actors and to help build commitment and understanding between different communities
- **Partnership between institutions** – Although effective advice is based on individual inputs and competencies, technical assistance should be provided a part of an exchange between institutions. This reinforces the relationship between the organisations and allows both partners to bring in complementary demands or address new issues beyond the confines of an adviser’s work.
- **Non-partisanship** – Partners will benefit if there is no misuse made of the relationship. A technical advisor has a role to play in safeguarding the assistance against possible manipulation or discrimination. Successful technical assistance involves buffering and protection in the interest of the partner.

We have included in Annex 7 a **capacity assessment framework**, which helps to verify the relevance and effectiveness of ongoing or planned capacity support, including TA personnel placements.⁵⁹ While it is written for a major development agency, we believe that it contains useful elements for a framework which is tailored towards the specific needs of NGOs in their work with partners. Such a framework will need to be developed in exchange with relevant staff and partner organisations while building on what is currently in use.

4.3 Comparing HORIZONT3000 with non-Austrian TA personnel providers

This section aims to situate the TA personnel programme of HORIZONT3000 within the wide spectrum of technical assistance work provided by other organisations.⁶⁰ As we did not have

⁵⁹ This framework originates from ongoing work of the EuropeAid. While it is a draft and still in a testing phase, users are encouraged to send comments to Virginia.Manzitti@ec.europa.eu.

⁶⁰ While some commentators noted that HORIZONT3000 as an NGO is different from bilateral implementing organisations such as BTC or GTZ, it is, like them, a TA personnel provider. The purpose in this section is to

the resources and time to do a detailed analysis, we agreed with ADA to highlight some trends and to provide pointers for a first-level comparison on content of the focus, remuneration and training of the different TA providers.

4.3.1 A spectrum from “volunteer organisation” to “professional TA provider”

Most of the organisations from which we have drawn our information have a long history of working in development cooperation. Some, like the DED and SNV, were created as German and Dutch responses to President J.F. Kennedy’s example of sending volunteers to destitute areas of the world. Others, such as Save the Children, have an advocacy background which builds on the thinking of social solidarity movements set up at the beginning of the last century and expanded after World War II.

We have listed some organisations from which we were able obtain information about remuneration in Table 8 below. **Most of these organisations work at the intermediate level with NGOs and/or local government.** They may have links downward to the community level, especially NGOs (like EFD); horizontally among civil society, local governments and regional governments (like SNV or SC-UK); or vertically to bridge between national planning and implementation (like SNV and BTC). The BTC (Belgium) is a fairly young organisation and originally modelled on the German GTZ, though it is now developing into a slightly different direction whereby it aims to feed more productively into wider (sector) reforms without necessarily being linked to project financing (ECDPM/ ACE Europe 2006). Table 8 below represents this spectrum, and includes BTC to mark the upper end of TA providers working at levels comparable to those at which HORIZONT3000 works.

At a certain point, the older **organisations mentioned above took a decision either in favour of becoming “professional” or to continue as a “volunteer organisation”.** According to VSO, *volunteers aim to pass on their expertise to local people so that when they return home their skills remain* (see web-site VSO). Other organisations work with a similar concept and remuneration package but try to avoid the contested work “volunteers”. They recruit “development workers”, as DED calls them, to help *improving the living conditions of people in Africa, Asia and Latin America* (www.ded.de). The Dutch SNV still carries the name “volunteer” in its corporate name but gradually “professionalised” as of the mid-1980s with changed profiles and requirements for their development workers (see Box 9).

Box 9: SNV – A history of change

During its 40-year career, SNV has evolved from a voluntary organisation into a professional development cooperation organisation. Our expertise in technical assistance and our personnel’s commitment to non-commercial goals still typify SNV. From an organisation sending out Dutch volunteers SNV has become a professional multicultural organisation of advisors.

The sixties

SNV was born out of the Jongeren Vrijwilligers Programma (JVP), or Young People’s Voluntary Programme. It was set up in 1963 as a cooperative venture between the Netherlands government and a number of private organisations. In 1965, the Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (SNV) or Foundation of Netherlands Volunteers was founded. It concentrated on posting young Dutch volunteers to share know-how with groups in the South and to help develop middle management skills in those countries.

In the first few years, SNV directed its energies at supporting (government) bodies in providing basic services within the reach of the poor- this was an important factor in selecting the countries in which we worked and the projects we offered.

The seventies

compare a range of organisations which provide TA personnel to partner organisations, and to look at TA personnel provision from a wider angle than personnel placements by NGOs.

Over the years that followed, SNV acknowledged that simply working in developing countries wasn't enough to improve their position. Development workers could also play a key role in making the Dutch public more aware of conditions in the South. So, at the start of the eighties, SNV policy consisted of two central activities: sending personnel to work in developing countries and raising awareness in the Netherlands.

The eighties

By the mid eighties, SNV was no longer a voluntary organisation but an organisation sending professional, well-paid experts to work overseas. We still refer to ourselves by the abbreviation 'SNV', which is no longer 'translated'.

The nineties

Since the beginning of the nineties we have gone by the name SNV Nederlandse ontwikkelingsorganisatie or SNV Netherlands Development Organisation. From the eighties on, our development activities were increasingly led by the needs of the people in the South. Besides this the emphasis shifted from technical assistance to advice. The advice we offer is primarily directed at arming local people for their fight against poverty. Our work still hinges on supervising and supporting projects carried out by local groups.

In January 1991, the organisation introduced new articles of association, stating that the SNV board could formulate and implement policy independently. SNV continued to be financed within the bounds of the budget of the Ministry for Development Cooperation. This new status was called 'quango' (semi non-governmental organisation, partly government, partly private).

In 1996 SNV re-formulated its commitment to technical assistance as its core business. It defined four product groups- 'capacity building', 'project implementation', 'mediation' and 'service provision for Northern organisations' -, reflecting the growing complexity of our work. Programmes were geographically concentrated in marginal areas in our countries of operation. Flexible types of assistance were introduced which, for example, enabled one advisor to serve more partner organisations. More emphasis was put on our mediating role between the different development actors (government, non-government and private sector) and on linking local organisations to actors at other levels in their countries, regions, or in the North. Based on an interdepartmental policy evaluation (IBO, 1999) it was concluded that the hybrid ('quango') status of SNV should be terminated.

2000 and beyond

Since 1 January 2002 SNV has been disentangled from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The administrative and financial relationship of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and SNV has come to an end. The future relationship between the Ministry and SNV will be one of subsidiser and subsidy recipient. From this position SNV can better aim to be a main supplier of capacity-building support to meso-level organisations in relation to Dutch-funded programmes.

Source: www.snvworld.org

4.3.2 Some recent trends on content and management

From the late 1990s, there has been a **growing focus** in international development cooperation **on country-led development processes** and a **call for consultation on policy and implementation questions with many actors** at the country level, including government, NGOs, funding agencies and development organisations. In parallel with this evolution in approaches, many development agencies, including smaller TA providers have made an effort to strengthen their country representation and management structures. Some, like SNV, have reduced their headquarters to a minimal size and decentralised substantial decision-making authority to regional offices which guide the work of their country delegations. A common feature among TA providers is the recruitment of sector specialists to support the work of technical advisors in the field. Sometimes they work out of the coordination offices and create synergies with the organisation's management staff. The VSO Programme Manager for Education, listed in Table 8 below, would fall under this category.

Another trend is the **growing attention paid to knowledge exchange and the introduction**

of continuous learning opportunities to build the expertise of technical advisors on the job. So-called “knowledge hubs”, or “communities of practice” with a focus on a particular discipline are created within development organisations. Their purpose is to ensure that advisers have up-to-date information on international thinking and practices, as well as solid background information about the contexts and sectors in which they function. The legitimacy of the organisation rests on its ability to provide competent TA personnel with this knowledge. Regular publishing of experiences to inform policy makers about relevant developments and about what the organisation does is also important for legitimacy. UK NGOs, in particular, have developed a solid profile as learning organisations in recent years. Needless to say, this knowledge work is costly. In the case of SNV, for example, it implies that the individual adviser has time reserved to work on content, to write and to exchange. SNV staff are assessed on their contributions to knowledge creation, staff training and promotion of learning.

To better keep up with the changing country contexts, an organisation like **HORIZONT3000 would benefit from more decentralisation to the field and from having more specialised knowledge about its priority sectors** in the regions. HORIZONT3000’s management arrangements and logistics support are well developed for the work it is undertaking, and generally compare well with those of other TA providers. The management of the process for identification and planning of TA is comparable to the procedures and systems used by other TA providers, though the organisation needs to keep itself up to date on the latest conceptual discussions and on the development of tools for institutional and organisational development, capacity assessment and monitoring.

4.3.3 Preparation/ induction

HORIZONT3000 invests significantly in the preparation of its “experienced newcomers”. Given their weak development background, this investment would appear quite justified. Other TA providers, such as UNV, but also development agencies who work with people with more development experience pay much less attention to this. While there is a certain logic to the idea that more experienced people need less preparation, we are aware of complaints from people working with “professional” TA personnel about their inadequate preparation.

The preparation course which HORIZONT3000 offers also provides an opportunity to bring “fresh blood” into the Austrian Development Administration and for development consultancy firms which depend in many instances on experienced experts with an ability to work independently. In the Netherlands, for example, where programmes such as that of HORIZONT3000 have been abandoned, there is growing awareness that an instrument is missing to bring young or new people into the world of development. Efforts are now underway to create programmes to allow young graduates to specialise in development work.

4.3.4 Salary, secondary employment conditions and contract period

In terms of the monthly salary and the secondary employment conditions, HORIZONT3000 ranges at the lower end of the scale, somewhere between volunteer organisations and the conditions offered to DED development workers. The table below confirms this picture. While several TAs recruited by HORIZONT3000 mentioned that the salary is in principle fine and sufficient to live on, there were many complaints about the secondary employment conditions. We have documented this in Chapter 3. HORIZONT3000 compares unfavourably, for example, with the DED, which has an elaborate secondary employment conditions package. The chart would suggest that HORIZONT3000 would have difficulty finding qualified candidates for positions which require mature and professionally experienced staff. HORIZONT3000, together with its principal funding organisations, should look into this issue seriously.

The initial contract period for HORIZONT3000 is two years, with the possibility of extension. This is similar to several other TA providers. SNV recruits for three years with the longer period seen as enhancing the potential impact of its advisers. There are advantages and disadvantages to both periods which merit discussion. However, if HORIZONT3000 chooses to maintain its current contract length, it would be important to discuss what incentives would be needed to motivate advisers to extend their contracts beyond the two years when required. Presently much valuable expertise is lost when good people do not extend beyond the two year period.

Table 8: Comparing conditions of service of TA providers

Organisation	Function	Country	Salary and 2 nd employment conditions (as far as available)
Education for Development (EFD)	Country Coordinator	Vietnam (Ho Chi Minh City)	A total of USD 25,000 (approx. € 18,000 a year, or € 1,500 per month) which is intended to cover all living costs including personal transport / air fare, insurances, accommodation and daily living expenses; 25 days annual leave plus Vietnamese national holidays
HORIZONT3000	For all development workers	(see www.horizont3000.at)	€ 1,060 (first year) to € 1,347 (third year) per month, plus a country-specific living allowance and a family allowance where applicable.
UNV	For all development workers	(see www.unv.org)	Approx. € 750 – € 1,800 per month, depending on family situation and country of assignment – see UNV “Conditions of Service”; payment for pension and social payments depends on country of origin/ primary contracting organisation (e.g., a German UNV gets benefits according to German “Entwicklungshelfergesetz”)
DED	For all development workers	(see www.ded.de)	€ 1,250 (first year) to € 1,500 (third year) per month; complementary pay for spouse and children; extensive secondary employment conditions, including pension, reintegration, etc. for detailed information: www.ded.de (Entwicklungshelfer/ Leistungen)
VSO	Programme Manager Education	Papua New Guinea	£ 19,528 p.a. (approx. € 29,000 per year, or € 2,420 per month) tax-free with attractive benefits package; tax-free status is for the dependent or individual
SC UK	Senior Programme Manager	Niger (Zinder)	£28,946 (approx. € 43,000 per year, or € 3,580 per month); 25 months Contract.
SNV	Senior Advisor Water and Sanitation	Uganda	€ 2,587 - € 4,024 (Gross per month); three years contract.
SNV	Senior Advisor Energy and Environment	Uganda	€ 2,587 – € 4,024 (Gross per month); three years contract with possible extension.
BTC	Expert Local Government	Tanzania (Dar-Es-Salaam)	€ 4,892 – € 6,922 (Gross per month); plus allowances, depending on family situation
BTC	Agricultural Engineer, expert in seed production	DR Congo (Kinshasa)	€ 5,062 – € 7,355 (Gross per month); plus allowances, depending on family situation

5 Recommendations

We were asked to cover two aspects in this strategic evaluation: (1) to undertake an evaluation of HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme for the period 2000 to 2005 and (2) to provide some insights into the international debate on technical assistance to stimulate debate on the future of TA personnel programmes in Austria in general. In terms of resource use, we were asked to focus our attention on the former. The recommendations in this section principally cover this aspect, and provide suggestions for improvement of HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme while taking account our knowledge about the work of NGOs and faith-based organisations from countries in which HORIZONT3000 works.⁶¹ The previous chapter, Chapter 4, however, provides some ideas and food for thought in the discussion of TA personnel programmes in Austria in general, and therefore needs to be consulted on this aspect. It presents different perspectives on TA provision and the TA practices of different providers. We cannot make specific recommendations on these, but only highlight them for use in any future discussion among the various development actors in Austria.

5.1 *Key recommendations emerging from HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme*

While we have raised some rather far-reaching perspectives on TA personnel provision emerging from ongoing international practice and thinking in Section 4.1, we believe that **HORIZONT3000 should** take a more cautious approach and **build on its comparative advantages**. This would mean to **focus on its “core business”** and to respond to the demands emerging out of the changing international aid agenda.

There are **different ways to respond** as there are needs at different levels. As seen in the diversity of experiences in the different HORIZONT3000 country programmes, there is scope for improvement as the organisation seems to be doing “a bit of everything”. This clearly reflects the fact that the organisation is at a crossroad, torn into different directions by different partners in different country dynamics. A key question which needs to be dealt with is whether HORIZONT3000's TA personnel programme should become more “**professional**” and able to provide a so-called higher-level technical advice to partners in the South, or to profile itself as a “**volunteer organisation**”, similar to VSO for example.

If “**volunteering**” is chosen, then an appropriate niche at the lower level needs to be carved out where assistance is provided in particular to organisations working at the intermediate levels and their constituencies and clients at the community level. HORIZONT3000 could principally continue along the current lines, taking into account the suggestions for operational and managerial improvements made throughout the country analysis. But HORIZONT3000 would then need to downscale its current profile which now portrays it as an organisation able to provide advisors to increasingly complex and demanding country development cooperation contexts.

If the path towards “**professionalism**” is chosen, then some more fundamental reforms would be needed, possibly including a reformulation of some of the principles on which the organisation is built. As observed in the country cases, HORIZONT3000 has already started to move in this direction in a number of cases, but encounters blockages which it cannot solve given the current framework in which it operates. We believe that HORIZONT3000 has the potential to become more “professional” and to provide advisors in the sense understood internationally, given its cumulative experience and the structures it has in place.

The following section provides some **recommendations** which should serve to inform the

⁶¹ Hauck (2004); Hauck, Filer and Bolger (2005); Campos and Hauck (2005); Hauck and Souto (2007)

current policy dialogue between HORIZONT3000 and its key partners, and to stimulate discussion on the possible implications for selected programmes. We hope that these broad recommendations will lead to a first fruitful exchange between the evaluation team and the different Austrian stakeholders.

5.1.1 Recommendations on the TA personnel programme for HORIZONT3000 headquarters

- **Build on the existing comparative advantages of the organisation**, which includes its expertise in working with local NGOs operating at the national and regional levels.
- **Build up the organisation's expertise in regional administrations and local governments** and bring in more expertise in these areas, in particular at the level of the country offices.
- **Decentralise more to the country offices** so that country dynamics can be followed more closely and reacted upon flexibly.
- **Build sufficient policy and sector knowledge in the country offices** so that programmes and technical advisors can be accompanied and provided with orientation of sufficient quality.
- **Build up the knowledge base in headquarters on relevant international development policy and practice** in order to provide backup to the country offices and to be an informed partner for dialogue with ADA, the owner organisations and other relevant partners.
- **Review, together with the relevant funding partners, the overall funding of the organisation**, with a view to providing higher levels of remuneration for TAs with more qualifications and experience.
- **Create a special category of staff with its own remuneration package for "experienced advisers"** who could work on more complex activities such as institutional capacity development, as technical specialists for particular types of requests in areas which are in high demand on the international labour market, and as sector specialists with the mandate of accompanying and mentoring "experienced newcomers".
- **Change existing reporting systems and procedures to make the operations of HORIZONT3000 more accountable and more transparent to partner organisations.** Explore the introduction of a double accountability system of TAs to partner organisations and HORIZONT3000 with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the TA. This accountability should focus on mutual learning and institutional development, rather than control.
- **Make serious efforts to become an organisation committed to learn and follow the practice of some of its competitors.**⁶² This implies developing systems, procedures and incentives through which knowledge can be exchanged and mutual learning can be stimulated. It also implies setting aside time for staff to exchange and learn in a systematic way. Becoming a real learning organisation would allow HORIZONT3000 to sharpen its profile as a provider of TA personnel who are well equipped with both solid experience and proven methodologies to deliver higher level advisory work.

5.1.2 Recommendations on the TA personnel programme for the HORIZONT3000 country offices

- **Situate the country programmes within the context of national development strategies and coordinate planned initiatives closely with governments and their funding partners.** Inputs should be more focused with the aim of advancing the development of a sector or wider area of work instead of an engagement in fragmented activities. This implies following new developments in the policy arena, and having regular

⁶² See for example, VSO's focus on learning as expressed in its strategic document *Focus for Change* (2004).

exchanges with a number of key partners, such as ADA, the EU and other principal development partners in-country.

- **Function as a translator of and informer on relevant poverty-reduction related issues and developments** at the lower levels to partners at the macro and intermediate levels, and vice versa to partners at lower levels on relevant policy developments at the macro level.
- **Focus on working with organisations at the so-called third level of non-state actors** (see our discussion in Section 4.1 and Annex 6 “Levels of NSAs”), but engage with a view to better linking up both horizontally and vertically with partners and the institutional environment.
- **Explore more opportunities for working with local governments or regional administrations** – the focus of the country programmes, however, should build on current comparative advantages.
- **Explore with ADA the possibility of closer cooperation in the priority areas of official Austrian assistance**, to create win-win situations and address work priorities in a spirit of complementarity.
- **Continue with the present practice of placing technical advisors in partner organisations without giving them responsibility for managing or controlling the implementation of external funding.** Attempts by international funding agencies to use HORIZONT3000 TAs as managers of project funds, as reported to us in some cases, should be discouraged.
- **Ensure that personnel placements are made in partner organisations which have sufficient funding to support the work of the technical advisors.** HORIZONT3000 and its funding partners should explore opportunities for supporting partner organisations which lack financial resources. This recommendation implies that TA placements should be made selectively, which might imply a reduction in the provision of TA personnel to certain countries.
- **Continue to respond to the expectations of the Austrian “owner organisations” and to assist them in following up on their contacts and small projects** – micro support to communities in deprived areas can have a high local impact and should not be overlooked.
- **Continue to work in particularly deprived areas of partner countries**, given that these are the areas where the capacity gaps tend to be most significant, and assist in linking such areas with the macro policy context of the country concerned.
- **Make an effort to reduce the wide variety of activities at country office level and focus more on key activities** lined out in the country programmes. The diversity of activities, as seen in Uganda, should be reviewed, with a view to enabling the country offices to provide more content-relevant support to the principal programme activities of the country programmes.
- There have been discussions among some ADA and HORIZONT3000 staff members about engaging in a sector at several levels simultaneously, similar to the German approach of *“Kooperation aus einem Guss”* whereby the activities of different German organisations interrelate. The Austrian context may be less amenable to such an approach. Austrian aid budgets are smaller than in Germany, with correspondingly smaller budgets for the focal sectors, and there are fewer organisations which could be involved simultaneously throughout a sector at different levels. In addition, the concept of tying aid throughout a sector to the aid agencies of one partner country is not in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration.

Table 9 below sets out some implications of the changes suggested for HORIZONT3000’s role in partner countries:

Table 9: Some implications for HORIZONT3000's role in partner countries

Uganda	Nicaragua
• Would require more cooperation with ADA, a review of the current sector priorities and more efforts at complementarity; • Would imply seeking more opportunities to become a more strategic partner with organisations at the intermediate level, with a view to assisting them in better linking up with their environment, strengthening their capacities with regard to sector policy engagement, etc. • Would need to consider whether fragmented support to ministries that is not coordinated with wider sector reform is of added value to partners at the national and sub-national levels; • Would need to explore increased joint action between civil society and local government activities of the country programmes. Selected pilots would be one way to test to what extent HORIZONT3000 can help to bridge the divides between these actors; • Would need to reinforce the government in priority sectors such as energy where HORIZONT3000 provides support to NGOs engaged in the implementation of a German-funded programme; • Would require more support for the work of organisations in deprived areas like Northern Uganda, but this would have to be embedded in wider reform efforts.	• Would require building on existing synergies in priority sectors for HORIZONT3000 and ADA country programmes and making use of the National Development Plan to better coordinate the provision of resources with central government, regional autonomous bodies, donor agencies and other TA providers; • Would need to create synergies between civil society, regional administrations and central government; • Would require assisting NGOs in liaising with peers, networks, associations and platforms to address policy issues which should be taken into account by central government and the donor community; • Would require support and assistance for consolidating existing mechanisms of civic participation, like CONPES (National Council of Social and Economic Planning), against possible attempts of the new Sandinista Government to use them for party politics; • Would need to intensify engagement with local NGOs in tendering for programmes; experiences of consortia building will help these NGOs to build their capacities and become more mature and independent actors; • Would require recognition of the needs of the Autonomous Regional Governments of the Atlantic Zone to receive assistance, but any response would require a more strategic approach of linking up with wider government policies and reform.

Finally, we would like to suggest as a **special recommendation to share the results of this evaluation with the interviewees**, in particular HORIZONT3000's partner organisations in the South. Country partners asked us repeatedly whether this report will be circulated. There is an interest to know what has been recorded from interviews, what has been said about their role in the cooperation with HORIZONT3000 and in the suggestions made with regard to HORIZONT3000's future operations. In the spirit of "Paris", this request should be taken seriously.

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Annex 1: List of persons interviewed

Vienna

Name	Function	Organisation
Austrian Development Agency (ADA)		
DI Johanna Mang	Head of Unit NGO Cooperation & Humanitarian Aid	ADA
Mag. Elisabeth Sötz	NGO Cooperation & Humanitarian Aid	ADA
Mag. Gerhard Schaumberger	Evaluation	ADA
Mag. Robert Zeiner	Head of department programmes and projects	ADA
Mag. Erik Vorhausberger	General Coordination & Organisational Development	ADA
Mag. Ursula Steller	Desk Officer East Africa	ADA
Gertrude Leibrecht	Desk Officer Southern Africa	ADA
Mag. Gottfried Traxler	Desk Officer Latin America	ADA
Austrian Federal Ministry for European and International Affairs (BmeiA)		
Mag. Anton Mair	Deputy Director General of the Department VII 'Development Cooperation' and Head of the Department VII.2 Evaluation and Development Strategy	BmeiA
Dr. Hermann Spirik	Head of the Department VII.5 for Programming and Planning	BmeiA
Dr. Josef Muellner	Head of the Department VII.4 Information and general aspects of Development Cooperation and Cooperation with Eastern Europe	BmeiA
HORIZONT3000 and its owners		
Mag. Petra Navara-Unterluggauer	Director, Personnel Programme	HORIZONT3000
Gabriela Grosinger	Desk Officer East Africa	HORIZONT3000
Thomas Vogel	Desk Officer Central America	HORIZONT3000
Hubertus von Lindeiner	Desk Officer Southern Africa	HORIZONT3000
Günter Klingenbrunner	Personnel Programme, Preparation Course	HORIZONT3000
Katharina Jochum	Coordinator Projects	DKA
Former TA personnel		
Beatrice Hoheneder	Former TA personnel, Nicaragua	

Clemens Schermann	Former TA personnel, PNG	
Elisabeth Schmid	Former TA personnel, Ecuador	

Mozambique

Name	Function	Organisation
ADA Coordination Office (KoBü)		
Mag Irene Nowotny	Head of Office	KoBü Maputo
HORIZONT3000		
Stephan Spatt	Programme Officer, Chimoio	HORIZONT3000
TA Personnel		
Elizabeth Stiebitzhofer	Technical Assistant, Tete	Uniao Provincial de Camponeses de Tete

Nicaragua

Name	Function	Organisation
ADA Coordination Office (KoBü)		
Michaela Ellmeier	Head of Office	KoBü Managua
HORIZONT3000 Country Office		
Doris Kroll	National Coordinator	HORIZONT3000, Managua
Doris Gruber	Project official	HORIZONT3000, Managua
Dr. Pedro Rupilius	Project official	HORIZONT3000, Managua
Government and Development Agencies		
Dr. Miguel Aguilera	Director	Division for Intl. NGOs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Managua
Mila Incer	National (Co) Coordinator	UNITE, Managua
Christoph Klinnert.	Regional Director	DED, Managua
Martha Gallardo	Coordinator NGO programme	European Commission, Managua
Mirna Palacios	Director	SNV , Managua
Partner Organisations		
Isabel Sanchez	Director	CECIM, Ciudad Sandino
Ana Julio Castilla	Programme Coordinator, TA. Counterpart	CECIM, Ciudad Sandino
Danilo Cedeno	President	Jagwood Timber Association, Managua.
Glenda Balladares	Nurse, PHC team	SILAIS, RAAN, Rosita.
Ines Aguilera	Nurse, PHC team	SILAIS, RAAN, Rosita
Jose Francisco Borge	Community educator, PHC	SILAIS, RAAN, Rosita.

Name	Function	Organisation
	team	
Jose Rosman	Director	CAD, Puerto Cabezas (Bilwi)
Gabriel Mercado	Community worker/educator	CAD, Puerto Cabezas (Bilwi)
Dr. Roger Montes Flores	Programme coordinator	SILAIS Madriz
Alejandro Floripe Fajardo	President	CECALLI, Esteli
Alejandra Maria Floripe	Project official	CECALLI, Esteli
Dr. Gerardo Gutierrez	Director	AMC, Managua
HORIZONT3000 TA personnel		
Gabriela Begush	TA personnel	CECIM, Ciudad Sandino
Johann Mandlberger	TA personnel	Jagwood timber association, Managua
Anna Christina Planck	TA personnel	SILAIS, Madriz
Hans Uwe Muller	TA personnel	CECALLI, Esteli
Anton Luger	TA personnel	FADCANIC, Bluefields. URRACAN, Siuna. Coastal Campaign against AIDS, Bluefields. Committee against HIV/AIDS, Puerto Cabezas (Bilwi). ACISAM, El Salvador
Political Analysts		
Msc. Cirilo Otero Escorcía	Economic analyst	CIPA, Managua
Msc. Carlos Benavente	Economic and political analyst	CIPA, Managua
Dr. Alejandro Serrano Caldera	Political analyst, General Director	Institute of Values and Development, Managua
Msc. Marvin Ortega Rodriguez	Director	Research Institute ITZTANI, Managua

Uganda

Name	Function	Organisation
HORIZONT3000 Country Office		
Dipl. Päd. Kathrin Hawighorst	Regional Director East Africa	HORIZONT3000, Kampala
ADA Coordination Office (KoBü)		
Mag. Franz Breitwieser	Head of Office	KoBü, Kampala
Steven Baguma	Private Sector Programme Officer	KoBü, Kampala
Partner Organisations		
Fred Musisi Kabuye	Executive Director	Africa 2000 Network
Fr. Felix Opio		Caritas Gulu
Rt. Rev. Robert Muhirwa	Bishop	Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal
Monsignor Balinda	Vicar General, Acting Director Caritas	Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal

Name	Function	Organisation
George Mugenyi	Diocese Education Secretary	Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal
Joseph Rwabukuuku and staff	ADP Co-ordinator	Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal, Agricultural Development Project
Fr. Vincent Byansi	Director	Catholic Diocese of Kasana-Luweero, Caritas Kasanaensis
Thomas Mayega	Programme Coordinator	Catholic Diocese of Kasana-Luweero, IRUDEKA Programme
Rev. Fr. Joseph Okurut	Education Secretary/Manager	Catholic Diocese of Soroti, CEREDO
Rev. Fr. Athanasius Mubiru	Diocesan Development Coordinator	Catholic Diocese of Soroti, SOCADIDO
Dr. Izeal Pereira Da Silva	Director	CREEC
Hellen Gakwaya	Deputy Executive Secretary	IRDI
Willie Otim	Commissioner, Dept. of Children & Youth Affairs	Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development
Hellen Obura	Acting Secretary	Ministry of Justice & Constitutional Affairs
Dr. Patrick Mwesigye	Executive Director	UCPC
Father Albert Byaruhanga	Education Secretary	Uganda Catholic Education Department, Kampala (formerly Fort Portal Diocese)
Rev. Fr. Bernard Aeko	Director	Uganda Martyrs Vocational Training Institute (UMVI)
Geoffrey Tumusiime	Programme Director	YSA
HORIZONT3000 TA personnel		
Catherine Glöckl	Technical Advisor	Africa 2000 Network
Katrin Kohlbecher	Technical Advisor	Caritas Gulu
Ute Engelberg	Technical Advisor	Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal, Agricultural Development Project (ADP)
Soren Christensen	Principal	Catholic Diocese of Fort Portal, St Joseph's Technical Institute
Ilse Dhondt	Technical Administrative Advisor	Catholic Diocese of Kasana-Luweero, Caritas Kasanaensis, Development Commission
Andrea Heiden	Technical Advisor	Catholic Diocese of Kasana-Luweero, IRUDEKA Programme
Alwin Budendorfer	Technical Advisor	CREEC
Annika Schabbauer	Technical Advisor	IFDI
Nikola Küsters	Technical Advisor, Monitoring & Evaluation Systems	IRDI
Robert Fischer	Technical Advisor	UCPC
Claudia Schedl	Technical Advisor	YSA
Other interview contacts		
Michael Winklmeier	Country Director	DED
Philippe Simonis	Regional Energy Advisor	GTZ, Ministry of Energy & Mineral Development
Daniele Giusti		Ugandan Catholic Medical Bureau

Annex 2: TOR (in German)

Evaluierung Personelle Entwicklungszusammenarbeit⁶³

1. Hintergrund

Das Personalprogramm von HORIZONT3000⁶⁴ wird seit vielen Jahren über eine ‚Rahmenvereinbarung‘ gefördert, und hat seinen Schwerpunkt in der Entsendung von Fachkräften. Durch die Neuausrichtung der ‚Rahmenvereinbarungen‘ (künftig ‚NRO-Rahmenprogramme‘) wurde auch die Erarbeitung eines adäquaten Förderrahmens für Personalprogramme erforderlich. Ein Entwurf für eine entsprechende Förderrichtlinie liegt vor.

Die generelle Diskussion über das Instrument der Personellen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit wird von der Frage über das optimale Zusammenspiel zwischen Personalentsendung und anderen Interventionen der OEZA in Entwicklungsländern begleitet. Dabei geht es u.a. um Fragen zur Nachhaltigkeit, zum Ausmaß der Kohärenz bzw. Abstimmung zwischen der Programm-/ Projektarbeit und den Einsätzen, zur Rolle der lokalen Partnerorganisationen, zur Rolle der Fachkräfte (inwieweit diese in beratenden Funktionen tätig sind, oder sie auch weiterhin als tragende MitarbeiterInnen/ LeiterInnen von Entwicklungsprojekten bzw. in lokalen Partnerorganisationen fungieren sollten). Die laufende internationale Diskussion über die Ausrichtung und den Stellenwert der Personellen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit sind in diesem Zusammenhang von hoher Relevanz.

Diese Fragestellungen betreffen vor allem die Programme von HORIZONT3000, die Fachkräfte für mehrjährige Einsätze entsenden. Wobei sich aus Antworten dieser Fragestellungen durchwegs auch Ableitungen für das Programm von ‚Jugend eine Welt‘ (JEW) oder ähnliche Programmen ergeben können.

Die neue Richtlinie zur Personellen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit sieht vor, dass Programme in regelmäßigen Abständen, zumindest jedoch alle 5 Jahre, zu evaluieren sind. Aus Sicht der ADA wäre der Zeitpunkt für das HORIZONT3000 Programm dafür gekommen.

2. Gegenstand der Evaluierung

- Personalprogramm HORIZONT3000 im Zeitraum 2000 – 2005 (inklusive vor Ort Evaluierung in den ausgewählten Partnerländern Uganda und Nicaragua)

3. Zweck

- Die Bewertung des Personalentsendeprogramms von HORIZONT3000 im Lichte der aktuellen internationalen Diskussion soll einen Beitrag zur Neuformulierung künftiger Personalentsendeprogramme und zur verbesserten Abstimmung des Instruments Personelle Entwicklungszusammenarbeit mit anderen Instrumenten der EZA liefern

4. Ziele und erwartete Ergebnisse

Relevanz

- Aufzeigen und Bewertung der derzeitigen inhaltlichen Ausrichtung der Einsätze in ausgewählten Ländern
- Klärung des Ausmaßes der inhaltlichen Kohärenz bzw. Abstimmung zwischen den Personaleinsätzen und anderen Projekten/Programmen bzw. anderen Instrumenten der Österreichischen Entwicklungszusammenarbeit

Impact

- Erarbeiten von Orientierungspunkten für die künftige Ausrichtung von Personalprogrammen
- Bewertung der längerfristigen inhaltlichen Perspektiven für den Personaleinsatz in den genannten Ländern
- Beurteilung der Nachhaltigkeit der Resultate des Personaleinsatzes, insbesondere des

⁶³ Summarised by ECDPM

⁶⁴ vormals das Programm des ÖED – Österreichischer Entwicklungsdienst. Das Personalprogramm wird seit rund 40 Jahren durchgeführt – erster Personaleinsatz im Jahr 1961

Transfers von Know-How und der Kapazitätenentwicklung vor Ort

Effektivität

- Aufzeigen wesentlicher Parameter für eine partnerschaftliche Umsetzung von Personaleinsätzen (zwischen Organisation in Österreich und lokaler Organisation)
- Erstellung eines Bewertungsrasters für die Beurteilung von jährlichen Einsatzplänen im Rahmen der Personalprogramme

Effizienz

- Erarbeiten von Richtwerten für den notwendigen Umfang für Personalprogramme (Kosten/Nutzen) in einem Land; Mindestumfang in Hinblick auf administrativen Aufwand

The following adaptations to the ToRs were made based on feed-back on the Inception Report:

Overall orientation of the evaluation:

- The Inception Report provides a brought background about the international discussion on TA. This is considered a useful contribution and will help to situate the evaluation of HORIZONT3000 in a broader context.
- However, ADA expressed the wish that the evaluation will relate to the specific realities and priority questions which HORIZONT3000 and its stakeholders are confronted with. The evaluation needs to take into account that HORIZONT3000 primarily works at the micro/ meso level in a context which is not primarily determined by new aid modalities, such as programme-based approaches or (sector) budget support.
- In light of this comment, there was agreement that the evaluation will take account of the wider changes taking place in aid and relate to this context, but avoid sliding into an intense discussion on how HORIZONT3000 could be used for operationalising Austrian aid at the macro level.
- The evaluation needs also relate to experiences of other organisations working at the meso level, like SNV, VSO, DED, AGEH, Interteam, MS, AISPO, and others. Where conceptual documents or literature about the work of these organisations are available, this should be taken into account as well.

Strategic issues to be taken into account:

- A key interest for ADA is, to what extent an organisational-administrative framework as HORIZONT3000 is of added value for Austrian Development Cooperation and priorities set by partner countries/ partner institutions.
- Related are questions about the future role and place which the Personnel Programme of HORIZONT3000 should take, where it should focus on and how this should relate to what other actors provide, country priorities and processes, demands, etc.
- Finally, this question also triggers interest in the future role and place of HORIZONT3000 in the context of a rapidly changing aid environment which increasingly moves towards professionalism, as opposed to volunteerism (idealism) – the background to part of HORIZONT3000 as well (church solidarity movement).
- Take note that HORIZONT3000 is an organisation which provides 'Fachkräfte' (as opposed to others which provide consultants or volunteers). These Fachkräfte are generally returning to Austria and are expected to play a dissemination/ third world advocacy role at home. To what extent is HORIZONT3000 indeed an organisation, which can "produce" persons who are able to fulfil this expectation and mandate of HORIZONT3000? → While the work will not involve an evaluation of the effectiveness of returnee in this regard, the evaluation should express its view on this aspect where possible based on observations from the field (i.e. duration in the field before returning).
- The evaluation should also provide comments, and/ or recommendations with regard to ADA's Draft NGO Guidelines – based on findings from HORIZONT3000's evaluation as well as from ECDPM's work on TA more generally.

Complementary aspects to be taken into account:

- While not included in the ToR, the evaluation will provide information and comments on

gender aspects of HORIZONT3000's work to the extent possible within given budget of the evaluation. E.g., gender balance of staffing, gender aspects taken into account during programming, preparation of staff, etc.

- The evaluation should also express its views about the cost aspects, i.e. where does it make sense to work with expensive TA, when with volunteers, etc. Comparing the costs of HORIZONT3000 with those of other organisations will be useful in this context.
- To the extent possible, comment on the programme and effectiveness of the preparation course of HORIZONT3000 (effectiveness of preparation course; what should be contained; compare with other organisations)

Annex 3: The international discussion on TA personnel provision – a summary

The ToR ask that we assess the personnel programme of HORIZONT3000 in the context of the international discussion on the provision of TA personnel. This discussion is fed by a number of ongoing international reforms in development cooperation, changing demands, emerging trends and views on how TA provision should be approached differently. Drawing from the various sources consulted and from the on-going work of ECDPM on both capacity development and TA personnel, we have presented in the following a number of observations about three principal areas: “TA relevance”, “TA effectiveness” and “TA efficiency”.

Some principal demands to be distinguished (relevance)

First, we would like to point out that there are **some broad trends in development cooperation** to be distinguished which have their bearings on the provision of TA personnel. These trends have emerged in recent years and have fed into the 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Second, there is a need to **disaggregate the perceptions and views** of bilaterals, multilaterals, and NGOs on the donor side and state (including core and line ministries and local government) and non-state actors on the partner country side. Third, one should underline that **needs on TA can be very different for sectors, types of programmes and areas of intervention** such as the public sector versus civil society. This also applies for different **types of countries and regions** such as East Africa, Pacific or Latin America. Fourth, views and objectives can differ on what TA is meant to contribute to capacity development as opposed to other objectives.

→ The shift from project to programme based approaches (PBAs) and to (sector) budget support (BS) is changing the context within which TA needs are identified. Different trends and patterns of demand are thus emerging;

- **More attention to Core Functions:** There is more emphasis on using TA to strengthen/support core functions of government including planning, budgeting, financial management, procurement and monitoring and evaluation related to implementing a results-based focus. In some countries, less emphasis is now given to recruiting TA to provide substantive sector expertise.
- **Greater Focus on Central Government:** The increased attention to strengthening the core functions of government to manage programme-based approaches (PBAs) and budget support (BS) may shift attention away from the needs of provincial/ local level administrations and of non-state actors. Though there are strong arguments made within the community of aid practitioners that macro-meso-micro linkages need to be strengthened in order to allow macro-reforms to take their effect at lower levels of government and broad society.
- **More Free-Standing:** The shift to PBAs and BS is to some extent de-linking TA from traditional project management responsibilities typically associated with project support. Where TA is more “free-standing”, or “advisory”, it can contribute to general administrative capacity and institutional strengthening, although it may continue to play a “gatekeeper/ watchdog” role albeit at arms-length. Experiences of organisations such as SNV which have been specialising in providing free-standing TA have shown promising results but also some difficulties resulting from lack of complementary project funding.
- **New Functions:** While the main function of TA is still to help develop individual and organisational capacity, as well as to provide oversight over the use of donor resources, greater attention is also being placed on performing additional functions such as engaging in dialogue, testing out innovations and promoting lesson learning, all of which are considered crucial to an effective utilisation of increasing aid budgets in the context of PBAs and BS.
- **But Poorly Planned and Coordinated:** While PBAs and BS offer more scope for matching TA provision to medium and long term human resources development strategies of the host

organisation (e.g., linking TA deployment to PRSP frameworks and national capacity assessments) in practice, the deployment of TA remains largely ad-hoc and un-coordinated (see further under “TA management”). Several of the case studies for the recent General Budget Support (GBS) evaluation coordinated by the DAC note that TA is badly planned and that the link with capacity development is particularly weak. This is the weakest element in what are otherwise strong GBS programmes such as in Uganda.

→ It is not clear how far these new patterns of demand reflect the priorities of donors or those of partner countries;

- From the **donor perspective**, there is interest in assuring efficiency and accountability in the use of aid resources channelled through national systems. Where host capacity and accountability is deemed to be weak, donors might seek to place TA within Government administrations as a means of providing oversight over the use of aid resources (“watchdog” function), of expediting aid utilisation through “hands-on” implementation (“gap-filling” function) or of strengthening skills, systems and procedures (“capacity development” function). TA might therefore address multiple objectives, though this may not be clearly spelt out.
- In certain contexts, e.g. **failing states or states in crisis**, providing strong direct support for the running of basic functions of Government in the interests of maintaining stability and regional security (e.g. international support to revenue/ customs services, governance/ justice and police forces in Sierra Leone) may be seen as a priority.
- Donors may also use TA as a means of influencing policy on issues key to them but not always of high priority to partner governments/ partner organisations, or associations. In so doing, donors seek to influence the policy agenda, or to support groups that might be voiceless.
- The view of **partner countries/ partner organisations** to new approaches to TA is less clear. Whilst generally welcoming the shift to PBAs and BS, partner countries often view the provision of TA as conditionality. The extent to which this is so will depend on the quality of the partnership and the degree to which partner organisations take the lead in the determination of needs (see further under “TA management”). As a matter of choice, local organisations would normally (but not always) wish to recruit their own nationals, or nationals from the region rather than expatriates from funding organisations.
- There is a general preference for **free-standing** TA that is de-linked from financial assistance, that is fully accountable to the local organisation and that contributes to the overall goals of the organisation. Because the interest of politicians and decision-makers is normally to assure short-term performance as well as compliance with any donor requirements, preference is often for hands-on “gap-filling”, rather than longer term capacity development. For recipients, it is often not an “either, or” issue: TA is expected to develop capacity while getting on with the job, but it often arises that the capacity development role becomes subordinated. And in the context of often under-staffed organisations, recipients will readily delegate financial management and reporting requirements of donors to TA personnel.
- In terms of the type of expertise required, partner countries may well see eye to eye with donors on the need to bolster core functions of government organisations/ NGOs, but may equally seek personnel to make up for scarce technical skills in particular sectors, to plug gaps in sectors where there is a high level of attrition or to deal with sensitive political issues that require a non-partisan approach. Partners do emphasise the importance of soft skills and inter-personal/ cultural affinity as important attributes that should accompany more formal skill sets.
- It is not clear how countries perceive the **comparative advantage** of donor funded TA compared to direct recruitment on the open market, but there is a clear indication that they resent the high salaries and benefits paid to expatriates.

→ In the context of PBAs/ BS, different TA skill sets/ profiles are therefore being sought;

- There is growing demand for expertise in areas of planning, budgeting, public financial management and procurement, and monitoring, consistent with the focus on strengthening

core functions of Government organisations/ NGOs.

- Advisors with substantive expertise in institutional reform, management, decentralisation, governance, human rights and anti-corruption issues are increasingly sought, as are people with experience in capacity development, although there is lack of clarity on the donor side as to what this really means.
- Equally, as these are usually associated with reform measures, emphasis is placed on personnel with change management and process facilitation skills, with a willingness to explore and to test out, as well as with skills in dialogue, communication and networking.
- Experience in working with PBAs/ BS and involvement in donor coordination and partner dialogue processes is also considered an asset. However it is recognised that the combination of sector expertise and macro policy skills is not easy to find.
- There is a growing recognition that broad institutional reform programmes, build on PBAs and financed by BS need a complementary expertise at the meso-level to accompany the transfer of macro reforms towards lower levels of government and broad society. The combination of sector expertise with a macro-meso-micro perspective is also not easy to find.
- Yet, there is need to caution against over generalising here. Demand is determined by the particular needs and circumstances of individual countries and sectors. The needs in a fragile country will be different to those of a middle-income country. The former may need expertise in managing complex change processes, the latter may be more interested in mobilising scarce skills in highly technical fields.
- From a recipient country/ organisation perspective, the question arises as to whether the demand for TA provided by donors can be distinguished from the more general demand for human resources. In this regard, donor provided TA may be seen as fulfilling particular niche requirements (responding to particular needs) that cannot be so easily obtained on the open market.

→ The comparative advantage of the “traditional” donor funded expatriate advisor needs to be carefully considered in the context of attractive alternatives;

- The more general question regarding the matching of supply and demand is raised. What are the alternatives to the traditional northern-based expert? The increasing transparency in costs of TA may result in demand for cheaper alternatives, e.g. volunteers and south-south cooperation. Under what circumstances are national experts, volunteers, international peers/ practitioners preferred? Are such preferences articulated when needs are being identified?
- The question also arises how far consideration of TA is done vis-à-vis alternative strategies for addressing a particular capacity problem. For instance, could the money spent on TA be used instead to finance pay reform within the civil service ... would that be a better way to build sustainable capacity? Or, could the money be used to induce the return of the Diaspora?

Modes of TA that have worked best and why (effectiveness)

First, there is a need to **distinguish the various roles that TA personnel play**, with a particular emphasis on their **contribution to capacity development**. Second, the literature provides examples of **on-the-ground TA practices** (facilitation, buffering, strategic gap filling, gate keeping, etc.) which can be linked to **different types of TA**, such as individually contracted bilateral advisers, company advisers and consultants, seconded public organisation professionals or volunteers. Third, one can **identify a number of factors that enable TA to be effective** for capacity development in different settings.

→ What is “Effective” TA?

- Presumably, TA is effective when it achieves its intended purpose. However, that purpose is not always explicitly stated. As earlier noted, TA can be expected to perform one of three principal functions, or some combination of these. These are:
 - (i) to support the development of individual and organisational capacity, including buffering

- organisations form undue outside pressures,
- (ii) to fill capacity gaps and perform functions in lieu of local personnel, (or to perform tasks that are temporary, time-bound or politically sensitive), or
- (iii) to serve as a gate-keeper and overseer of the use of donor funds.

A DFID report suggests that TA is an extremely versatile instrument and can therefore be moulded to perform very different tasks.

- Effectiveness is therefore a relative term. What might be effective in terms of capacity development may not be effective in terms of the other purposes of TA and vice-versa.
- In practice, TA is often expected to perform all three functions even though these might be in contradiction with one another. The dilemmas placed on TA performing multiple roles is raised in the literature ... particularly in the context of PBAs where there may be competing concerns for getting the job done, ensuring accountability, but also building capacity. Attention is drawn to the fact that the definition of roles/ purpose is often not sufficiently articulated in the first place leading to problems during implementation. See further below under “success factors”.
- It is often asserted that the principal function of TA is to build capacity yet it is precisely here where one finds a lack of clarity over what is intended / expected, both on the part of donors and recipients. Is that capacity to be built at the individual or organisational level? What is a reasonable time frame to expect capacity to emerge and what assurances are there that it is sustainable? Can one assume that capacity built will necessarily result in performance improvement? Is it reasonable to expect a single “expert” to develop capacity in large organisations, and if not, what other factors/ pre-conditions are important? How can you tell when capacity is strengthened or is adequate to a task? A “theory of action” is often absent resulting in difficulties in determining what is to be reasonably expected and who should be responsible for what.
- By contrast, it is far easier to define what TA is expected to do when performing a gap-filling role or project management/ oversight role. It is also much easier to prescribe modes of working. Yet even here, the extent to which TA is effective depends in large part on contextual factors related to the organisation/system within which the TA is being deployed (see “success factors” below).

→ **Effective TA for Capacity Development**

- There is a growing “conventional wisdom” regarding ways to promote capacity development. Emphasis is placed on the link between ownership and capacity development, on the different ways that knowledge is acquired and applied, on the processes through which individuals and organisations learn, and on the importance of inter-personal relationships between those who are there to develop capacity and those whose capacity is to be developed. There are insights on how best to balance long term processes with quick wins, and how to distinguish between those things that need time and those that respond to quick action.
- To develop capacity, TA is expected to play an overall facilitating role that emphasises mentoring and empowerment of local personnel and organisations. The practice of team work, coaching and getting involved with fellow workers is moreover noted as something positive by country partners. While there is no “blueprint”, there are many tools and tips available that can be drawn upon, many of which are drawn from the HR and organisational development disciplines. Yet, it continues to be the case that TA personnel are recruited for their substantive expertise and may have little exposure to such know-how.
- If this is the role to be played, then who is best placed to play it? Nationals with a more subtle understanding of the local rules of the game and an ability to read situations accurately may seem better placed to facilitate a change process. But in some situations, a certain distance and greater impartiality from local stakeholders is preferable and outsiders might be more effective. Sometimes a combination of both is preferable. In some circumstances, a development worker earning a basic salary on parity with local staff might be better accepted by the receiving organisation than a well paid expert. The input of personnel seconded from a peer organisation in the north might also be appreciated more than the recruitment of an advisor employed by a consultancy firm.

- Rarely, if ever, can TA on its own, build capacity and sustain its impact. TA is normally part of a larger portfolio of instruments that can contribute to the task of capacity development, including systems development, financial assistance and training. There is no “right mix” as each situation will demand a tailored response. More significantly are factors to do with the recipient side including leadership, ownership, legitimacy and financial stability.
- In the context of de-linking TA from project support and shifting towards PBAs and budget support, the question does arise as to whether TA will also become de-linked from more comprehensive change/ capacity development strategies.

→ **Success factors enabling effective use of TA (for capacity development)**

- Much of what is said in the literature focuses on three main issues: **host context, quality of design, and suitability of TA personnel.**
- **Host context:** TA tends to be more effective in contexts of good governance and where basic capacity is already in place. In this situation, there is both the ability and willingness to make full use of any expertise provided. This is especially important where TA is used to support major policy/ organisational reforms where local ownership of the process is critical. That does not mean, however, that TA cannot have a marked influence in less conducive environments. Countries with a clear vision about the role of TA tend to use it more effectively. Host organisations are also more likely to make effective use of TA where their own mandate is clear, where basic capacity is in place, and where there is an incentive to perform. Yet even when factors within an organisation might be conducive to utilising TA, organisational performance may be determined by factors in the external environment over which the TA has little or no influence. These factors also have a bearing on the sustainability of any capacity developed.
- **Quality of Design:** The point is repeatedly made that TA fails because of inadequate attention at the design stage. There is inadequate determination of needs, and poor articulation of the response and therefore roles that TA should play. Often roles are defined in general terms and may be multiple. What is usually missing is a theory of action that explains how to move from the present state to the envisioned end point. This is not meant to be a detailed articulation of activities but rather a discussion of approaches to change, recognising that there is no one right path and that tailoring actions to the often changing environment is critical. Such a theory of change can help to clarify the roles TA personnel can play and how they can influence/ contribute to a local change/ capacity development process⁶⁵. It can also help to ensure that partners share a common understanding of need and of proposed interventions. The above points are particularly evident in large PBAs where TA input is embedded (and somewhat lost) within large financial assistance programmes. This is in part because TA remains largely linked to projects whereas financial assistance is being programmed through PBAs and budget support (this point is taken up again in the TA management section).
- Some external agencies are better placed to support particular roles than others. For instance some of the smaller agencies can perform niche functions and are perhaps more flexible, and adaptable than others.
- **Suitability of TA personnel:** Having the right person to do the required TA job is critical and poor placement of personnel is a commonly cited problem (see further under TA management). Equally, lack of preparation on the receiving side can result in improper use of TA resources, or to a mis-match of expertise. The issue of accountability and the role of the host agency in managing TA also influences TA effectiveness and touches on issues relating to inter-personal relations. In this regard the DAC article on human dynamics of aid is instructive where it talks of “double de-motivation” and issues of dignity and reciprocity in human relations. Elsewhere reference is made to cultural imperialism. Personal qualities relating to cultural sensitivity, process skills etc. are highlighted as positively influencing the

⁶⁵ Some of the literature and especially the ECDPM Capacity study suggest that guiding principles may be more important than detailed TA or CD intervention strategies because of the fluid and unpredictable character of change processes. While wanting to be clear on outcomes, the exact manner by which those outcomes are achieved cannot be fully determined in advance.

dynamics between TA and local partners.

- Measuring Success: The difficulty of measuring success is noted in the literature: the fact of attributing capacity or performance outcomes to any single intervention is recognised as problematic. Result areas for TA are often poorly defined making it difficult to evaluate the TA contribution. Also noted is the fact that many TA interventions are by their nature diffuse and multiple, making it difficult to establish hard performance indicators. A systems approach would suggest that we cannot predict the results of interventions like TA. We may have to resort to assessing the process – personal suitability of individuals, how they have worked with others, etc. - including serving as a catalyst, providing critical information, helping to buffer organisations from outside pressures, etc.
- A crucial point is that donors tend to over-estimate the potential impact of TA particularly in the context of large change processes. In reality, TA can play important roles but generally cannot be the driver of a change process.
- Finally it is worth repeating that the definition of “success” and of “what works” depends on the purpose ascribed to TA. Thus success in the context of gap-filling is very different from success in the perspective of capacity development. Much of the literature on success and failure tends to focus on TA in relation to capacity development.

Options of managing TA (efficiency)

First, in the context of a broader shift towards PBAs, BS and country managed development processes (PRSPs, etc.) **there is an intense discussion on new approaches to managing TA differently**. This is particularly true of procurement approaches versus more traditional ways on providing TA. Second, while new aid practices are emerging **it is useful to review the extent to which TA is planned, implemented and managed differently**, in particular with regard to needs identification, induction, supervision and accountability. But innovations should not be equated automatically with promising practices and therefore need to be looked at critically. Third, managing TA effectively in a different context also **requires looking at the capacities of funding agencies to adapt their roles and way of working** vis-à-vis country authorities, partner NGOs, other financing agencies, managing contractors or volunteer organisations.

→ *Managing TA differently in the context of new aid approaches*

>> **Pooling**

- Pooling offers a way to shift/ balance responsibilities for the overall management of TA and to uphold principles of country ownership, harmonization and alignment. The commitments set out in the Paris Declaration reinforce the potential value of this mode of TA management. It is seen as a way of redressing some of the imbalances concerning needs assessment, procurement and management/ monitoring that can affect the effectiveness of TA, particularly with respect to capacity development.
- There are now a wide range of experiences of pooling documented in the literature, covering a range of applications from loose to full pooling.
- Whilst several countries with clearer policies on TA management such as Tanzania and Zambia are pushing for fuller pooling arrangements across all sectors, some like Uganda are taking a more selective approach, using it in sectors or sub-sectors where it seems to work. Other countries remain less convinced of the approach. Indeed, the benefits of pooling are not guaranteed and depend in large part on the capacity of host countries/ organisations to take on board broader responsibilities for TA management. It should, therefore, not be treated as a panacea to all the problems of TA.
- Pooling of TA as with other aspects of PBAs can incur high transaction costs and can place demands on specific capabilities that are not available. There can also be strong institutional interests to retain privileged bilateral relations with donors.
- What is less clear is what the overall impact of pooling arrangements has been on TA effectiveness: does TA that has been deployed through pooling arrangements work any better on average than TA deployed through non-pooling arrangements? How does it

improve mechanisms of needs identification, recruitment and supervision and how significant are these compared to other factors that can impact on TA performance?

>> PBAs, BS and Country-Driven Processes

- The discussion of pooling and related aspects of TA management arises in the context of a general shift towards PBAs, GBS and country managed development processes (PRSPs etc).
- However, the literature suggests that much TA continues to be managed in a “project mode” (even in the context of BS, according to DFID). Some argue that it is simply a matter of time before TA as a resource follows the path of financial assistance and is provided mainly as budget support. When this happens, there will be questions about the continued relevance of maintaining specialized TA budgets and TA organisations within development cooperation agencies. As partner governments take greater charge of TA, it will become harder for donors to justify TA as a special case for special treatment, managed under tight donor control.
- Oxford Policy Management and others call for a shift to a “procurement mode” whereby countries assume full responsibility for the TA function. Indeed, they suggest that responding to demand is a more effective approach than creating demand and that this approach is appropriate until evidence emerges that donors are effectively able to operate on the demand side.
- A counter argument, however, is that in a framework of partnership where both donor and recipient have legitimate interests, the TA function ought to remain a shared responsibility.
- According to DFID, the management of TA is linked to the capacity of the recipient to manage public resources more generally. Thus in fragile states which lack both development policy and the ability to budget and manage resources, it is likely that the provision of TA will remain with donors. However, where systems are in place and functioning adequately, there is little reason for donors to stay in charge.
- Progress towards BS has improved the effectiveness of TA, according to OPM.

→ *Managing TA differently: identification, procurement, induction, supervision and accountability*

>> Design of TA Interventions (Needs Identification)

- Several reports including the DFID TA Stocktaking exercise argue that the design of TA interventions is often weak, resulting in inadequate specification of: who the client is, what the overall function of TA should be, determining appropriate management and decision making responsibilities, specifying purpose and desired outcomes, and determining the specific skills required to carry out the assignment. Insufficient clarification and shared understanding at this stage can lead to many problems during implementation.
- Donor agencies still tend to take the lead in the identification of needs with country partners being more passive/ reactive. The IMF TA study notes this and the preliminary findings of the ADB TA evaluation also show that this can decrease ownership and commitment to decisions taken about TA.
- Being transparent about the real cost of TA, however, provides the host country the opportunity to consider the comparative advantage of TA over other forms of support and to decide what kind of TA is suitable: local expert, expatriate advisor, volunteer, etc. (value for money). AusAID is doing this through the use of “service facilities” that work with the partner country to determine appropriate forms of TA provision, such as in the health sector in PNG.
- Few countries have well developed human resources or capacity development strategies for their public services that accurately match personnel requirements to their development plans/ programmes. It can therefore be difficult to match proposed TA support to any kind of medium term HR/ capacity development strategy. PRSPs, or emerging PRSPs, do offer a potential framework around which priorities for TA can be made, and pooling (see above) can help to harmonise/ align TA more effectively around sector programmes/ PBAs. Donors are encouraging country partners to conduct capacity assessments as a basis for

determining capacity development support including the provision of TA.

>> TA Procurement

- Several reports question the adequacy of selecting TA personnel solely on the basis of CV. They suggest a more intensive selection process that includes face to face interviews and that the receiving country/ organisation be fully involved. They further argue that the selection processes should be as rigorous and individualised as would apply for the appointment of permanent staff.
- TA procurement is a specialized business. Donors such as DANIDA contract this task to specialized HRM agencies. The HR function in many partner country public services is often extremely weak, compounding the challenge of assuring effective deployment of TA personnel within national administrations. With the trend towards PBAs and budget support, this demands that attention be given to host country/ organisation capacity for managing the HR function.
- As a general rule, the countries in greatest need of technical assistance have the least capacity to manage it, resulting in donors retaining responsibility. Yet, even in countries with greater administrative capacity, some such as South Africa may prefer donors to manage the procurement process. Perceived advantages include greater flexibility, faster processes, and avoiding the risk of patronage.

>> Preparation and Induction of TA

- The literature sees pre-assignment preparation as a neglected but crucial step in the management of TA process.. The quality of induction can have a significant bearing on the effectiveness of TA in the field (see section on “effectiveness”). Major benefits can come from adequate induction of both TA and the organisation receiving TA, for example, AusAID’s bringing together of both TA and representative(s) of the receiving organisation to reflect on expected roles, relationships and responsibilities. Organisations that send out development workers such as SNV, VSO, DED and UNV are well known for preparing personnel, as are agencies such as DANIDA and GTZ. Many advisors/ experts are, however, expected to get on with the job as soon as they arrive in country and may receive only scant orientation from either the donor mission or the host organisation.

>> TA Supervision, Monitoring and Accountability

- As a matter of principle, the literature suggests that responsibility for the supervision and monitoring of TA should be the responsibility of the receiving organisation. When the supplier (donor) retains the supervision or it is a shared responsibility, national ownership is usually less than in a sole control environment and sustainability is less likely.
- Yet it is rare that responsibility is fully handed over to the recipient, and there are good reasons for this in countries with high levels of corruption and leadership more interested in power than in the betterment of their countries. There are various examples of how responsibility is shared between donor and recipient.⁶⁶ GTZ-funded TA remains largely responsible and accountable to the GTZ country office although efforts are being taken to increase accountability to the recipient side. France, Belgium and the EC all have systems of co-management which means that the donor has an effective veto over any activities. Danida places primary responsibility on the receiving organisation but uses the mechanism of a steering committee to maintain principles of partnership and shared responsibility/ accountability. The extent to which modalities of shared responsibility work effectively depends in part on the capacity of the receiving entity/ country. Pooling arrangements (see above) offer an alternative way to share responsibility.
- The literature notes the lack of appropriate mechanisms for measuring TA performance/ impact. Despite its often pivotal role in the implementation of sector programmes, TA receives comparatively scant attention in programme monitoring frameworks. This makes it difficult for partners on either side to monitor this resource and learn from experiences. TA performance is often done through the proxy of the overall programme success/ failure,

⁶⁶ See further the report prepared by ECDPM/ ACE for Belgium Technical Cooperation (BTC) (2006).

although there is not necessarily a direct causal relationship between the two. Really good TA can salvage bad projects as poor TA can scupper good ones.

→ **Donors' Own Capacity and Constraints**

- The literature points to various constraints and opportunities that confront donors attempting to modify their management of TA. The ECDPM study done for BTC study discusses, for example, the different policy and procedures that govern the way in which agencies can respond to the challenges of managing TA. A notable difference is the way in which donor countries assign the responsibilities for management of TA including identification, formulation, and implementation to different agencies.
- The issue of deconcentrating/ decentralizing management responsibilities to country offices is relevant to the discussion in terms of how it affects the capacity of agencies to effectively determine needs and engage with partners ,for instance, in pooling arrangements or in supporting complex change processes etc.
- Donor capacity is another issue. Do they have the appropriate competencies to manage TA particularly in complex areas such as institutional change and public sector reform? There needs to be a match between these capabilities and downstream activities for TA to be effective.
- The question arises whether the shift from project approaches to PBA and BS approaches places more or different demands on agencies to manage TA. What is the future role for specialized TA agencies such as GTZ, ADA, SNV or even UNDP in this context? How can their expertise in change management derived from project support assist in wider programme/ budget support?

Annex 4: Interview questions for the field studies

Overview of all questions asked to the different categories of respondents ('master list')

1. Relevance of activities (Demand for what kind of TA by whom?)

1.1. What are the **aims of HORIZONT3000 TA**?

For people familiar with the whole personnel programme (more than one activity)

1.1.1. What are the **aims of the technical assistance personnel** programme in the country (in terms of sector distribution etc...)? Who defines them?

For partner organisations and TAs:

1.1.2. What are the **aims of the TA activity**?

1.1.3. What is the motivation for this sort of technical assistance through personnel? Is it different from other (e.g. financial) assistance?

- **Is the aim of this programme to 'change minds and attitudes'?**

1.2. What are the intended **synergies** between the TA programme and other activities?

- HORIZONT3000's other activities/sector programmes?

For partner organisations: Is there financial assistance linked to this project?

- OEZA activities?

For Kobü: What are there synergies between HORIZONT3000's work and other OEZA activities?

- Activities/priorities of the partner country?

For the partner government: Is HORIZONT3000's work in line with country priorities?

- Activities of the partner organisation?

For partner organisations: How does this TA link with your other work?

- Activities of other organisations?

Other organisations: Is there an overlap or complementarity between your work and that of HORIZONT3000?

1.2.1. **How does HORIZONT3000 coordinate** its activities with other organisations?

2. Effectiveness - What worked (or not) and why?

2.1. **How are TA needs identified?**

2.1.1. Who asks for TA or proposes assignments?

2.1.2. How does HORIZONT3000 select partner organisations? What are the criteria?

2.2. **TA assignment preparation/planning**

2.2.1. To what extent is the context in which TA is provided assessed?

2.2.2. To what extent are tasks clearly defined before TAs arrive?

2.3. **What kind of roles do HORIZONT3000 technical assistance personnel play?**

2.3.1. What do the TAs do? What sort of TA assignments does HORIZONT3000 support? For partner organisations: What does the expert do? What sort of assignment is it?

2.3.2. To what extent is the job done by the development worker that outlined in the Terms of Reference?

- To what extent did changes have to be made to the job description after arrival?

- To what extent did the role have to be changed?

2.3.3. Does HORIZONT3000 get the right people for the assignments? Do they meet the expectations of the partners?

2.3.4. What sort of assignments are envisaged for development workers doing a 'placement' for the first time?

For partner organisations:

2.3.5. Have you had previous TA from HORIZONT3000? What sort of TA was that?

2.4. What is the role of the local partner organisations?

2.4.1. What role do they play in defining assignments?

2.4.2. What role do they play during the assignment with regard to ensuring effectiveness?

2.5. Is the technical assistance provided by HORIZONT3000 successful?

2.5.1. **Do you think HORIZONT3000's TA programme is successful?**

For partner organisations: Do you think this is a successful assignment?

2.5.2. What do you see as **key success factors**?

(Mainly for non-HORIZONT3000 interviewees)

2.5.3. **How do others perceive the HORIZONT3000 TA?**

- o ...the partner organisations?
- o ...the government?
- o ...Other development organisation?

For partner organisations:

2.5.4. On the **recruitment of international experts vs of local experts**:

- o If you were offered a sum of money for the purchase of expertise on the local, regional or international labour market, what would you do? Would you still take HORIZONT3000 TA personnel or recruit yourself?
- o Would you have the capacity and knowledge to recruit experts yourself?
- o **Why are TAs rather than local experts recruited?** (Cover cost issues if possible) For partner organisations: Why was a TA rather than a local expert recruited?

3. Efficiency/ Management of the programme and of TA

3.1. Management of TAs

3.1.1. Do you have comments/views on the **TA** recruitment/ selection process?

3.1.2. Do you have comments/views on the **preparation and induction** which HORIZONT3000 TAs receive?

- o What happens on this in Vienna?
- o What happens in country?

3.1.3. How are experts managed? **Who do they report to? Who are they accountable to?**

3.1.4. Monitoring of activities

- o How do you assess what the TAs are doing? How are the assignments/activities monitored? (PCM?)
- o (How) Are local partners involved in monitoring?

3.2. Management of the TA programme

- o Is HORIZONT3000's local structure sufficient for managing the TA programme?
- o What are the constraints (on HORIZONT3000's/ADA's side) to the effective management of the programme?

4. Outcome/ traces of impact/ sustainability

4.1. What do you/does HORIZONT3000 understand by **capacity development**?

4.2. To what extent **was capacity developed** during the TA assignment? Which capacities were developed?

- o Individual capacity (e.g. through training)
- o Organisational capacity (e.g. system development)
- o Institutional capacity

4.3. What **longer-term impact** has the placement of HORIZONT3000 technical assistance personnel had? How sustainable are the activities supported by HORIZONT3000?

- (How) are projects continued once TAs leave?
For the TA: Do you think this activity will continue once you leave?
- What is the role of TAs in/ impact on partner organisations?
For the TA: What impact has your assignment had on the partner organisation?
- How do you assess impact?

5. Future demands for technical assistance personnel

5.1. What are the trends in terms of the roles played by technical assistance personnel? Is there a change in roles that is recognisable? E.g. as regards

- ...the positioning of the technical advisor in- or outside the organisation
- ...the placement of personnel with financial management responsibility or as stand-alone TA
- ...the recruitment of more local or regional vs international TA

Annex 5: Organisations/ projects visited in Uganda and Nicaragua

Uganda			
Name/ location	Sector/ type of work	TA / type of work	Other Austrian funding
Africa 2000 Network Uganda (A2N), Kampala	NGO working on poverty alleviation and rural development	Technical Advisor/ Business Analyst (Business and organisational development)	A2N receives funding for a fruit-drying project through HORIZONT3000
Centre for Research in Energy and Energy Conservation (CREEC), Makerere University, Kampala	Research department of Faculty of Technology/ Energy sector	Technical Advisor on renewable energy (works as a staff member)	No Austrian funding
Fort Portal Diocese - St Joseph's Technical Institute (SJTI), Fort Portal	Church based organisation/ Vocational training sector	Principal of SJTI (exceptional gap filling position)	SJTI receives equipment support from an Austrian school (100% private cooperation); SJTI also participates in the timber-based batch production project
Fort Portal Diocese – ADP project, Kyenjojo	Church based organisation/ Rural development sector	Technical Advisor / Agricultural Development Project (ADP)	ADP is financed by HORIZONT3000 (on behalf of Katholische Maennerbewegung Linz – KMB) and ADA
Gulu Diocese, Caritas, Gulu	Church-based organisation,/ Social work	Technical Advisor (Organisational development)	ADA framework contract
Integrated Family Development Initiatives (IFDI), Kampala	NGO working in the environment and energy sector	Technical Advisor (Organisational Development)	IFDI implements a rain water harvesting project funded by HORIZONT3000
Integrated Rural Family Development Initiatives (IRDI), Kampala	NGO working in the environment and renewable energy sector	Technical Advisor (Monitoring and Evaluation)	IRDI was supported by HORIZONT3000 to implement a water and sanitation project
Kasana Luweero Diocese – Caritas, Health Department, Luweero	Church organisation/ health sector	Technical Administrative Advisor/ Organisational development	No Austrian funding
Kasana-Luweero Diocese - IRUDEKA programme, Luweero	Church organisation/ Rural development sector	Technical Advisor/ IRUDEKA programme	IRUDEKA receives funding from HORIZONT3000, KMB and DKA

Uganda			
Name/ location	Sector/ type of work	TA / type of work	Other Austrian funding
Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, ⁶⁷ Kampala	Government ministry/ Juvenile Justice sector	Technical Assistant/ programme coordination	-HORIZONT3000 financed project for skills development amongst children in remand homes -Sector budget support Justice, Law and Order Sector
Ministry of Justice, Law Council, Kampala ⁶⁸	Government Ministry/ Law and Justice sector	Technical Staff/ Legal Aid Specialist	Sector budget support Justice, Law and Order Sector
Soroti Diocese – Uganda Martyrs Vocational Institute (UMVI), Soroti	Church based organisation/ Vocational training sector	- Administrator (played director role) - Technical advisors to the garage - Technical advisors to the carpentry - Technical advisors working on programme for people with disabilities	UMVI received funding from DKA and ADA (as well as the EU) UMVI Carpentry now participates in timber-based batch production project
Uganda Cleaner Production Centre (UCPC), Kampala	Project for the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Development/ Energy sector	Technical Advisor (works as staff member)	UCPC receives Austrian and Swiss funding (via UNIDO)
Youth Social-Work Association (YSA), Kampala	NGO/ Social work	Technical advisor	YSA projects receive funding from ADA

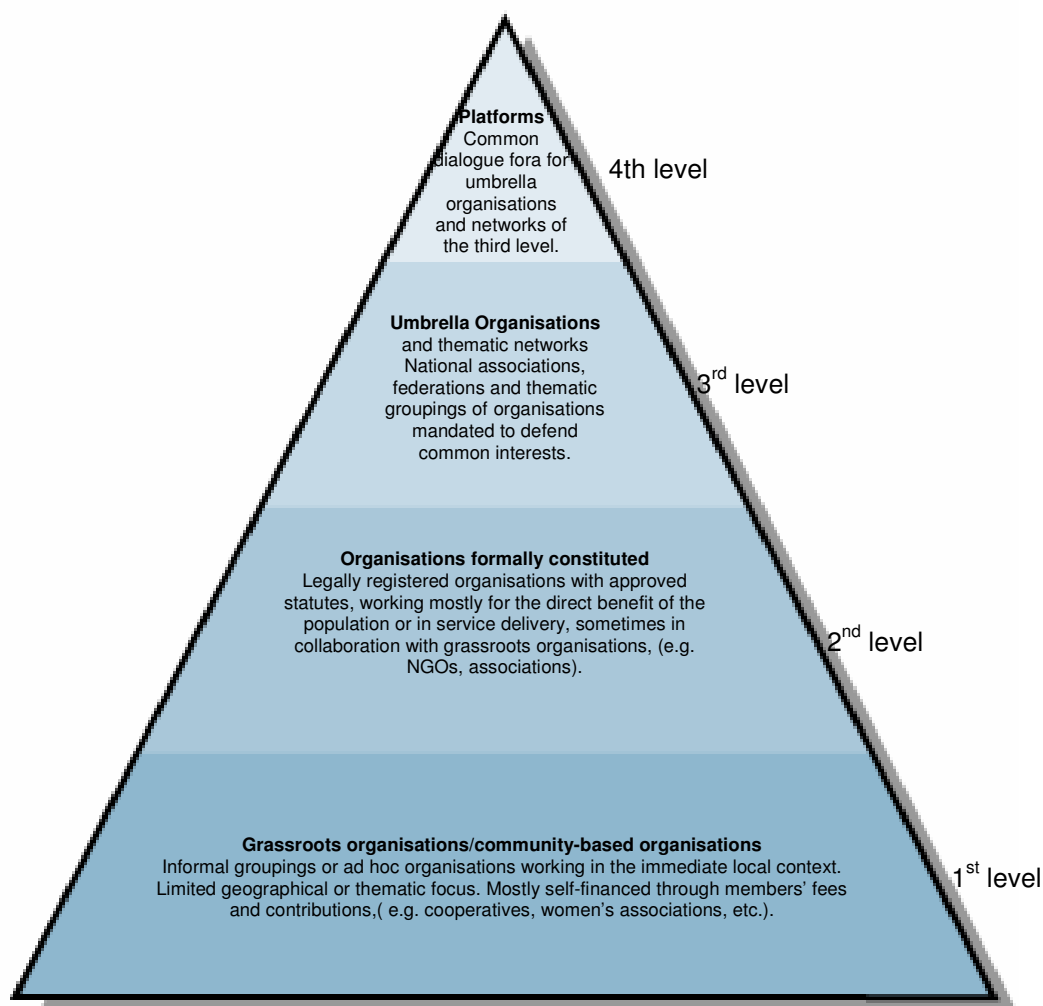
Nicaragua			
Name/ location	Sector/ type of work	TA / type of work	Other Austrian funding
AMC, Managua (work is done on the Atlantic Coast, specific project was on the Rio Coco)	National Foundation / Primary healthcare and institutional networking in health sector, Atlantic Zone	Technical Advisor on Sanitation Project on the Rio Coco (completed)	- HORIZONT3000 - EU
CAD, Puerto Cabezas	Church based organisation and Governmental organisation of the “Autonomous North	Technical Advisor (community work, communication/ educational materials) (completed, difficult to	- HORIZONT3000 - DKA - OEZA

⁶⁷ Given the limited availability of the respective Government partners during the mission, the study team was only able to hold two quite short interviews on the two assignments in the Ministry of Gender (juvenile justice) and the Ministry of Justice (legal aid) respectively. These allowed us to gain only a limited insight into these two assignments, which are the only cases in recent years where HORIZONT3000 has provided technical assistance to the central Government. In both cases, the Government seems to have asked for HORIZONT3000 TA personnel to overcome shortages in specialist staff (resulting from budgetary restrictions and cumbersome recruitment procedures). While in one of the cases the host ministry seems to have been generally satisfied with the TA provided, the other assignment did not appear to be successful and in fact ended prematurely.

⁶⁸ See footnote above.

Nicaragua			
Name/ location	Sector/ type of work	TA / type of work	Other Austrian funding
	Atlantic Region (RAAN)/ Social prevention of drug abuse, youth work	find new TA) -	
CECALLI, Esteli	National foundation/ Primary healthcare, community health, Natural medicine	Technical Advisor (Laboratory improvement, certification of products, enterprise development, marketing)	- HORIZONT3000 - KMB - OEZA
CECIM, Ciudad Sandino, Los Quinchos programme	Local foundation / Educational youth programmes in marginal urban areas	Technical Advisor (Psychological aspects of special education)	- HORIZONT3000 - KFB - DKA
- FADCANIC, Bluefields. - URRACAN, Siuna. - Coastal Campaign against AIDS, Bluefields. - Committee against HIV/AIDS, Puerto Cabezas (Bilwi), - ACISAM, El Salvador	- Regional Foundation - Regional University - Governments of the North & South Atlantic Region (RAAN & RAAS) - Local Association / Support to regional autonomy and development, Campaigning against HIV/AIDS, Participatory communication	Technical Advisor, (facilitating process of systemisation of experiences, networking)	- HORIZONT3000 - KMB - OEZA - EU (ACISAM)
Jagwood Timber Association, Managua	Central American Timber Association/ Supporting member organisations on technical, organisational and marketing aspects	Technical Advisor (Technical development (Timber Workshops), Product design & organisational development of association & member organisations, certification procedures for product export)	As an exception there is no HORIZONT3000 project funding
SILAIS project, Madriz (frontier zones with Honduras)	Regional Ministry of Health/ Primary healthcare and community health, Programme on Reproductive and Sexual Health	Technical Advisor: (advisory role on PHC, reproductive and sexual health, project proposals and organisational development)	- HORIZONT3000 - DKA - OEZA (ADA) - EU
SILAIS project, Rosita	Regional Ministry of Health/ Primary healthcare and community health	Technical Advisor on primary health care - training and advisory activities (completed)	- HORIZONT3000 - OEZA

Annex 6: Levels of organisations of non-state actors



Levels of organisations of non-state actors

(Source: ECDPM/ ACP, 2003)

Annex 7: A tool for capacity assessment

EUROPEAN COMMISSION EuropeAid Co-operation Office

Aid Delivery Methods Programme Checklist for Capacity Development Support

Introduction

This checklist is intended to serve national authorities, development partners and consultants involved in dialogue about and assessment of organisational capacity, and in design of support to Capacity Development (CD). It's derived from the Aid Delivery Methods Concept Paper on "Institutional Assessment and Capacity Development, why, what and how?" (September 2005). It reflects agreed good practices in the area of CD and can be used independently. However they are best used together for full application of the tool.

The checklist is phrased in the present tense, but it can also serve during reviews. It has been designed so as to allow a numerical scoring, in case this is considered relevant. The grid follows the following principles and sequencing⁶⁹ :

- 1 Capacity Assessment – what? This part focus on external as well as internal factors which shape capacity. It follows the step-wise approach outlined in the Concept Paper, starting with a focus on the outputs of the organisation(s).
- 2 Capacity Assessment – how? The process of capacity assessment is as important as the content of the assessment. Ownership and participation issues are crucial, and will influence future capacity development prospects.
- 3 *Capacity Development and Change – Enabling Environment and Commitment.* The feasibility and likely success of Capacity Development and Change is strongly determined by the domestic drive for and commitment to change, as well as by the likely resistance and the constraining factors in the context.
- 4 *Capacity Development and Change – Goals and Design Issues.* Capacity development processes benefit from clear results, and the design should consider promotion of change by working both on internal and external factors, and on both functional/technical and political dimensions of capacity.
- 5 *External Support to Capacity Development – the Demand Side.* Until this section, capacity and capacity development are considered mainly endogenous and domestic processes. Here, development partners' support is introduced, first with questions regarding the demand for external support.

⁶⁹ [see page 4-5 in Concept Paper](#)

6 External Support to Capacity Development – the Supply Side. This section focuses on the quality of design and delivery of the external support. Are the proposed support modalities the right answer? Are development partners aligning to domestic processes, and harmonising initiatives and approaches? Since this is a generic checklist, some of the questions may not be applicable in specific situations, and some may be more relevant than others. Use the checklist as seems fit for the given situation - it is meant to be helpful and not a straight jacket!

If you wish to apply numerical ranking, we suggest that you use this scale:

4 = fully/yes/excellent etc.; 3 = to a large degree/good etc.; 2 = partially/not significantly/fair;
1 = No/not assessed/not available etc.). If the question is not applicable, don't score!

1. Capacity Assessment – Why and what to assess?

No.	Question	Score	Notes for own use
1.1	Is it clear and agreed <i>why</i> the capacity assessment shall be made? Is it reasonably clear which decisions it will support, and by whom these decisions will be made?		
1.2	Is the capacity assessment involving all the key organisations (and/or units) whose performance is central to the achievement of the wider sector objectives?		
1.3	Is the assessment including a mapping of past and present output levels (quantity and quality of services and products) of the organisation(s) identified?		
1.4	Are the users of these outputs identified and their satisfaction level taken sufficiently into account?		
1.5	Are drivers and constraints in the context which influence the performance of the organisation(s) identified?		
1.6	Is the short- and medium term resource situation of the organisation(s) mapped, and possible input-objective mismatches as well as constraints identified?		
1.7	Is the quality of the governance of the organisation(s) assessed, as well as how they are held accountable by domestic stakeholders?		
1.8	Are the relevant internal elements of the organisation(s) assessed following a reasonably comprehensive analytical model?		
1.9	Is sufficient attention given to the political and power dimensions of the organisation(s), in addition to the rational, functional dimensions?		
1.10	Is sufficient attention given to the analysis of the informal dynamics of the organisation(s) and the fit between the informal and formal aspects?		
1.11	Is the assessment sufficiently substantiated by facts, figures and arguments?		
	Transfer no. of questions answered and sum of score to last page		

2. Capacity Assessment – How is the process organised?

No.	Question	Score	Notes for own use
2.1	Has the national partner taken the initiative to the capacity assessment process with a clear sense of its relevance and timeliness in relation to future capacity development?		
2.2	Has the national partner lead the design of the assessment process?		
2.3	Is staff in the organisation(s), clients/customers, networking partners and external stakeholders adequately involved in the assessment process?		
2.4	Are previous, parallel or planned capacity assessment processes sufficiently taken into consideration?		
2.5	Is the assessment process placing a reasonable burden on the organisation(s), considering other priorities and tasks?		
2.6	Is the feedback and decision making process related to the assessment reasonably specified and made clear to all concerned?		
2.7	Do all key partners largely agree on the professional profile and competency of those who deliver technical support to the assessment process?		
	Transfer no. of questions answered and sum of score to last page		

3. Capacity Development and Change: Enabling Environment and Commitment

No.	Question	Score	Notes for own use
	Enabling environment:		
3.1	Is there some degree of domestic pressure on the organisation(s) for reforms, capacity development and change?		
3.2	Do relevant leaders publicly express their commitment to capacity development and change of the organisation(s) to national audiences?		
3.3	Have leaders visibly invested in the success of the process, so that failure could entail loss of reputation or other risks?		
3.4	Are actors with sufficient power and relevant leaders willing and able to counteract external actors resisting change?		

3.5	Would other change processes and experiences in the country indicate that the envisioned change process is likely to succeed?		
	Internal		
3.6	Is internal leadership of the change process sufficiently broad based and is it likely to remain strong and active?		
3.7	Has possible internal resistance to change been taken into account and can and will leaders be able to deal with it?		
3.8	Are there upcoming organisational issues or events, or other change initiatives, which may be likely to demand the attention of leaders and take change off the agenda?		
	Transfer no. of questions answered and sum of score to last page		

4. Capacity Development and Change– Goal and design issues

No.	Question	Score	Notes for own use
4.1	Has the effect of the change process been sufficiently specified in terms of increased quality/quantity of outputs (services/products) of the organisation(s)?		
4.2	Are the output targets resulting from the CD process realistic as well as reasonably ambitious compared to historical records of performance of the organisation(s)?		
4.3	Are the goals of the change process consulted and/or shared with staff?		
4.4	Are the goals of the change process communicated externally to stakeholders?		
4.5	Has the promotion of change in external factors which could improve the likelihood of successful internal change been considered?		
4.6	Are mechanisms in place to monitor the change process, inform relevant stakeholders and ensure learning from success and failure?		
4.7	Is the capacity development process designed with flexibility so that it can adapt to changing circumstances?		
	Transfer no. of questions answered and sum of score to last page		

5. Demand for External Support to Capacity Development and Support

No.	Question	Score	Notes for own use
5.1	Does the demand for donor support to CD come from internal change agents with sufficient leverage and commitment to the change process?		
5.2	Are external domestic stakeholders endorsing the way in which donors give support to CD of the organisation(s)?		
5.3	Is there already an ongoing endogenous change process which will be strengthened by donor support?		
5.4	Is the design of the required donor support lead by the national partner(s)?		
5.5	Is there a logical link between donor support, the capacity developed as a result of the change process and the effect of this on organisational outputs?		
	Transfer no. of questions answered and sum of score to last page		

6. Quality of Design and Delivery of Capacity Development Support

No.	Question	Score	Notes for own use
	General to the Support to Capacity development		
6.1	Are the various supporting activities to capacity development sufficient flexible, without losing sight of strategic goals?		
6.2	Has the capacity support been discussed and harmonized with relevant other development partners before reaching the decision stage?		
6.3	Are regular mechanisms in place allowing the national partner(s) to coordinate all sources of support to the capacity development of the organisation(s)??		
6.4	Does the required support consider local capacity development support suppliers, as well as the use of peer-based mechanisms (peer reviews, twinning, regional exchanges etc.)?		
	Specific to Technical Assistance (TA) as one of the support mechanisms to Capacity Development		
6.5	Is the demand for Technical Assistance sufficiently driven by the organisation(s)?		
6.6	Is the partner organisation involved in drafting of TOR, and selection of the suppliers of TA or other capacity development inputs?		
6.7	Is the TA contract made by the national partner(s)? If not, is the TA largely under the authority of the national partner?		
6.8	Does the partner organisation(s) have adequate mechanisms for regular performance assessment of the TA?		

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	Specific to Training as one of the support mechanisms to Capacity Development		
6.9	Has incentives and motivation to performance been assessed confirming that training is likely to be transformed to enhanced individual and collective performance?		
6.10	Is training supplied based upon a sound job- and task assessment related to the wider HRD strategy of the partner organisation(s)?		
6.11	Is training managed by the partner organisation(s) with adequate mechanisms to ensure that the right staff is trained for the right job?		
6.12	Will tracer-studies testing job-relevance and effectiveness of training be conducted?		
	Transfer no. of questions answered and sum of score to last page		

Scoreboard

	Group of Questions	No. of questions scored	Sum of score	Average	Notes for own use
1	Capacity Assessment – Why and what?				
2	Capacity Assessment – How?				
3	Capacity Development and Change: Enabling Environment and Commitment				
4	Capacity Development and Change– Goals and design issues				
5	Demand for External Support to Capacity Development and Support				
6	Quality of Design and Delivery of Capacity Development Support				
	SUM – OVERALL SCORE				

A low score in some sections can indicate that more work has to be done here, or that an CD initiative is connected with higher risks. The lower the overall score, the higher the risk that a support scheme to a capacity development process will fail to be fully effective. An average score below 2 would most likely indicate that overall failure is likely.

This grid is work in progress, and comments on usefulness, omissions, errors, poor phrasing etc. are welcomed. Please direct comments to mail@nilsboesen.dk in copy to Virginia.Manzitti@ec.europa.eu.

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