



Together⁴Change

Appendix 29

**ICS Strategy Development
2011-2015**



International Child Support Strategy Development 2011-2015¹

Concept note, November 13, 2009

- Towards citizen-led change processes -

¹ Please note that a full business plan 2011-2015 is being developed, which will include a more elaborate description of the background, different concepts, theory of change, international development discourse, quality of collaboration and the programmes. The underlying concept note will be included in this larger document.

Motto: *“Our future is greater than our past”*
Okri²

Introduction

With the many changes happening and challenges occurring worldwide in relation to the economy, financial markets, the environment, food insecurity, energy crisis, world politics, power and social relations, etc. it is urgent to do a reality check on the context we as an organisation are working in. Also, how this changing environment and globalisation at large impacts on community level and (child) poverty and marginalisation in particular. In particular, in this changing environment and within the context of the recent development debate, we have to do a reality check on our role as a development actor.

We will celebrate the 30th birthday of our organisation next year. When we reflect on how our organisation has evolved, we can conclude that we have a dynamic past. Especially, the last five years we have developed in many ways: from a charity based, funding organisation in the Netherlands towards a development organisation with coordinated regional programme representations; from project activities towards rights based programmes and processes; from education towards an integrated approach; and from an individual child focus towards a community focus. This has had a great impact on the organisation and the way we work. Since we are a relatively small actor, we have always considered collaborating with other local, Dutch, international organisations as crucial for realising efficiency and impact. Amongst others, this has resulted in a joint subsidy from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Co-Financing System 2007-2010 (MFS) with 4 Dutch organisations and a range of international and local organisations called *Change for Children*. ICS is the lead organisation of this collaboration.

In our business plan for 2007-2010, we have challenged ourselves to rethink about how best we can support the communities and organisations we work with and how best we can have an added value in the development arena. One central concept that we have introduced since 2006 is a civic driven approach with the school as an entry point. Whereas only recently the Civic Driven Change discourse has provided more knowledge and understanding of the concept, we have started with translating a civic driven approach into practice with the schools and the communities we collaborate with.

A core principle is a process of co-creation with different civic actors and stakeholders, both duty bearers and rights holders at community level. The focus is on organising an inclusive process, rather than implementing projects and activities. It is a process that organises different stakeholders at community level, whether government officials, community leaders, representatives of organisations and community groups, teachers, parents or children. The stakeholders together first identify the main social issues to be addressed depending on their different perspectives and secondly, identify their respective roles in addressing these issues. Finally, a capacity gap in fulfilling their roles and an action plan is agreed upon and a social contract signed. The end result is a plan developed by the stakeholders jointly which could include activities in the area of education, health, protection, livelihood and/or HIV/Aids and which defines the respective roles. Hence, it is this process that defines roles, responsibilities, planning, programming, M&E, etc. Consequently, this process is a result of the programme in itself. This is reflected in the way we have worked with Crisp (Child rights in school improvement planning) in Kenya and Tanzania as well as the civic driven community approach applied in Cambodia. We will further develop this way of working, building upon the

² Ben Okri, *Mental Fight*, Phoenix, London, 1999, p. 63.

different experiences, feedback from communities and stakeholders, new insights and lessons learnt, amongst others an external evaluation of Crisip in July 2009³.

Quotes derived from the CRiSIP Evaluation:

CRiSIP Design

“The design of CRiSIP represented an interesting mix of participatory approaches which assisted the inclusiveness of the (larger) community and stakeholders, the promotion of a holistic view on children’s education and led to joint action planning.”

Role of the communities

However, the role of ICS would be that of a catalyst, facilitating the community at the grassroots to take the lead in need identification, making decisions on issues that affect their children and coming up with their own possible solutions for the identified issues.

ICS’ learning capacity

ICS has shown itself to be an organisation open to learning and to critical self-reflection. This value has, without doubt, assisted it in implementing this ambitious programme. ICS has worked hard to strengthen its manpower and support systems and is aware of the pending challenges on e.g. finance, where it is working with unsecured budgets and on programme related challenges such as ensuring meaningful child participation and the functioning of the cluster committees.

ICS’ search for its role

Nevertheless, the communities continue to perceive ICS as a donor and it has been, and continues to be, a balancing act for ICS between being an implementer and a catalyst for change.

From: ETC Crystal, Mid-term evaluation of Crisip - International Child Support, 2009 August

Developing, organising and facilitating these civic driven processes have included a searching path based on the information and knowledge available at that point in time. The collaboration with Context, international cooperation and their Centre on Civic Driven Change and Civic Driven Child Development has been instrumental and crucial in developing a civic driven process, organise learning, knowledge development and establish a track record. After 4 years, we now feel confident that we have managed to lay an important foundation which we can build upon and improve further based on our own experiences and learning and knowledge development from the Civic Driven Change discourse in general and Context’s Centre for Civic Driven Change in particular.

Action Learning Case Studies (ALCS) form an integral part of Context’s Centre for Civic Driven Change. The aim of the research programme is to learn from development practice in order to improve future practice and policy. The methodology used for this programme is based on principles of collaborative action research which means that knowledge and experience of the participants are key. The case studies are conducted by means of story-telling, concept mapping and triangulation and are centered around and build upon a „story“. Hence the central method is a story-telling exercise. A community, group or a few individuals are invited to narrate a story about their experience in a change process that they were part of. The main questions to be answered are: (1) how does change take place in societies; (2) what role do people play in such changes; (3) what brings in change, what makes change; and (4) what stops/blocks change? During the past two years several ACLS exercises were carried out in ICS’ programme areas. In September 2009 a joint learning workshop was organised to

³ ETC Crystal, Mid-term evaluation of Crisip - International Child Support, 2009 August

consolidate and learn from the studies by the participating local organisations. In the next box a conclusion is given on what adequate citizen led change processes entail⁴.

Since 2007, we have been working on developing a holistic and integrated Civic Driven Child Development programme in Cambodia, Lao, Kenya and Tanzania. From its inception, economic activities and livelihood has been an integral part of our holistic approach, with a focus on household level. Along the way we have come to realise that a refocus is desired to realise economic development in a substantial and long lasting way. That economic development is not an add-on but that it is as important as social development. Also, economic activities are required at community/district level, thus exceeding the household level. Through our partnership with Stichting het Groene Woudt, a Dutch private fund working on social venturing, we have taken the opportunity to pilot a social venturing entrepreneurship approach in two new programme areas, in close collaboration with SHGW. These pilots include the Green Forest Social Investment Initiative in Suba, West Kenya and the Orkonorei Maasai Social Initiative in Simanjiro plains, Northern Tanzania. Both pilots have provided many experiences and learning which we want to build upon in our strategy.

As part of our business plan 2007-2010, we emphasized the importance of a participatory and quality focused monitoring and evaluation approach while prioritising domestic/downward accountability. We have found an alternative in the economic concept of Social Return on Investment as a more flexible, non-linear, participatory, multi-stakeholder analysis while reflecting the different perspectives of different stakeholders. To that effect, we have collaborated with Context in order to translate and develop the concept of Social Return of Investment for application in development work. We are now at the stage where we can include SROI as a main methodology in our Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation system.

Whereas we have grown as an organisation in the last five years, we realise that a continued check and reflection of our philosophy, perspectives, approach, role and focus is required to ensure that we support poverty alleviation and the communities and organisation we collaborate with in the best, most effective and most efficient way possible. We want to build upon our experiences, our successes, lessons learnt and the international development debate as to ensure quality service to people in poor and marginalised circumstances and have an added value in the development arena.

This concept note⁵ gives insight into our philosophy and strategy as International Child Support (ICS). We are currently developing a renewed policy and strategy for 2011-2015 encompassing Civic Driven Change and Social Business. This policy builds upon and broadens the current strategy. For us, the

Adequate citizen led change processes entail:

1. That citizen action can be initiated by anybody, including children;
2. The existence of a desire to change;
3. Paying attention to justice and equity especially for the marginalized;
4. Realizing the potential in everyone to bring about change in his/her community;
5. Taking responsibility;
6. Co-creation of local solutions to local problems;
7. Transparency;
8. Actively searching the voices of less vocal;
9. Involvement of citizens in defining the change;
10. Respect and trust for indigenous people.

From: Context Joint Learning Workshop on Civic Driven Change,

⁴ Context, international cooperation, Joint Learning Workshop on Civic Driven Change and Civic Driven Child Development, Workshop report, September 2009

⁵ The content of the underlying concept note has to a large extent been inspired by different dialogues and workshops during the last year, in particular in collaboration with Context, international cooperation and SHGW (Stichting het Groene Woudt). Also, reference should be made to a concept note by Fons van der Velden, director of Context, international cooperation 'Towards citizen-led innovative change processes. Social business, Civic Driven Change and Social Return on Investment' (September 2, 2009) developed as a background paper for an ICS workshop in September 2009.

concepts of Civic Driven Change and Social Business are interlinked, closely connected, and interdependent and they strengthen one another. That is why we consider them both as one conception for our work towards realising social and economic change for the wellbeing of children and young people. We are currently developing a larger business plan for 2011-2015 in which the underlying concept note will be included. Based on this concept note, we will submit a joint subsidy application to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the Co-Financing System 2011-2015 (MFS II)⁶.

This concept note starts with providing a quick scan of the changing context we are working in, followed by explaining our perspective on the core causes of poverty and marginalisation. Then the concepts of Civic Driven Change and Social Business are explained based on our understanding of both concepts and followed by a paragraph on how these concepts are interlinked and interdependent. The next paragraph explains the relevance of social accounting in this respect. The next step is to explain how the concepts relate to our vision focusing on the wellbeing of children and young people. Finally, the last section elaborates on how our understanding of Civic Driven Change, Social Business and Social Accounting translates into our strategy and programmes.

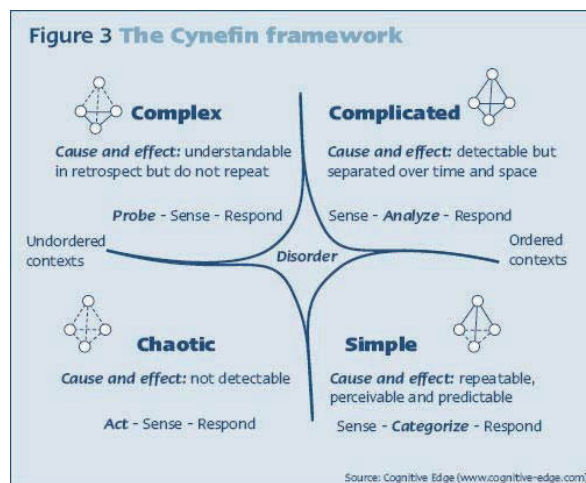
⁶ A joint application is being developed together with 3 Dutch organisations - SOS Children's Villages, Wereldkinderen and Wilde Ganzen - as co-applicants and ICS as lead agency, to be submitted before December, 1st (first phase of MFS II). The collaboration consists of a big number of African, Asian, Dutch and local organisations from ICS as well as from the co-applicants.

I. Scan of a changing environment

We realise that we live and work in a fast changing and dynamic global society. We acknowledge that globalism provides opportunities for countries and their citizens economically, socially, culturally and politically. However, we stress that still large groups of people throughout the world are left out and are not part of this globalising world. That is why we prefer to talk about fragmented globalism. We stress that despite the opportunities, the divide between those who are actively part of society and those who are excluded due to poverty and marginalisation is growing. The financial and economic crisis, food insecurity, struggle against terrorism and the growing intensions amongst the world, climate change, environmental degradation, water shortage, energy crisis, and etcetera directly impacts on low and middle income countries. In fact, poor and marginalised people are the first to experience the negative consequences of such global crisis and challenges, whether living in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Australia, United States or Europe. The world today still shows a harsh reality in which 2.5 billion⁷ people survive on less than one dollar a day. Half of them are children. This reality shows that each year close to 10 million (9.7) children under 5 die from easily preventable causes⁸ and large groups of children and young people have to survive without the care and protection of their parents. For example, at the end of 2003, there were an estimated 143 million orphans under the age of 18 in 93 developing countries⁹.

This reaffirms the continued importance of poverty alleviation for the world's society. Recently, various publications have appeared that are considerably critical of aid. Also from the South more and more voices are heard that challenge the dominant paradigm of development.¹⁰

From this growing group of reflections and criticisms, we are in particular triggered by Fowler¹¹ (amongst others) who argues the limitation of the linear development thinking and aided change approach that has dominated the development sector for decades. He makes a case for complexity thinking as a compelling path to more effective and enduring societal improvement.¹² The science based complexity theory recognizes the relatedness amongst aspects of and developments in society and that nothing is completely predictable, rather certain issues are more likely to happen than others. The challenge is to find patterns in the way things are taking place, within their complex and interdependent influences, and how likelihoods can be identified. The Cynefin framework (see figure) shows the different dynamics and contexts of change processes. Fowler stresses that development cooperation is part of a bigger system of



⁷ Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, Beleidsnotitie Ontwikkelingssamenwerking 2007- 2011: Een zaak van iedereen, 2007

⁸ <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2008highlevel/pdf/newsroom/Goal%204%20FINAL.pdf>

⁹ Unicef, Children on the brink, 2004

¹⁰ For an overview of the development debate, see: concept note by Fons van der Velden, director of Context, international cooperation 'Towards citizen-led innovative change processes. Social business, Civic Driven Change and Social Return on Investment' (September 2, 2009)

¹¹ Fowler, A., Civic Driven Change and International Development: Exploring a complexity perspective. Contextuals No. 7, Context, international cooperation, November 2007

¹² Fowler, A., 'Connecting the dots. Complexity thinking and social development'. In: The Broker, issue 7, April 2008, p. 10

international relations, but that the focus has been on aid and not on what it should be about: generating a systematic change process.¹³ The aid organisations are part of the system that has to be changed and that is why a broader perspective is required. In this context, we realise that “the present situation is a political choice by those who are in power”¹⁴.

In the same line of thinking, we feel inspired by Easterly’s¹⁵ distinction between what he calls ‘searchers’ and ‘planners’. In his opinion, development aid has been dominated by planners, with their macro, long-term and rigid schemes for development. Searchers, on the other hand, operate like entrepreneurs, reacting to feedback from their ‘clients’ and trying out innovative ways of working whenever they get stuck. Easterly therefore pleads for more support for small scale, local initiatives.

Another different debate relates to the emergence of a relatively new phenomenon: Social Venturing Entrepreneurship. A growing group of economists¹⁶ argue that different praxis proves that a silent revolution is taking place that provides an alternative to issues of poverty where the state and market are failing¹⁷. They argue that Social Venturing Entrepreneurship is a contemporary form of entrepreneurship directed at societal and social issues in situations without a well functioning market. The aim of the entrepreneur is not to maximise profit for the benefit of the stakeholders and the outcome is not only that of financial gain. It differs from traditional patterns of thinking because it breaks through the regular structures of society, with the primary institutions of the government, the market and civil society.

We also feel challenged by some who argue that there is a need for a paradigm shift in the sense that it is important to put people central again. One of the main arguments is that no one ‘develops’ anybody else. People and societies develop themselves, with or without the help of outsiders’.¹⁸

We embrace what Van der Velden wrote in 2003: ‘It should be concluded that a rather radical paradigm shift has to be made. In the development sector one has to stop to think that ‘the North’, development professionals and the aid industry at large have to develop, built, transform, advice the other (countries, regions, societies, sectors, institutions, organisations and/or individuals). The issue is basically very simple: poor and marginalised people are knowledgeable. So-called poor countries, organisations and institutions have their own history, rationality, indigenous knowledge systems and traditions, which need to be respected and valued not only for its validity and usefulness but because it is part of the power of the poor. To put it in other words: human and social capital does exist and should not be ‘created’ but ‘nurtured’. This history and rationality is generally strong on knowledge of local diversity and complexity, precisely where outsiders’ knowledge is weak. Especially in view of the rapid changing contexts, the advantages over outsiders’ knowledge are even greater. Moreover, empirical research makes abundantly clear that poor people are capable of self-reliant organisation.’

We acknowledge that many NGOs in Africa, Asia and South America have become strong and capacitated organisations. At the same time, we have to realise that these NGOs do not necessarily represent marginalised and impoverished people or community groups. Also, NGOs have institutionalised vested interests which do not necessarily coincide with the real needs and priorities

¹³ Bieckmann, F., ‘Ontwikkeling is herverdeling van macht’. In: Vice Versa, June 2008, 34.

¹⁴ A quote from former Dutch Minister of Development Cooperation, Jan Pronk.

¹⁵ Easterly, W., *The White Man’s Burden*, 2006

¹⁶ Professor van Dijk is a leading person in promoting the concept. He is professor at the chair for Social Venturing Entrepreneurship of the Nyenrode Business University in Breukelen, the Netherlands and also at the University of Wageningen.

¹⁷ Kievit, H., van Dijk, G., Spruyt, B.J., ‘The silent revolution of social venturing entrepreneurs’ in: *Holland Management Review* 2008, nummer 120, p. 22

¹⁸ Eade, 2000: 13 based on the Capacity and Vulnerabilities Analysis (CVA) which emerged in the late 1980s.

of communities and their organisations. Meanwhile, the variety of organisations in low, medium and high income countries has increased and different groups with different interests have organised themselves in local civic organisations.

We now are challenged to broaden the scope of development cooperation towards the global society and international cooperation at large. Worldwide societies, economies and politics have become so much interrelated and with a high level of interdependency, it is obvious that poverty is as much related to this globalised world as any other issue. Meanwhile, we realise that globalism is fragmented to the extent that still large groups of people are left out. Poor people cannot participate in the benefits of this globalising world without an active engagement and without access to products and services that represent global quality standards. Similarly, poverty alleviation is not solely the domain for development aid and development cooperation alone has not been the solution to poverty alleviation. Rather, poverty alleviation should be contextualised within the broader international community consisting of the usual development actors as well as other unusual civic actors. Coherence amongst foreign policy, economic affairs, conflict resolution, trade, etc. is crucial which requires a multi-stakeholder involvement. In fact, we have to recognise the stark reality of the presence of the businesses, ranging from small businesses to corporate sector, in the context where communities are embedded. That is why we consider the business sector a necessary element in the equation.

II. Poverty, marginalisation and social change

“Poor people deserve the best.”

Poverty and marginalisation are global issues and are not limited to development countries alone. Due to differences in history, context, power and culture, poverty and marginalisation have different dimensions, impacts and manifestations. Meanwhile, in whatever circumstances, poverty and marginalisation limit people to be part of society, to become active citizens, to claim their rights, to change their own circumstances and to contribute towards social change. For us poverty is more than lack of income and financial means. We define poverty as a multi-dimensional phenomenon related to access to basic social services, markets/economies, human rights, self-respect, self-development and autonomy. Poverty is therefore a lack of power of (poor and marginalised) people to acquire the necessary means, knowledge and capital for themselves. Consequently, we therefore look at poverty alleviation as a process to redistribute power and as a process of strengthening capacity and addressing injustices so that people are active, informed and involved in control of their own lives. We think that this requires societal change.

We believe in the potential, capabilities and desire of people to change their own circumstances in the interest of the people themselves and common wellbeing. And that at the end it is people who can realise social change in their lives and in society at large. We think that people have capacities to take self-reliant, cooperative, bold action. We realise that societies are changed and are continuously evolving driven by people’s beliefs, interests, desires and aspirations. Meanwhile, people also require opportunities, power and self-esteem for making their own choices for change.

We also realise that changing circumstances of poverty and marginalisation is complex and chaotic. We consider poverty to be a complicated tangle of political, social, historical, institutional and technological factors.¹⁹ Although change is often a ‘messy’ process, which cannot be entirely planned or controlled, it can well be influenced. We also acknowledge the limits of markets and state to bring about solutions to global problems. That is why we advocate for change processes in which people are put in the centre, in the heart and become owners of such processes. In which people can realise their own social change. We realise that every situation is unique with its own scale and context. This is because people experience situations, opportunities and problems differently and they have different interests and solutions in the way they want to improve their living conditions. That is why it is time that people’s capacities are strengthened to improve their situation in their own way according to their own social interests. We realise that ‘people driving their own change’ is a normative issue which we understand as respecting differences and concern for the whole²⁰.

While we foster empowering people to drive their own change, we realise that economic power is a condition for people to be able to break their cycle of poverty. In order to diminish the divide between ‘the rich and the poor’, pro-poor growth and redistribution is required. That is why we consider economic development in the private sector, agriculture and informal sector crucial in realising long lasting social change²¹. In fact, economic ability forms a key component of the factors that drive social change. Meanwhile, we recognise that economic growth has not yet adequately addressed issues of poverty and marginalisation globally. Many countries have recorded impressive economic growth in the past decade. Despite this significant economic growth, many people have remained marginalised in those countries due to exclusion and unequal participation in the market

¹⁹ Easterly, W., *The White Man’s Burden*, 2006

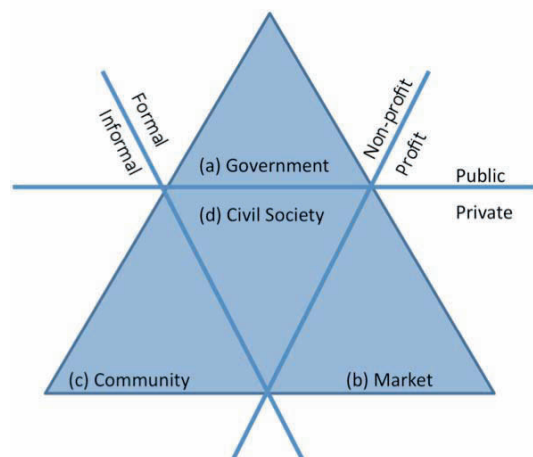
²⁰ In the section on Civic Driven Change this aspect of normative is further explained.

²¹ Please be referred to the Policy Memorandum of the Netherlands on Civil Society Organisations ‘Collaboration, Customisation and Added Value’, Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation, April 14th, 2009

system. So we have to ask ourselves the question what has been driving this economic growth. We conclude that most economic growth has taken place in mainstream economies (for example urban settings, ICT, tourism, service and financial banking sector, agricultural commodities value chains) which does not benefit poor people. Therefore, for economic development to benefit poor people, it is important to have dedicated investments in those sectors and geographical areas that accrue the most benefits to these people.

Long lasting social change requires bridging the existing gap by synchronizing the power of markets in driving economic change and rights perspective to ensure inclusion of poor and marginalised people into market economy. That is why we are convinced that effective poverty reduction requires an economic and social empowering approach which strengthens the capacity of people at the base of the pyramid to actively participate in the market system as producers and consumers. We believe that it is this kind of approach that will make a positive influence and contribution towards altering the aforementioned structural gaps in economic growth to ensure that everyone benefits fairly and equally.

While we take the challenge as an organisation to contribute towards addressing one of the world's main problems being poverty and marginalisation, we realise that 'business as usual' has not worked sufficiently and that state and markets have not been able to reach those at the bottom of the pyramid. That is why we acknowledge the need for innovation as an integral part of our work. In order to position citizens in society, we use the so-called Pestoff triangle²². Pestoff used a diagram to show how responsibilities are divided between market, state and civil society. Nyenrode University, the Netherlands²³ builds further on this triangle and distinguishes four domains (see figure): (a) state; (b) market; (c) community and (d) civil society. The division is based on the difference between public and private, between working for profit and not for profit, and the separation between the formal, structured sector of society and the informal sector of society.



The primary purpose of the government or public domain is redistribution, whereas the market or corporate sector is based on trade, reciprocity and is profit making. Community refers to informal relations between private persons in society within families and other households. Civil society includes NGOs, philanthropic institutes, churches, volunteer organisations, etc. Every domain has its leading principles, dominant actors and sources, motives and results. We realise that these four domains of society have proven not to be able to address issues of poverty, marginalisation and redistribution effectively and adequately on its own. That is why we think it is time to look for concepts and strategies that go beyond and cut across the divide between these four domains. In that we realise that people are positioned and act within the different domains of society: state, market, community/family and civil society simultaneously. An individual can be a parent, a government employee and a community volunteer at the same time and finds her/himself across the different domains that make up society.

²² Pestoff, V., 'Citizens as Co-Producers of Social Services – From the Welfare State to the Welfare Mix', as quoted in: Kievit, H., van Dijk, G., Spruyt, B.J., 'The silent revolution of social venturing entrepreneurs' in: Holland Management Review 2008, nummer 120, p. 21.

²³ Kievit, van Dijk, Spruyt, p. 22

There is a growing interest in children in the development discourse and practice as for example reflected in the Millennium Development Goals. However, whereas the focus is primarily on numbers and children as a target group, there is a dire need to focus on quality development of children and look at children as part of society, as civic actors in society.

We consider children and young people²⁴ to be active citizens or civic actors of society. We believe in and build upon their natural strength and resilience and their positive contributions towards change processes in their direct and indirect environment. At the same time, we realise that poverty and marginalisation affect their personal development in a different and deeper way than when the same kind of poverty is experienced at a later age. Poverty not only affects the physical, cognitive, emotional and psychosocial well-being of boys and girls, but is also a decisive factor for their functioning as future adults. Limited access to education, health care and income can also maintain or perpetuate the poverty cycle for the next generation. For example, malnourishment of a child can lead to limited physical and mental development, which in turn will most likely lead to a new generation of babies who will be born and grow up malnourished. Such levels of (under)development can lead to a limited use of someone's potential labour capacity or to less developed cognitive skills. At the same time, we realise that children and young people are more vulnerable than other groups in society. Serious forms of neglect, abuse, exploitation and discrimination make them invisible for the outside world as a result of which hundreds of millions of children and young people are not provided with the most essential support such as education, health care and protection.

That is why the childhood and adolescent years are a critical period in the development of someone's life. We focus explicitly on the development and protection of children and young people because a safe and enabling environment shapes physically and mentally strong people capable of developing themselves and contributing towards societal change. They will eventually lay the foundations for a generation of capable and responsible citizens.

We acknowledge that children and young people do not live in isolation, but that they are part of a social dynamics, of civic society. Relations between children, with their families and other adults, within schools, with local groups and institutions play an important role in their lives. Adult relations, e.g. father - mother, mother-in-law – mother, father – uncle, etc, in their direct environment are often important role models. This comprehensive social dynamics determines the child's status in its social context and its survival and development opportunities. We consider this to be so important that this complex environment is central and a focus when working towards the wellbeing of children and young people.

We in particular focus on rural areas and communities. We think that social and economic development of rural areas is crucial for breaking the poverty cycle and for providing opportunities for children and young people in order to avoid migration to urban areas. Consequently, this means that we in particular focus on rural communities and civic society of which children and young people are part of as civic actors. We want to contribute towards enabling and empowering people, the different civic actors to take care of the wellbeing of all children in their community and to support and create opportunities for their young people. We realise that different civic groups (girls, boys, women, men, children, young people, farmers, elderly, teachers, disabled, etc.) are affected by marginalisation and poverty in different ways, and thus that different or extra measures are necessary to ensure equal opportunities and inclusion for everybody.

²⁴ We define children as a broad group of citizens up to 18 years and older, thus including young people.

III. Civic Driven Change²⁵

"We have to become the change we want to see"

Mahatma Gandhi

Civic Driven Change refers to change processes that are directly initiated, lead and owned by people themselves. We embrace Civic Driven Change as a renewed focus on people and on societies at large. We realise that in the real world, there is a continuous political struggle in which people organise themselves to address countless local problems. We also realise that societies are continuously influenced by such actions as well as people's beliefs, interests, desires and aspirations. We want to build upon the potential of people to act as citizens that are aware of their rights as well as obligations and act in the individual interest and for the common good. We trust in people's experience, capacities and knowledge and their self-willed civic action to create the society they individually imagine and collectively want.

We understand development as an open-ended change process. This ongoing change is a democratic process in which people/citizens are taking the lead. Hence, it is not a linear development process; rather we are navigating through the complexity of reality. We realise that outcomes of such processes are hard, if not impossible to predict.

This is because every complex society and community develops on the basis of power relations which are asymmetric in principle. The role of Civic Driven Change is to alter these asymmetries in a pro-poor direction. As such, Civic Driven Change is essentially a normative concept: there is civic behaviour (pro-poor, democratic) and uncivic behaviour (perpetuating asymmetrical power relations and unfair distribution of wealth).

For many decades, the main driver of progress has been considered to be either the state or the market. Civil society existed only in relation to, and by the grace of, these forces. But people-centred social change requires that individuals take control and address the problems in their communities. We acknowledge the important contributions that citizens all over the world have made and are constantly making to world history and to societal change. Meanwhile, we realise that people and their organisations acquire a stronger position in relation to both the state and the market. That is why we consider strengthening civic power in relation to the state and the market an important element. We think that citizens have a responsibility to work together to come up with alternatives themselves, without relieving the state of its own responsibilities.

Civic refers to individual or collectives of people, citizens rather than civil society and its organisations. It concerns normative behaviour of inclusion, respecting differences between people and care for the whole and natural environment. As contrary to what is considered 'uncivic'.

Driven refers to change processes powered by people in which democracy is central. It is about people's energies and force towards realising an imagined future.

Change refers to an imagined and desired future by people. Change is normative, potentially conflicting as well as collaborative and addressing existing power relations, from power over somebody towards power with and to people. It is both a natural as well as a political change process.

²⁵ Much of the CDC concept as understood and described in the underlying document is based on training by *Context, International Cooperation* during the ICS workshop on CDC, 3-5 June 2009 in Nairobi (be referred to the available (draft) report June 8th, 2009). As well as based on the following literature in particular: Biekart, K. & Fowler, A., *Civic Driven Change. A concise guide to the basics*, ISS, April 2009; Bieckmann, F. '*Civic Driven Change Initiative. Deep Democracy*', in: *The Broker*, issue 10, October 2008; and Boyte, H.C., *The Citizen Solution. How You Can Make a Difference*, Minnesota Historical Society, 2008.

Our starting point is that change should be people's initiated and citizen-led. But we can contribute to circumstances where it can be genuinely citizen-led. This means that we can contribute by initiating and organising an environment conducive for people to organise themselves: inclusive, collaborating, co-creating. Consequently, we put focus on processes of change rather than only on projects and the social actors themselves while we emphasize empowerment, self-organisation and education. We organise, facilitate and follow processes of civic actors who initiate and decide on the change agenda. In this process, we consider ourselves to be searchers and co-creators, as contrary to planners and a director or controller.

A precondition for Civic Driven Change is that people enjoy basic civic rights and freedoms: 'the right to have rights'. When these rights are absent or denied, we consider that establishing citizenship and equal social, economic and political power relations for poor and marginalised people in rural communities is the real issue to be addressed with the aim to strengthen civic behaviour and civic organisation. The challenge is to link local initiatives horizontally in a national and even global network, so that the great gap between local, national and global can be bridged.

We understand Civic Driven Change based on the following characteristics:

- *People* are citizens and *drivers of change*, taking action with concern for collective wellbeing and not only moved by self-interest.
- It is *normative*: it builds on democratic principles as a way of life rooted in living communities. It is work in progress and it confronts 'uncivic' behaviour. What is civic is a matter of definition. Some of the civic notions that have emerged so far are: respect for differences, concern for the whole, acknowledge spiritual and secular value basis, and embrace all types of social institutions.
- CDC is *inclusive*, focusing on the individual and 'the whole', respecting those who are different based on a continuous engagement and dialogue.
- *Political nature* of CDC: it is about shifting power relations, being inclusive, binding, staying connected and building bridges.
- Shifting the focus from 'civil society' to 'civic action': citizens do not exclusively exist in a separate arena called 'civil society'. Civic action happens across society at the same time: within and across state, market, civil society and family. Civic action can be at different levels: 'small is not necessarily beautiful and big is not necessarily bad'.
- From participation towards *civic agency* and *co-creation*: a shift from taking part in a process towards owning the process. From 'consumer' to 'producer' attitude. Shift from 'what can the government do' to 'what can us all do'.
- From mobilising towards *organising* citizens: citizens are organised beyond the boundaries of the state, the market, civil society and family, is self-directed and self sustained and comes from within, starting from where people are. They cooperate and act as co-creators to jointly realise social change.
- From partnership to *collaboration*: as co-creators collaborating for a joint effort, you change yourself also.

We acknowledge that Civic Driven Change is not necessarily a new concept, but that it offers a lens which connects the different debates on citizenship, private versus public, democracy and civil society in a novel way. It is about refocusing rather than reinventing. Civic Driven Change helps to unpack and focus on deep causes of poverty, marginalisation and injustice. It generates fresh insights, synergies and innovation in addressing these issues. At the same time, we think that the current Civic Driven Change discourse has not fully acknowledged the importance of economic power of people for realising their own change processes. To overcome this gap, we decided to combine Civic Driven Change with the concept of social venturing entrepreneurship or social business as explained below.

“The future of the World lies in the hands of these market based social entrepreneurs. We cannot combat poverty within the orthodoxy of capitalism practiced today. Economic theory has not provided us with any alternative to this familiar model but I argue that we can create a powerful alternative: a social-consciousness-driven private sector, created by social entrepreneurs.”

Mohammad Yunus

IV. Social Business²⁶

Whereas we have gained experience with and learned about what a civic driven approach can include and how this translates towards Civic Driven Change for Child Wellbeing during the last 3 years, we also realise that economic development is crucial for long lasting social change that benefits communities and children. Moreover, we think that equity in economic terms is a condition for realising equity in human rights terms. Similarly, economic power of people is a crucial condition for breaking the cycle of poverty by people themselves. In the meantime, we recognise that economic development does not automatically reach people at the bottom of the pyramid. Rather economic development should be the center piece in which social change revolves with the people concerned and their civic organisations driving the change process and becoming owners of economic change processes.

That is why we have come to realise that there is a need to include specific attention to economic development at community level (thus exceeding household level) into our strategy. In such a way that the economic activities are directly focusing on providing products and services that benefit poor and marginalised people in rural areas and embedded within local communities. Our aim is to develop an entrepreneurial approach towards social change with the principle to generate economic activity in a business manner with a social objective. This approach is placed within the concept of social business or social (venturing) entrepreneurship.

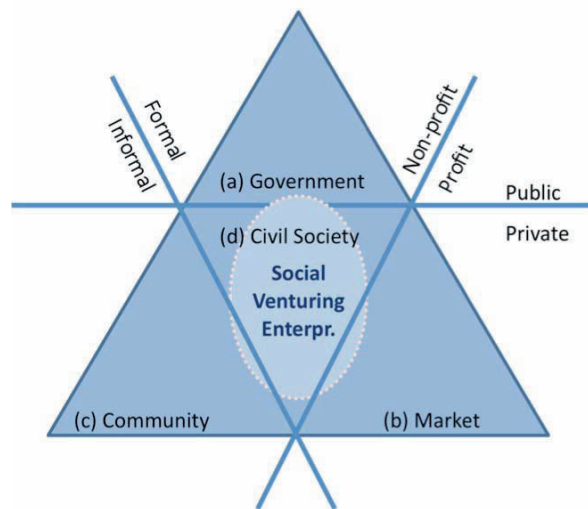
We understand social business or social (venturing) entrepreneurship²⁷ in the context of poverty and marginalisation as a way to address social issues while ensuring financial/economic viability, through an entrepreneurial approach and directed at realising a long lasting, self-sustaining solution. The primary purpose of a social business is reducing inequity by creating and achieving a long lasting social benefit with people in rural communities who are usually left out but are now actively

²⁶ The conceptualisation of social business by ICS is based on different events (in addition to the referred literature). One is a session by the Dutch Professor van Dijk with the Supervisory Board, Management Board, Regional Directors and other ICS staff on May 14, 2009 in Amersfoort, the Netherlands. Professor van Dijk is professor at the chair for Social Venturing Entrepreneurship of the Nyenrode Business University in Breukelen, the Netherlands and also professor at the University of Wageningen. Another is the collaboration with SHGW and Context, in particular in relation to two pilot programmes on social business – Green Forest Social Initiative (GFSI) in Suba, West-Kenya and Orkonerei Maasai Social Initiative (Omasi) in Simanjiro plains, North Tanzania. Both pilots have provided learning for developing the underlying strategy. Finally, a joint strategy workshop was held in September 2009 with partners on how ICS is going to work with the concepts Social Business and Civic Driven Change. The following partners participated: SHGW, Context, African Child Policy Forum, GFSI and Omasi.

²⁷ For the time being, ICS has decided to use the wording social business instead of social (venturing) entrepreneurship. There is however no difference in the meaning of both terms; they are the same. Meanwhile, the terminology is still under construction.

engaged. At the same time, the organisation or business providing products and services is profitable to enhance scalability. It is based on the idea that reciprocity is central to all societies, as contrary to philanthropy which only gives or receives. The concept of ‘venturing’ refers to returns and reinvestment of profit (not for consumption) but not necessarily directed at maximising profit for shareholders. It is based on the classic economic theory of Adam Smith that the market should create value for society as a whole, that entrepreneurs should pursue the welfare of all fellow-citizens and feel responsible for the wellbeing of society.

As explained earlier, we realise that the four domains of society - market, state, community/family and civil society – are falling short in offering solutions for poverty, marginalisation and redistribution effectively and adequately. We embrace the concept of social business because it finds itself at the cutting interface between market, government and civil society (see figure). It cuts across sectors and disciplines and differs from traditional patterns of thinking because it breaks through the usual structures of society and provides a framework where market, state and civil society converge. Although social business falls outside the strict parameters of these categories, it makes optimum use of these primary institutions to find acceptable, sustainable solutions to acute social problems.²⁸



Social business often provides services in markets where private businesses and the public sector have not been able to deal adequately with injustices. In other words, in those places where those looking to make money for themselves or their stakeholders (markets) and those with a public duty to provide services (government) have failed to come up with big enough answers. The need for innovation is linked with this, as ‘business as usual’ has not worked in those circumstances. Innovation should therefore not be treated as an add-on but as an integral part of social business. This means that we distinguish Social Business from Corporate Social Responsibility²⁹ and that we talk about Social Business, not Corporate Social Responsibility.

We distinguish three groups of businesses: the big corporates (Coca Cola, Shell), small and medium sized enterprises (SME) and the small one-person/household businesses (farmers, shopkeepers, etc.). The big corporates constitute only a small portion of the number of businesses worldwide while earning most of the profit. They have a rationale that includes shareholders value maximising based on returns of investments. The group of one-person/household businesses is by far the largest group, but struggling to survive day-by-day. In most occasions, they are part of the poor and marginalised groups in the areas where we work. The SME group is known as the main economic catalysts, for example they are responsible for a majority of job creation in the Western world and are known to be innovative businesses. We consider the SME’s as key economic drivers, especially in situations with a critical mass of a middle income class. However, we realise that in many poor communities

²⁸ Kievit, van Dijk, Spruyt, p. 20-25

²⁹ It should be noted that social business is quite different from Corporate Social Responsibility. The core business of a corporate social responsible company is to maximise profit and at the same time ‘do no harm to or do good for people or planet’. For social entrepreneurs, the social mission is explicit and solving a social issue is central. For business entrepreneurs, wealth creation is a way of measuring value creation. For social entrepreneurs, wealth is just a means to an end (impact maximising instead of profit maximising).

these SMEs and the middle income class are hardly present. We identify this as an important reason why economic development is hampered in many rural communities in the countries where we work.

In order to integrate social business within our strategy, we identify three functions to be performed, being: (1) a social entrepreneur; (2) a social business case; and (3) a social investor. We understand and define these three functions in the following way.

A social entrepreneur has a clear vision on how to solve a social issue and is determined to realise this. He/she combines such passion and determination with risk taking, innovation and a business approach. We consider a social entrepreneur to be a civic actor and a 'searcher' according to the terminology of Easterly³⁰. He/she applies practical, innovative and sustainable approaches to benefit society in general, with an emphasis on those who are marginalised and poor. A social entrepreneur realises that the success of its venture is dependent on the social capital and thus people in the surrounding communities.

A social business case addresses social issues, directs business activities to a social end in relation to poverty, marginalisation and violations of human rights, while at the same time abiding to economic rules in order to ensure financial viability and to sustain and enlarge the scale of the products and services offered. It invests in society through products and services to stimulate citizens' independent and sustainable action towards economic equal positions (economic justice). It often provides services and products in markets where private businesses and the public sector have not been able to deal adequately with injustices and where markets are not (yet) well functioning. It is about impact maximising while a condition is to make the business financially viable; it is not about profit maximising or maximising shareholders' value primarily. Besides the active usage of business means, a social business case is also heavily drawn on the existence of social capital or the development of it, which is a requisite for the inclusion of people, regions, groups, individuals in economic growth of society. It is organised in a hybrid manner, with a social and political aim such as NGOs but working as a company.

Central elements of a social business case include:

- *An economic activity*
- *Clustering of knowledge around economic development*
- *Reciprocity: not for nothing*
- *Recipients' structure: who will receive the benefits/money*
- *Linking and completing the economic and social chain*

A social investor is driven by a clear vision on solving society issues, realising change and a dedicated worldview. In his/her view, economic development has to create value for the overall society and has to do with freedom of choice, right to shelter, education, health, freedom of voice, etc. A social investor is willing to take the risk to invest in areas where the market and state have failed or were not willing to address such issues. At the same time, he/she is not giving away money but requires repayment. He/she is willing to take a longer time span than a regular investor for return on investment either in the way of economic and/or social returns. That is why profit is defined differently, for example social benefits, dignity of people, financial profit, political change, economic benefits, environmental improvements, etc. A social investor considers money valuable when it is being used for something with social value.

We consider being a social investor as our main function. At the same time we want to play a role in organising and facilitating a business case which includes creating an enabling and conducive

³⁰ Easterly, W., *The White Man's Burden*, 2006

environment. We realise that different kinds of social business and social entrepreneurship are possible to realise long lasting social and economic change, that there is not one model, that it can be small or big and that it can be initiated by different civic actors. Finally, we recognise that in principle any social issue - whether education, health care, human rights violations or poverty alleviation - can be supported by a social business approach. Meanwhile, we realise that not every social issue can become fully economic/financial viable without future investments and financial support by governments, for example in the area of education. We realise that Civic Driven Change is broader than Social Business and that some aspects will need continued investments, for example in the area of (child) rights promotion and protection.

"A million social business entrepreneurs can show how things can be done in radically different ways but they cannot redistribute wealth or compel large businesses to take responsibility for the mess they make. Systematic changes require government action..."

From: Black & Nicholls, 2004, p. 49

V. Social Business & Civic Driven Change³¹

Over the last few decades, the concept and practice of social business has gained quite a bit of momentum worldwide. Many social enterprises have evolved that occupy the space in between the traditional NGO sector, the market and sometimes the state. We however realise that many problems related to poverty and marginalisation need far reaching structural changes in the way economies and states work.

We agree with the Civic Driven Change discourse that 'local citizen action is a critical starting point for reform to happen'. Our starting point is 'that neither government nor markets can bring solutions to the range of problems faced by societies everywhere' and that 'it is time, therefore, for citizens to reclaim their rightful place as agents of developments, guiding how societies evolve to what ends and on what terms'.³² With that, we understand Civic Driven Change as the political domain of social business and social entrepreneurship. We argue that it is the combination, interdependence and interrelatedness between Civic Driven Change and Social Business that drive long lasting social and economic change.

Initially we thought to see a contradiction between an important principle of Civic Driven Change vis-à-vis Social Business. Whereas Civic Driven Change is citizen-led, which could be translated narrowly towards community initiated, social entrepreneurship can be and is often externally initiated. These principles could conflict. Meanwhile, we do not narrow civic actors to being communities only. On the contrary, we realise that civic actors are not only to be found in the civil society domain but also in corporate, government and public/private domain, thus anywhere. After all, civic society is larger

³¹ An important input is provided by the Dutch Professor van Dijk during a session with ICS' Supervisory Board, Management Board, Regional Directors and other staff of ICS on May 14, 2009 in Amersfoort, the Netherlands. Another important input comes from the September workshop with partners on how ICS will work with Civic Driven Change and Social Business.

³² Biekart, K. & Fowler, A., Civic Driven Change. A concise guide to the basics, ISS, April 2009, p.10-11

than the civil society domain and brings together players in the markets, state, community/family and civil society. That is why we believe that civic action can be initiated by anybody. Similarly, we consider a social entrepreneur as a civic actor and an important driver of change who can contribute towards solving issues of poverty and marginalisation.

For facilitating such change processes, it is crucial to study how change is taking place in a specific context and to identify drivers of change. Based on a series of Action Learning Case studies³³, we have learned that change can happen in many different ways by many different actors and that citizen action can be initiated by anybody, including children. Change can be based on small or big initiatives; it can happen inside-out as well as outside-in. Meanwhile, we realise that many more context specific studies are required to get a better understanding of how change is taking and can take place.

We consider people to be the main human capital for social change. Similarly, a social business case heavily draws on people and its success heavily depends on the existence or development of human capital. According to the French sociologist Alexis de Tocqueville (1805-1859) every individual has a surrounding circle in which he/she enjoys freedom and has influence while outside this circle a person has no power to influence circumstances. This circle of power can be very different per individual, or groups of individuals for that matter. Social business strives for enlarging this circle by empowering people while realising that in many cases joint efforts will have larger impact than by an individual on his/her own. This means that local structures are central in which groups of people (want to) join forces to undertake something together and make a change. In the same line of thinking the conclusion can be made that social entrepreneurship is possible in the most remote and poor areas where even the smallest level of entrepreneurship is happening. Meanwhile, a condition is that a market is available and accessible or is created.

This means that it is crucial for social business to be embedded at local level with active involvement of and collaboration with local people. This will ensure that the social enterprise provides products and services that are relevant and required by the communities while at the same time ensuring 'ownership' (see below) with the local communities, thus ensuring sustainability. In such case, the economic and social domains will come together and reinforce each other. In fact, in case of a concise approach, it will be hard to distinct the economic or social domains.

Such thinking is in line with a recent research on Base of the Pyramid business initiatives.³⁴ This study concludes that social sustainable businesses that create employment and support provision of social services are the most successful financially. Such businesses are adapted to the local requirements and needs. These develop products that are really relevant for the local communities, stimulate other local entrepreneurship and have become part of or are embedded within the local environment.³⁵

We recognise that linking Civic Driven Change and Social Business does not automatically lead towards common or community ownership of the social enterprise. The perspective of the customer, the quality and verifiability of the service and products are more important than the legal structure. Thus, ensuring social and economic benefits for the surrounding communities and people is more important than realising community ownership per se. We conclude that the first step is to make

³³ ICS and its partner organisations participated in different Action Learning Case Studies organised and initiated by Context, international cooperation. For more information, please see: Context, international cooperation, Joint Learning Workshop on Civic Driven Change and Civic Driven Child Development, Workshop report, September 2009

³⁴ Klein, M.H., Poverty Alleviation through Sustainable Strategic Business Models. Essays on Poverty Alleviation and a Business Strategy, Erasmus Research Institute of Management (ERIM), Erasmus School of Economics, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 2008

³⁵ Also see (in Dutch): Vossen, M., *Zaken doen met de allerarmsten*. In: *Vice Versa*, jaargang 43, 2009, 2, p. 14-21.

social and economic change through social business happen. The second step is to look at ways to transfer the ownership of the enterprise towards community, but only if the business is financially viable and is making profit.

We conclude that it is the interdependence and interrelatedness between Civic Driven Change and Social Business that drive long lasting social and economic change. That is why we aim at combining Civic Driven Change and Social Business within our strategy as of 2011. Our horizon is that in 2015 we have matched Social Business and Civic Driven Change in our programme areas.

We think our added value as an organisation is in leverage and catalysing function: to create linkages as a mechanism to achieve a relatively bigger result, e.g. linking poverty alleviation with rights in general and child rights in particular. Our role is in supporting and stimulating social entrepreneurship, organising people and their communities and warranting the social focus of the social business and entrepreneur. Our focus is on linking and completing the social and economic chain and to facilitate cohesion amongst different initiatives at community level.

VI. Social Accounting

Whereas we want to contribute towards social change processes, we realise that it is important to check and reflect on what we mean with 'social'. In fact, Black and Nicholls argue forcefully that 'social enterprise' is meaningless without verifying the label 'social'. In particular, we want to be accountable to the people and local organisations we collaborate with as to ensure that the social change that is envisaged is in line with what they think is important.

There are basically three major arguments why social accounting is important. The first is that feedback leads to an improved business and enhancement of quality of services and products. It also helps to prove that the social business and other activities are considered to be valuable to the people who matter. Finally, there is a moral imperative to be accountable to stakeholders and customers. Accountability and the willingness to be independently scrutinised 'are the acid tests of the social business'.³⁶

The importance of social reporting is also linked to the continuous balancing act between economic and social purposes of a social business and our work.

Activities of social business and civic driven change generate, as indicated earlier, economic, social, environmental and, potentially, many other outcomes. A Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis tries to bring these outcomes together and to express them in one value. Such an analysis tries to understand, measure and report on these social, environmental, economic and possible other results, created by the initiatives. It identifies the sources of value, tries to find adequate indicators of this value and develops qualitative and quantitative expressions for these indicators. In the end, SROI monetises (some of) these indicators by assigning financial equivalents to social, environmental and other returns. Examples of such returns are more jobs, increased life expectancy, less sickness, less absence from work, a cleaner environment, lower crime rates, higher tax returns and less public health expenditures.³⁷

The process of a SROI analysis leads to the so-called SROI ratio. This is the ratio between the value of the benefits and the value of the investment. For example, a ratio of 3:1 indicates that for every Euro invested by an organisation three Euros worth of value (economic, social, environmental and/or other) is delivered to society. In calculating a SROI ratio, one has to realise, though, that such a figure in itself is of limited use. Data about similar organisations are needed to assess whether a SROI ratio of 3:1 is good, expected or below average.³⁸

The framework of SROI has broadened since it was developed. Methodologically this meant that the original focus on monetisation to incorporate additional types of information is considered not sufficient and/or possible. Not everything can be sensibly monetised. Now it is found that, ideally, the methodology of SROI should combine quantitative and qualitative measurements: it provides a quantitative investment ratio in combination with a narrative, based on qualitative methods, such as storytelling exercises. In recent versions, more emphasis is also put on ascribing value to unintended consequences and negative impacts next to intended and positive ones. A typical SROI analysis thus consists of:

- (i) a specific process by which the SROI ratio is calculated;
- (ii) context information in quantitative, qualitative and narrative terms to enable accurate interpretation of that ratio; and

³⁶ Black & Nicholls, 2004, p. 21.

³⁷ Raat, 2005.

³⁸ NEF, 2004a: 20-21

(iii) additional information on values which could not be monetised during the analysis.³⁹

SROI bases its understanding of value on the perceptions of stakeholders which is particularly important in the case of social enterprises. The attached monetary value of a pair of fashionable brand shoes, for example, will be very different for a child who wants to show off with these shoes to his friends, than for his parents who have to pay for the shoes.⁴⁰ In the sector of development cooperation, the stakeholders have to be regarded as the owners of the interventions. They are the actors in their own development process and they are the ones who should define the intended changes and results to be achieved. As such, SROI can make a deliberate choice to analyse results from the perspective of the beneficiaries.

In line with the above, SROI may provide a good basis for improvement of the performance, learning and the accountability of social enterprises since the point of view of the programme itself is placed in the centre. It is about measuring results of social enterprises 'developmentally', which implies measuring in a participatory way, with (self-) respect and adding to the development objectives of the local organisations. SROI includes the potential of providing learning opportunities.

³⁹ Scholten et al, 2006: 6-7 and 15.

⁴⁰ Scholten, personal communication.

VII. Social Business & Civic Driven Change for the Wellbeing of Children and Young People

We have identified children and young people as civic actors, as (potential) drivers of change. At the same time, we realise that for children and young people to contribute towards social change, also in the long term as adults, a conducive and enabling environment is required in which people and society at large are capacitated, empowered and willing to take care of the wellbeing of their children and provide opportunities for their young people.

For people living in poverty to drive their social change, we consider economic power as a condition to strengthen their claimmaking power and negotiate their rights and the rights of their children. In that respect, we embrace social business for creating a better world for all children. At the same time Civic Driven Change is about laying foundations for children and young people to be active and responsible citizens, both as young people and as adults. Through Civic Driven Change, children and young people learn about democracy and citizenship, the concept of reciprocity, their rights and responsibility.

We recognise the many initiatives and movements within countries and communities which are happening anyways. It is our task to identify such initiatives and to link our work into such societal change movements in the countries we are working. Both Social Business and Civic Driven Change paradigms recognise that people have the inherent capacities and strengths in form of individual and collective abilities and have either financial, physical/natural and human assets and resources to drive the change process they desire. Civic Driven Change focuses on facilitating people to unleash their inherent strength by strengthening the requisite capacity and structures. Social entrepreneurship focuses on helping people utilise their assets to generate resources required to facilitate long lasting change.

That is why we focus on creating a conducive and enabling environment in rural areas through supporting social and economic change processes with poor and marginalised people driving their own change. With the ultimate purpose to realise a conducive environment in which the children and young people of today and in the future can develop as responsible citizens and drivers of their own change.

We realise that Civic Driven Change is broader than Social Business and that some aspects will need continued investments, for example in the area of (child) rights promotion and protection. Whereas we appreciate and build upon their natural strength and resilience, we also realise that due their special vulnerability, children need special protection and child protection mechanisms have to be established and strengthened.

VIII. Strategy 2011-2015

Based on our understanding of the concepts of Civic Driven Change and Social Business and how it can impact on young people as described above, we envisage some major changes in our strategy. While we build upon our experience with a civic driven approach for social change, we strengthen our strategy with the inclusion of social business as a way to realise economic power. Whereas we continue and build upon our knowledge, capacity and experiences with Civic Driven Change, the element of social business will be an important searching and learning path for the organisation with new dimensions, new relations with 'unusual' actors, thinking out of the box and different competences.

While we continue with Civic Driven Change as the basis of our strategy, the focus for 2011 and onwards changes in the following ways:

- Whereas we used the school as an entry point for social change, we acknowledge that any civic actor, whether a school, a social entrepreneur, children or young people can drive change processes. This is also based on learning from the Crisp process (Child rights in school improvement plans) in Kenya and Tanzania as well as the civic driven process in Cambodia. Consequently, in our strategy different entry points can be used to drive change processes. This is embedded within the Civic Driven Change element of our strategy.
- We realise that economic power is necessary for poor and marginalised people in rural areas to break the poverty cycle and to drive their own social change. That is why we consider economic change as important as social change. This is reflected in the inclusion of social business into our strategy as a new element.
- Two pillars of our current strategy, being child rights programming and collaboration are now included as core values, guiding us in our work. In our current strategy, child rights programming and collaboration are separate pillars in the overall strategy. Enhanced understanding of the concept of Civic Driven Change has taught us that both collaboration and a rights based approach are intrinsic values of Civic Driven Change. Therefore child rights and collaboration are included in our future strategy as core values rather than as goals in itself.
- Our perspective on children has broadened to the extent that we explicitly include young people (older than 18 years) as a target group. Also, more so than before, our focus on children becomes more indirect by focusing on creating an enabling and conducive environment for people to ensure the wellbeing of all children and young people.

On the basis of lessons learned during the past years and new insights gained we have reformulated our vision and mission and in line with this our strategy.

Our *vision* is that people around the world are capable and willing to ensure the wellbeing of all children and to drive their own change.

Our *mission* is that, in collaboration with people and its organisations, we inspire co-creation of initiatives and ventures which enable long lasting social and economic change in order to ensure the wellbeing of all children and young people.⁴¹

Our *strategy* is that we invest in services and products to stimulate people's independent civic action towards economic and social equal positions in order to address issues of poverty, marginalisation and human rights; by way of:

- investing in civic driven social change in an economic viable manner;

⁴¹ Our current mission explains social development as education, health and protection. Meanwhile, the new mission statement better reflects the holistic approach which could include any social issue as well as economic activities.

- stimulating economic activity through social business to invest in long lasting social and economic change; and
- investing in civic driven advocacy and civic actions for child rights and child protection.

The following *core values* guide us in our work: equity and justice, rights based approach, collaboration, transparency and accountability.

We have identified the following *main functions*⁴² to be performed: change process driver, facilitator, social investor, a business case, monitoring and learning, conscience keeper of child rights, child protection and ensuring inclusiveness, broker and networker, (action) research, capacity development, advocacy and lobby.

Within the framework of these functions, our *core roles* as ICS are (a) facilitating and organising people and communities for social and economic change processes; (b) being a social investor; and (c) organising and facilitating business cases. We use this terminology both for aspects of social business as well as civic driven change. We understand a social investor to include individuals or organisations that commit resources for investment into business cases to generate social impact or a mix of social impact and financial returns; as well as intermediaries that generate options for people/organisations to invest in a range of social investment opportunities. This includes pooling resources into an investment fund, actively seeking investment opportunities and managing risk on behalf of the providers of the investment funds. Different responsibilities and tasks derive from the three main roles which include: organising and facilitating planning, monitoring and learning, linking and completing the social and economic chain, being a broker (through knowledge and funds), being a conscience keeper and enhancing capacity. We engage into relations with other actors to ensure that all functions as identified above are realised.

Whereas we are familiar with some roles and tasks as identified above (e.g. PME, enhancing capacity, conscience keeper, organising communities) we recognise that the change in our strategy has considerable consequences for the way we perform our role as professional. Some guiding principles in the way we perform our role are being a collaborator rather than an expert, a partner in the process. It means that we consider citizens as competent actors and thus have to approach them in that way. We have to start from where they are and associate around issues of common concern. The basis for such relations should be principles of equity and reciprocity. This means that we have to transcend seeing citizens or communities in a passive role of beneficiary but rather built a relationship that works both ways: finding the added value in the collaboration and strengthen each other in reaching the ambitions set.

We have to take into consideration the aspect of risk taking: who is taking what risk. As contrary to many development interventions which often shift risks on to the most vulnerable, we acknowledge that different groups bear different risks. We want to ensure that we spread risks as much as possible and be transparent about it. Consequently, the communities and their organisations we collaborate with are either protected against such risks or are able to deal with the risks involved. This also confirms the importance to identify, acknowledge and address power relations. Also, instead of direct implementation, we are more involved in creating and supporting conditions for people themselves to take up the issues they think are important. It also means that we have to build upon civic actions and initiatives already happening in communities or a group of villages. Thus, we have to identify and find such societal change movements first while realising that civic initiative can be formal/ informal, visible/invisible, big/small, etc.

⁴² It does not mean that all functions as identified have to be performed by ICS. Instead, our roles are distracted from the identified functions.

Our *path towards 2015* will be characterised by different phases. The aspect of child rights and child protection is already embedded within the organisation, amongst others through a range of Pan-African and local partner organisations and through existing capacities and competences within our organisation. There is still room for improvement but the basis is already available. That is why this aspect will be incorporated fully as of 2011.

The element of Civic Driven Change and organising communities around social issues will also be incorporated fully, based on our earlier experiences, lessons learned and current understanding of Civic Driven Change. We do realise that it will still remain a searching and learning process in particular because of the requirement for contextualisation. Also, we realise that there is still room to improve as an organisation with regard to our competences as a co-creator rather than directing and mobilising the communities. These are just some aspects for learning and improving with regard to Civic Driven Change. Meanwhile, this aspect of the strategy will be fully implemented as of 2011.

The element of Social Business will mostly be a learning and searching path where we as an organisation has to get a deeper understanding of the concept, its implications for our role and our organisation, and how this can be translated into practice and towards current programme areas. We realise we will need additional capacity and different competences in this area to be able to realise a full match between Social Business and Civic Driven Change by the end of 2015. Especially, in this area new relations and collaborations are sought and build. This means that the concept of Social Business will be embedded within our organisation and incorporated within our programmes gradually, in different phases and in different ways: piloting/full implementation, large/small scale, company/CBO, external/community driven, etc. It will also include a high level of risk taking which means that aspects of navigating complexity, social accounting, monitoring and learning are even more crucial.

<i>Characteristics of our strategy</i>	<i>As opposite to</i>
Citizen-led	Expert-led
Change	Aid and development
People	Institutions
Reciprocity	Giving away
Searchers	Planners
Innovation	Business as usual
Social entrepreneurship	Charity
Civic rights & responsibilities	(‘helpless’) Beneficiaries
Economic power	Dependency
Demand driven	Supply driven
Process	Project
Collaboration	Aid and partnerships
Navigating complexity	Linear concept of development
Co-creation	Participation
Holistic	Thematic
From local to global	From global to local
Organising (horizontal)	Mobilising (top-down)
Communication	Information

- We expect to be faced with different *challenges*, to name a few:
- Navigating through the complexity of reality. We realise that we are dealing with wicked problems for which the market, state and civil society cannot provide adequate solutions on their own. Similarly, we are engaged in change processes to address poverty and marginalisation

which are complex, chaotic and non-linear, and for which one-size-fits-all solutions are not appropriate, but instead require a high degree of contextualising.

- That is why we realise that business as usual will not suffice and that continued innovation should be an integral part of our strategy. This will require specific competences of our organisation, our staff, our partner organisations and the communities we work with.
- Balancing social and economic change processes and benefits. Getting the balance right between running a business and staying focussed on the social purpose of a social business is going to be a major challenge.
- Finding investors for risky economic projects in rural areas for marginalised groups in relatively unstable countries. Therefore, building a track record and showing results by way of social accounting is crucial.
- Scale and roll-out. How to link and connect the many similar and different local initiatives horizontally. In practice this will mean realising and completing the social and economic chain.

While we can build upon our experiences, knowledge, lessons learnt and capacities to address these challenges, we also realise that the described change in strategy has considerable implications for our organisation (positioning, systems, structure, staff, fundraising, etc.), our programmes (products and services, roles, situational analysis, etc.) and our relations and linkages with stakeholders and collaborators (expand towards unusual actors). We are aware that our strategy demands a flexible and reflective organisation which is capable of addressing the challenges that are ahead of us and of changing, adapting, adjusting or revising where necessary. Different processes are being set up to look at the diverse implications for the different aspects of our organisation, programmes and relations. While doing so, we realise that there are unresolved issues and that these will be explored further in the process: we make the road by walking. In the business plan for 2011-2015 different processes will be identified to address the respective implications. For example, one particular issue that we have identified for urgent follow up is capacity and competence development, both internally and externally (broaden network and have external inputs). To that effect, we will set up a process for a comprehensive curriculum programme in collaboration with Context, international cooperation for the whole organisation (staff, trainers, management) in the areas of and interlinkages between Civic Driven Change, Social Business and Social Accounting.

Our strategy is translated into two programmes:

- A. *Investment for Social and Economic Change*: this is ICS' core programme and includes a holistic and integrated programme at community level to contribute towards addressing root causes of poverty and marginalisation. We distinguish two elements: a) Civic Driven Change for Child Wellbeing and b) Social Business.
- B. *Child Protection*: focuses on strengthening child protection mechanisms for addressing abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, and ensuring that children can grow up in a safe and supportive family environment.

Both build upon our experiences with and learnings of the programmes which we currently implement: Civic Driven Child Development and Child Protection⁴³.

⁴³ See for a concept proposal per programme: annex 30 of the MFS II application *Together 4 Change*.