

Country Programme Plan Nicaragua

I. ANALYSIS

1.0 Country Context Analysis

1.1 Brief overview

Nicaragua, with a population of approximately 5.4 million, was ranked 112 on the 2006 Human Development Index (HDI). It is the second poorest country in Latin America (after Haiti) with 80 % of the population living on less than 2 USD a day. The reason that it still scores higher on the HDI index than other countries in the region, like Guatemala and Honduras, is attributed to relatively higher degree of equity, life expectancy and school enrollment¹. Subsequent major disasters in combination with the destruction of human and capital infrastructure resulting from the civil war and the economic blockade in the 1970-80s has increased vulnerability and deepened the poverty level during the last decades.

To fight poverty, the government released the Strengthened Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (SGPRP) in 2000, seeking debt relief assistance because Nicaragua became heavily indebted over the last three decades, primarily due to the cost of the civil war. In December 2003, the countries included in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative of the international financial system were able to get a 73% reduction of their debt. The debt "forgiveness" was based on the Second Progress Report of the SGPRP. The country's poor economic level and performance implies that the government is open to proposals and pressures from multilateral development banks, transnational corporations and international governments, for changes in economic and social policies. A new International Monetary Fund loan is expected to be available after negotiation in September 2007.

The HIV epidemic in Nicaragua is an increasing problem, with almost half of the country's HIV cases have been detected in the past three years alone. The majority of cases are due to unprotected heterosexual contacts (72%) and unprotected sex between men (26%). The ratio of HIV cases between the sexes has fallen drastically, with almost one quarter of cases occurring among women and girls. Even more than the statistics would indicate, social conditions in Nicaragua are conducive to a widespread epidemic. Young people begin their sexual lives very early, and more than one third are pregnant or already mothers by the age of 19 years. A culture of machismo, compounded by a strong stigma against men who have sex with men, encourages men to have multiple sexual partners and to take sexual risks. Poverty is widespread and domestic violence is a feature of far too many Nicaraguan homes, as is sexual abuse of women and girls.²

The Autonomous Regions of the South and North Atlantic Coast (RAAS and RAAN, respectively), are among the most deprived and marginalized areas of the country. The regions have the poorest municipalities in the country and are the main areas where the indigenous and African descendant communities live. About 5% of the Nicaraguan population is indigenous, and 10% are African descendants that live in deprived conditions, with a lack of access to basic services and often suffering from discrimination. Furthermore, the provinces where they live are some of the provinces with the highest incidents of HIV in Nicaragua.

Nicaragua is the richest country in Central America in relation to water resources. Both the quantity and quality of water are considered sufficient to solve the needs for human

¹ Human Development Report 2006

² Nicaragua country situation analysis. UNAIDS. 2006.

consumption and productivity. However there is a low coverage of water and sanitation services in both the rural and slum areas, which is reflected in the high prevalence of waterborne diseases³. Also poverty levels in rural areas (70%) are more than the double that in urban areas (30%)⁴.

1.2 Participation

We are committed to the empowerment and mobilization of people to build sustainable communities and accountable governance and secure their civil and political rights.

Civil society in Nicaragua has a strong history of organization and participation, based primarily on the Revolutionary mass organizations of the eighties. This has given Nicaragua a distinct advantage, with higher participation of female and poor populations in decision-making processes than seen in other countries in the region. Community based organizations are still strong and are facilitating participation in decision making process at a local level.

On the other hand; although historically developed structures such as centralized decision-making, patron-client relations, corruption and machismo exist in Nicaragua to a lesser extent than in other countries in the region, they are a reality and hamper participation at all levels of the institutionally weak government.

In the late eighties and nineties donor funds flowed into the Nicaraguan civil society and resulted in the creation of many new NGOs. Although this has created new organizational space, capacities and legitimacy for the civil society, the "NGO-isation" is in itself hampering participation as the NGOs are highly dependent on aid and thus primarily dependent and accountable to donors.

During the eighties the church was divided, on the one hand it formed part of mass mobilization and the strengthening of community participation, whilst on the other hand segments of the church, especially the higher level of the church organization, continued to be highly conservative and exclusive.

As in the other countries in the region PLHIV face discrimination and stigmatization and their participation in the process of HIV and AIDS policy development is thus hampered.

1.3 Equity

We are committed to join forces with the poor and excluded in efforts to secure their basic economic, social and cultural rights, and to challenge the rich and powerful to promote economic justice.

Nicaragua is the second poorest country in Latin America and is heavily dependent on the primary sector of the economy. The historically developed patterns of centralized capital and land, patron-client relations and machismo are present in Nicaragua, as with other countries in the region. The Gender related Index (GDI) for Nicaragua is similar to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador and the Income for women is one third of that for men on average. The poorest 20% of the population earn 5.6% of GDP and the richest 20% earn 49.3%⁵. As mentioned above, the poverty is also more than the double in rural areas (70%) compared to urban areas (30%) and the rural population represents 44% of the population. The agenda for ensuring equitable access to economic, social, political and civil rights is hence relevant also for Nicaragua.

³ Human Development Report 2006

⁴ UNDP Nicaragua - Common Country Assessment. 2007

⁵ Human Development Report 2006

However, in our analysis the relatively high HDI score, resulting from among others higher life expectancy and school enrolment for both women/girls and men/boys, combined with relatively lower degrees of inequity when compared to other countries in the region, have led us to give a relatively higher priority to participation and protection agendas and lower priority to equity agendas for Nicaragua.

In accordance with our analysis, the major problems in Nicaragua are weak governmental institutions, poverty, vulnerability to natural disasters, environmental degradation and exploitation from international companies in alliance with corrupt governmental officials.

1.4 Protection

We are committed to the empowerment of people affected by insecurity and violence. We will address root causes and enable people and communities to reduce their vulnerability and resolve conflict without using violence.

The public health systems lack financial resources and are weak in terms of prevention, epidemiological control and care. Access to affordable medicines should be at the core of health policies, however in response to pressure from transnational corporations, the government is increasing measures to restrict access to generic drugs. Civil society organizations are openly expressing opposition to this situation. Nicaragua is the country with the lowest HIV prevalence in Central America, but this is generally attributed to a lack of quality data. UNDP considers it urgent to increase preventive measures, as the numbers could rise quickly. Half of the registered cases have been accounted for the last three years only, and four out of five are detected in the four most affected provinces (Chinandega, Leon, Masaya and RAAN).

Historically, Nicaragua is the country in the region that has been most affected by subsequent disasters and situations of emergencies, both natural and human made. The multiple political unrests, the earthquake in 1972, the civil war and economic blockade in the 1970-80s, the political crisis of the 1990s and hurricanes such as Juana and Mitch in the 1990s; all these challenges have hampered the emergency response capacity and deepened levels of poverty in the country. During the last ten years, tropical storms and hurricanes have had severe social, economic and environmental impacts in the three regions in which the country is divided, the South Pacific, the Central Region and the Autonomous Regions of the North Atlantic. Susceptibility to disasters is based on the high vulnerability of the poor and marginalized population, and the weak response capacities both at local and national levels.

The result of the governmental openness postulated through the "debt relief package" is the implementation of rather aggressive economic policies of reduction of governmental apparatus. It also implies the consideration of massive infrastructure projects such as the construction of a transatlantic canal by using the macro watershed of Lake Managua (Xolotlán), Lake Nicaragua (Cocibolca) and the San Juan River. The Nicaraguan government has also welcomed a proposal from the European Union to include key services such as water and sanitation into the negotiations of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) for its privatization. Nicaragua is considered one of the most vulnerable countries towards the implementation of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), in force since July 1 2006, especially in terms of labor and environmental laws.

The report "Domestic Violence in Nicaragua 2006", elaborated by the Legal Medicine Institute of Supreme Court of Justice in Nicaragua, states that the domestic violence is a major problem in the country. Domestic violence represents the second cause of physical harm (not fatal) at national level. Domestic violence is a gender problem because in 78.20% of the cases it is addressed against women, especially those aged between 26

and 35 years. The statistics also showed that the second most affected group is women between 36 to 50 and the third is women between 18 to 25 years.

Based on the cases reported in 2006, the most predominant types of domestic violence in Nicaragua are the maltreatment of women by their partners (49.27%), the maltreatment of women by other relatives (46.19%) and child cruelty (4.54%). Geographically, the districts with more complaints are Siuna, Jinotepe and Masatepe. The Nicaraguan government also shares the concerns for the graveness of these problems and The Ministry of Public Health recognizes domestic violence as a public health issue. In 1995 a law was passed to prevent and sanction domestic violence. Also the law of unilateral divorces was promoted by the women's organization in the country as an alternative means to end destructive relationships. However in 1998, the Center of Constitutional Rights made an investigation about the practice of the law of unilateral divorces and found that the majority of the persons demanding divorces where men. The conclusion was and still is that women trapped in a violent family relationship will feel that it is an overwhelming decision to leave such a relation ship by legal means⁶.

1.5 Role of Civil Society and NCA Partners

1.5.1 Role of Civil Society

Current civil society in Nicaragua is a product of the developments over the last decades; revolutionary mass organizations of the eighties, political polarization, NGOs created in the nineties, donor flows for civil society, the post-Mitch establishment of the *Coordinadora Civil* – these are central processes that have given Nicaraguan civil society its particular configuration. A civil society that is politicized and polarized, where the dominant division no longer is between the Sandinista left and the non-Sandinista right, but rather between segments of the left for and against the FSLN leadership.

Civil society organizations in Nicaragua are relatively advanced in terms of coordination; however coordination was stronger in the past.

Churches and church-related organizations (specially catholic and evangelical) constitute important actors for society in general, due to their influence on public opinion and social mobilization. NCA's relationships with this type of organizations will be of strategic importance in relation to social-political advocacy and the fact that they have a similar value base as NCA.

Additionally, the key to this relationship is to promote the moral and political responsibility of the churches relating to the development and promotion of human dignity. They should also be encouraged to use their potential capacity to canalize the claims of the poorest and most dispossessed towards the social and governmental actors who are responsible for the respect and protection of this group's human rights.

There are integrated regional and/or national alliances and networks that work on concrete actions to claim people's rights, especially in relation to improved public security, good governance, justice and economical, social, political, cultural and environmental conditions at local, regional and national levels.

For NCA, the role that civil society plays is a key factor, for citizen empowerment that allows guaranteeing responsible governance in all levels.

⁶ Minutes from the 10^a. *Cátedra interdisciplinaria de la mujer "Por una vida en abundancia y tiempos sin violencia"* CIEETS-FEET. Managua, Nicaragua, 2006. Lectura by *Licenciada* Lorna Norori representative of *Sí Mujer* and *Dos Generaciones*.

1.5.2 Role of NCA partners in Civil Society

Historically, the organizations that have been partners of NCA in Nicaragua have been churches, church-related organizations, ecumenical organizations and other civil society organizations (associations, non governmental organizations, etc.)

The current portfolio of partners includes organizations of rights holders and duty bearers, but is mainly made up of organizations that seek to mobilize right holders to make their claims and duty bearers to support these claims. These partners are characterized by:

- All partners are organizations committed to the promotion of human development, rights, security and a culture of peace at community, municipality, regional and national level.
- They work directly with excluded poor people in the areas in which they work. In almost all the cases, partners are working in the most isolated and poorest communities where there is strong need.
- NCA's partners have experience in the areas and issues they work on, and especially they are recognized by poor and excluded people they are supporting.
- Some partners also have a very good reputation from society and government at local, national and international level.
- In almost all the cases, partners practice a coordinated approach to improve the impact of their work. NCA's partners are also integrated into strategic alliances and networks at national and international levels.
- All of them are legally constituted, condition that secures their social, political and fiscal responsibility.
- Almost all of them have more than ten years of creation and are or have been partners with other donors.

2.0 NCA's Added Value

NCA started working in Nicaragua in 1994, supporting projects that had specific impact on poverty reduction through education, sustainable agriculture and networking. NCA has also supported education projects and ecclesiastic leadership strengthening. Partners and networks have been involved in advocacy on health policies, specifically on STD and HIV, and also in monitoring the implementation of public investment policies related to health services. Sustainable management of watersheds and food security projects has been supported in the South Pacific region. Actions for prevention of gender-based violence have been supported in the South Atlantic Coast.

NCA has a specific calling to mobilize churches and church based organizations and to promote, strengthened and facilitate their commitment and engagement for social change in order to improve the living conditions and assure the human rights of the most vulnerable groups in Nicaragua. One challenge for the near future is to look for potential church-based organizations to strengthen the thematic focus for the country programme.

Using a *rights-based approach* in programming, as well as emphasizing relation building among partners and other strategic networks, NCA seeks to contribute to societal change.

Since 2005 NCA has had a programme officer based in Nicaragua. This local presence allows a closer relationship with the national partners and other Norwegian NGOs. A close relationship with the Norwegian Embassy has been established, mainly to design a process of involvement with other Norwegian NGOs, and their partners, in HIV and AIDS issues. .

The programme officer has been especially active in promoting and facilitating the involvement of Nicaraguan churches in activities to overcome stigma and discrimination of women and men living with HIV and AIDS. An important step was the participation of 15 protestant churches in activities related to the IV Central American Congress on AIDS (CONCASIDA), including a round table on HIV as a challenge for the churches, with NCA as a co-organizer.

In the area of emergency preparedness and response, NCA's programme officer, actively takes part in the *ACT Nicaragua Forum*, a cooperation between ten Nicaraguan and international member organizations of the global emergency alliance *Actions by Churches Together (ACT)*. NCA is using its long and worldwide experience from emergency operations to help the forum establish good routines and build relevant capacity.

NCA has promoted the participation of a delegate of a local partner in its global Advisory Group, who also has been advisor for the NCA Regional Office in Guatemala.

II. NCA INTERVENTION STRATEGY

3.0 Thematic Analysis and Priorities

A number of rights violations emerge from the analysis of participation, equity and protection in chapter 1. NCA does not have the capacity to work effectively on all of these, important as they may be. We have therefore identified the following rights claims as priorities for NCA's work in Nicaragua during the pending period of the strategic plan (January 1st, 2008 to December 31st, 2009). While we make evident that each right is supported by normative rights frameworks such as international human rights conventions, and that some are backed up by United Nations Millennium Development Goals, NCA's starting point is poor people's own lived experiences of poverty and exclusion, an understanding that these rights reflect real felt needs.

3.1 Specific rights to be addressed by the program

The specific rights to be addressed by the Nicaraguan Country Programme Plan are:

- The right of all citizens to participate in the political governance at all levels around the country.
- The right of people living with HIV and AIDS to be protected from discrimination and stigma.
- The right of all people to health and in particular the right to protection from HIV infection.
- The right of poor and vulnerable people to be protected from and to be assisted when faced with disasters and emergencies.
- The right of all people to be protected from violence and insecurity, especially women and youth.
- The right of poor people to attain higher standards of health, including provision of clean drinking water.

3.2 Thematic focus

The overall vision for NCA's Nicaragua Country Programme is to promote human dignity for poor and excluded people, by supporting partners and programs that contribute to increased participation, equity and protection. NCA's program in Nicaragua will therefore have the following four thematic focus areas and five cross-cutting issues:

3.2.1 Faith Communities address HIV and AIDS

"Faith Communities address HIV and AIDS" is the most developed NCA program in Nicaragua. Even though Nicaragua has a low percentage of HIV and AIDS prevalence, this is generally attributed to insufficient quality of data, and UNDP among others, is recommending taking immediate preventive action as numbers could be rising quickly.

Awareness about the challenges of the HIV and AIDS situation will be raised by coordinated actions between NCA, partners and alliances. Catholic and Evangelical Church leaders will be sensitized on the stigmatization and discrimination that PLHIV are suffering, and encouraged to raise prophetic voices and promote both their inclusion and respect for their human rights. The participation of PLHIV will be strengthened. The capacities of Churches and church-related organizations for prevention, care and advocacy will also be strengthened. As part of the social auditing, the implementation of actions supported by the Global Fund will be sought monitored. Advocacy will be conducted to improve prevention and facilitate care and treatment.

3.2.2 Protection from natural disasters and complex emergencies

Local and national capacities for emergency prevention, preparedness and response will be strengthened by NCA, partners and alliances, ACT in particular. At a local level, the communities where NCA and ACT members have presence will be strengthened for vulnerability reduction and risk management. Advocacy for accountable governance will be carried out to improve the capabilities of the National Coordinator for Emergencies Reduction (Sp. SINAPRED). The participation of civil society in SINAPRED will be strengthened, with the purpose of promoting decentralization and enhance prevention and response capabilities in rural areas.

3.2.3 Protection from violence and insecurity

Nicaragua is experiencing relatively low levels of violence and insecurity, but as with the rest of the nations in Central America, gender-based and domestic violence is a problem. Furthermore, current conditions can be conducive to a rise of violent youth gangs as seen in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, although this problem is presently limited. These two issues, gender based/domestic violence and the potential rise of violent youth gangs are the most pressing under this thematic focus area.

Previously, violence has not been a prioritized thematic focus in Nicaragua, but NCA's experience in Guatemala in this area could form a basis for the development of such a program in the country. This will be further evaluated in the period 2008-09.

3.2.4 Communities for safe water and sanitation

Communities' mobilization and advocacy at local and national level for facilitating equitable access to safe water and sanitation and sustainable management of watersheds and water resources will be supported. Prevention of privatization and monitoring of accountable governance of the resources and services will be part of the social auditing to be conducted in this area.

The lack of policies and laws regarding water and sanitation will be addressed by promoting open discussions on the proposals supported by different sectors, including proposals from civil society for equitable access, increase in coverage of the services, decentralization and accountable governance, sustainable use and community's participation. The implementation of laws and regulations will be monitored.

This thematic focus is still under development in Nicaragua and will depend on capable partners. This will be further evaluated in the period 2008-09.

Cross-cutting issues:

The cross-cutting axis will be integrated into the project planning and implementation at all level in this programme.

Rights-based approach

The rights-based approach offers a significant understanding for equality analysis and objectives within the particular context of Nicaragua. Clear identification regarding inequalities and discrimination by gender, class, ethnicity and race is important for planning, implementation and evaluation of projects.

Gender-based approach

The gender-based approach allows for the understanding of social inequalities and discriminations due to sexual identity and how they affect women and men in different ways. A particular interest will be on addressing Churches and church-related organizations because in almost all cases, these organizations have traditional practices and points of view that influence the general public opinion.

Civil society for accountable governance

Increased empowerment and advocacy capacity of right holders is the major aim of all the actions detailed in this programme. It is considered that empowerment of right holders will allow them to claim their rights and to be involved in decision-making bodies at all levels.

Civil society mobilization, advocacy actions and social auditing will be the main tools to promote accountable governance. Strengthening and empowering civil society and promoting accountable governance, will be a cross-cutting axis integrated into all the thematic focus of this programme.

Risk management

Taking into account that poor and vulnerable people are at risk of being affected by natural and social disasters, a risk management approach will be included in all the projects to be implemented. Training is going to be offered through the national ACT Forum when necessary.

Multicultural approach

As the thematic issue of indigenous peoples in the region has not yet been fully developed, NCA has chosen to focus this thematic issue only in Guatemala for the period 2008-09. The awareness and sensitivity to the specific rights, interests and perceptions of the different peoples and ethnic groups that make up the Nicaraguan population, will however be an important element in all the thematic focus areas. This is particularly relevant for the projects in the two autonomous regions of the Atlantic Coast.

4.0 Strategies for Rights Holders and Duty Bearers

In NCA's rights based approach, we seek to engage with poor men and women as citizens – people who are entitled to human dignity and basic human rights by virtue of being human. NCA's rights based approach entails a two-pronged strategy. A vital component of our strategy is to resource poor and excluded groups as **rights holders**. By claiming abstract rights as tangible entitlement, poor people improve their lives.

At the same time, we recognize that social relations and institutions (both formal and informal) within society can pose serious barriers to poor men and women who try to claim their rights. NCA's Right Based Approach will also entail the identification of key **duty bearers** and strategies to engage them to transform these institutional barriers and mechanisms of exclusion. A particular role for NCA and partners will be to facilitate linkages between prioritized rights holders and the most relevant duty bearers.

4.1 Rights Holders

The poor, marginalized and excluded, are the rights holders with whom NCA and partners will be working in Nicaragua. The prioritized right holders for this country programme are:

4.1.1 Right holders for thematic focus Faith Communities address HIV and Aids

- Poor women and men (children, young and old) living with HIV that suffers stigma and discrimination around the country.
- Population around the country that is not informed about HIV and is at risk of infection.

4.1.2 Right holders for thematic focus Protection from Natural Disasters and Complex Emergencies

- Communities vulnerable to emergencies and disasters that have been previously affected by land flows and floods in slum and rural areas of Nicaragua.

4.1.3 Right holders for thematic focus Protection from Violence and Insecurity

- Women, girls and boys who suffer gender-based and domestic violence in rural areas.
- Youth, women and men with high levels of risk to be involved in young gangs in slum areas of Managua.

4.1.4 Right holders for thematic focus Communities for Safe Water and Sanitation

- People living in selected poor rural and slum areas that do not have access to adequate water and sanitation services.

The main strategy for working with identified right holders is their empowerment through the following strategies:

- Information campaigns to raise social awareness, using different media and coverage regarding the detailed thematic focus areas.
- Training processes for women, girls, people living with HIV and indigenous peoples regarding human rights and gender-based violence.
- Training for community women and men leaders regarding natural management risks.
- Training regarding advocacy actions at local, national and regional level.
- Investigation and research.
- Create networks and arenas where the right holders can express their demands.
- Advocacy actions for human rights and dignity claims.

4.2 Duty bearers

NCA introduces the rights-based concept of duty bearers to refer to those people or institutions that have an obligation to deliver and respect basic rights. Actors who contribute to disabling environments, yet have the resources or power to remove these obstacles, are defined as duty bearers. The duty bearers under this programme are:

- Leaders of Catholic and Evangelical Churches, church-related and ecumenical organizations at local and national level.
- Local, regional and national authorities responsible for delivering health, education, security, emergency and environmental services in the poor communities in rural areas of Nicaragua.
- Civil society organizations at local, national and international level in accordance with thematic issues and level of implementation.

- Men and women that are perpetrators of gender-based and domestic violence around the country.
- Women and men at large that promote stigma and discrimination against PLHIV.
- International cooperation organizations and sister organizations that are part of ACT Forum Nicaragua.

The main strategy for working with identified duty bearers is to ensure that they respect and are obligated to uphold and fulfill identified right holders' basic rights. The specific strategies will be addressed through:

- Information campaigns using different media and coverage regarding gender-based violence, stigma and discrimination of PLHIV, xenophobia and racism, environmental degradation and human rights protection.
- Training of women and men at large regarding gender-based and domestic violence, stigma and discrimination of PLHIV, xenophobia and racism, environmental degradation and human rights protection in Nicaragua.
- Training for local and national authorities regarding environmental degradation, water and sanitation services, HIV and AIDS pandemic etc.
- Organize training for technical assistance disasters management and emergency response.
- Facilitate the coordination between right holders and duty bearers.

5.0 Geographic focus

Managua is a key area for advocacy actions for all the program's thematic focus areas due to the concentration of the Governmental and State institutions there.

5.1 Geographical focus for thematic priority Faith Communities addresses HIV and Aids

Bluefields and Pearl Lagoon in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region, which have high levels of HIV and AIDS

5.2 Geographical focus for thematic priority Protection from Natural Disasters and Complex Emergencies:

NCA will be working in emergency response in all those areas prioritized by ACT Forum Nicaragua.

5.3 Geographical focus for thematic priority Protection from Violence and Insecurity

Managua related to youth gangs. For gender-based and domestic violence this will depend on further assessment of the thematic issue and of potential partners.

5.4 Geographical focus for thematic priority Communities for Safe Water and Sanitation:

At present Leon, Bluefields and Pearl Lagoon in the South Atlantic Autonomous Region. Further development of this thematic issue will depend on further assessment and of potential partners.

III. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

6.0 Program objectives per thematic focus area

6.1 Faith Communities address HIV and AIDS

Overall goal: Women and men living with HIV have been accepted and supported by Churches and Church-related organizations to live a dignified life.

<p>1. Specific Objective (Right Holders) PLHIV Organizations in Nicaragua are included in alliances with churches, church-related organizations and ecumenical initiatives against stigma and discrimination.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <p>PLHIV are taken into account in the liturgical activities</p> <p>PLHIV are involved in the planning process of NCA core partners "AMC" y "ILFE".</p> <p>PLHIV organizations in Nicaragua are involved in ecumenical alliances.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification</p> <p>Testimonies of PLHIV.</p> <p>Project plan NCA core partners</p> <p>Ecumenical public activities.</p>
<p>Expected Result: Demands and proposals of the PLWH organizations are considered as the basis of work of each alliance.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <p>PLHIV demands reflected in church speeches.</p> <p>PLHIV demands reflected in church-related organizations work plans.</p> <p>PLHIV demands reflected in public activities.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification</p> <p>Speeches records.</p> <p>Project plan NCA core partners</p> <p>Ecumenical public activities.</p>
<p>2. Specific Objective (Duty Bearers) Churches and church-related organizations and ecumenical initiatives assume the responsibility to denounce the stigma and discrimination against PLHIV.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <p>Stigma and discrimination situation against PLHIV reflected in church speeches.</p> <p>Stigma and discrimination situation against PLHIV is reflected in church-related organizations' work plans.</p> <p>The situation of stigma and discrimination against PLHIV is reflected in ecumenical initiatives in public activities.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification</p> <p>Public Church Declarations</p> <p>Work plans of AMC and ILFE.</p> <p>PLHIV testimonies</p>
<p>Expected result Networks and linkages developed and strengthened between organizations of PLWH and ecumenical alliance.</p>	<p>Indicators</p> <p>Memories of understanding drafted.</p> <p>Commitments for each member of the alliance were established, at national and regional level.</p> <p>Joint activities on HIV and Aids between members who have signed the MOU</p>	<p>Sources of Verification</p> <p>The Memorandum of understanding.</p>

Assumptions:

- The organizations of PLHIV are willing to make alliances with church, church related organizations and ecumenical initiatives.
- Reduction of discrimination and stigmatization will lead to less transfer of virus.
- There exist formal networks of PLHIV.

- Church-related organizations have strong influence in opinion building as well as a potential for mobilization of constituencies in the Nicaraguan society for anti-discrimination and social inclusion.
- There are some initiatives from church related organizations to work with services for PLHIV.
- The alliance between the PLHIV and the Churches generate changes in the understanding, work and communication of the Churches.
- The Churches are convinced of their responsibility to protect and uphold the human rights of the PLHIV.
- In Nicaragua there exist laws (law238) which will actually promote and protect the rights of the PWLHA.
- Global fund is the most important fund available in Nicaragua for the work to fight AIDS.

Risks:

- The networks of PLHIV formed mainly by men, feel threatened by the increasing leadership of organized women living with HIV and AIDS.
- The bureaucratic processes that the Global Fund demands decrease the time that the local organizations may dedicate to the specific work.
- That some Church-leaders have discriminatory attitudes that are too rigid to allow discussions about HIV.
- Due to the need to prioritize the daily struggle for subsistence, there might be a lack of relevant participation of women and men living with HIV and Aids in training activities.

Links between Partners and Program Objectives

Core Partners	Type of Organisation	Geographic Focus	Intervention
Acción Médica Cristiana (AMC)	Church related organization (evangelical)	Atlantic Coast in Nicaragua	Training Information Advocacy
Iglesia Luterana Fe y Esperanza (ILFE)	Church (Lutheran)	Managua	Training Information Awareness rising
Resource Organisations			
Not defined	Civil Society Organization of PLHIV	Managua	Advocacy Counseling Empowerment
Strategic Alliances			
CARITAS Nicaragua			Information

Note: ASONVIHSIDA is the most likely resource partner that will be considered.

6.2 The Specific Thematic Focus for Protection from Natural Disasters and Complex Emergencies

Overall goal: Reduced vulnerability of men and women to Natural Disasters and Complex Emergencies.

1. Specific Objective	Indicators	Sources of Verification
Increased knowledge and ability of risk management in the vulnerable societies in rural areas and urban slum areas where there are ACT implementing partners.	Increased organization and participation of local communities in risk management Improved capacities in risk management at local level	Testimonies Interviews Assessment of local level capacities

<p>1.1 Expected result Workshops in risk analysis at local level have been held in vulnerable communities.</p>	<p>Indicators Selected vulnerable communities in areas with ACT partners have participated in workshops to analyze risk at local level.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Training records Training reports</p>
<p>1.2 Expected result Information campaigns implemented about the threats men, women and children in vulnerable communities are exposed to</p>	<p>Indicators Public campaigns regarding disaster prevention developed by ACT Forum Nicaragua and partners. People in selected communities informed about risks and disasters prevention.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Press release and materials Project plans and reports. ACT plans and reports. Testimonies</p>
<p>1.3 Expected result Community systems for early alert established</p>	<p>Indicators 1 community as minimum in each district attended by ACT has established a system for early alert.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification ACT plans and reports</p>
<p>1.4 Expected result Local plans for emergency elaborated</p>	<p>Indicators 1 community as minimum in each district attended by ACT has formulated a local plan for emergencies.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Project plans and reports Plans in place.</p>
<p>1.5 Expected result Community maps of risk elaborated.</p>	<p>Indicators Communities attended by ACT have developed maps of risk, in relation with specific vulnerabilities situations.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Maps for specific risks.</p>
<p>2 Specific objective Partners, Churches, communities, local authorities and members of ACT share responsibilities in prevention and emergencies attention.</p>	<p>Indicators A local Strategic alliance for emergencies prevention and attention established. Memorandum of Understanding defined.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Minutes Memorandum of Understanding.</p>
<p>2.1 Expected result A network has been promoted regarding the responsibilities of Churches, local authorities and ACT members.</p>	<p>Indicators Partners, Churches, communities, local authorities and members of ACT have defined particular responsibilities for the implementation. The planning process integrates ACT and Sphere Project principles, gender based approach (including UUNN Resolution 1325), and Indigenous peoples' values.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Agreements of cooperation. ACT Model of Intervention document.</p>
<p>2.2 Expected result Contributions have been made to the joint development of a common strategic plan.</p>	<p>Indicators A common strategic plan developed.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Strategic plan document.</p>
<p>2.3 Expected result ACT Nicaragua local members have received training in Emergency preparedness and risk analysis</p>	<p>Indicators Technical Staff from local members participated in monthly workshops held by ACT Forum Nicaragua.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification ACT plans and reports</p>
<p>2.4 Expected result ACT Nicaragua implementing partners have received training in Emergency preparedness and risk analysis</p>	<p>Indicators Technical Staff from the partners have participated in monthly workshops held by ACT Nicaragua.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification ACT plans and reports</p>

<p>2.5 Expected result A model of intervention of ACT has been constructed.</p>	<p>Indicators Procedures for emergencies response defined at local level taking into account mechanisms of SINAPRED.</p> <p>The local model of intervention integrates ACT and Sphere Project principles (incl. code of conduct), gender-based approach (incl. UN Resolution 1325), and Indigenous peoples' values.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Model of intervention document.</p>
<p>2.6 Expected result Specific emergency plans have been developed for specific risks contexts.</p>	<p>Indicators Emergency plans in relation to the risk at local level developed.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Plans.</p>
<p>3 Specific Objective Improved emergency response in the vulnerable societies in rural areas and urban slum areas where there are ACT implementing partners</p>	<p>Indicators Community systems for early alert established.</p> <p>Local plans for emergency elaborated.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification No. of training developed.</p> <p>System in place.</p> <p>Early alert plans.</p>
<p>3.1 Expected result Community organizations where ACT partners work are strengthened to assist themselves in a situation of emergency.</p>	<p>Indicators Men, women and children of the communities in situation of risk, are informed about the threats they are exposed to.</p> <p>Community maps of risk elaborated by people with the involvement of partners.</p> <p>Workshops in risk analysis and process of attention implemented.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Campaigns of information implemented by partners.</p> <p>Maps of risk are in place.</p> <p>Number of workshops developed.</p>

Assumptions:

- Community population is willing to participate and organize themselves in emergency committees.
- Additional financial resources will be provided from the ACT International Alliance for these activities.
- Local authorities have been involved in training processes for the risk mapping investigation.

Risks:

- Due to the need to prioritize the daily struggle for subsistence, there might be a lack of participation of local community in training activities.

Links between Partners and Program Objectives

Core Partners	Type of Organisation	Geographic Focus	Intervention
AMC	Church related organization (evangelical)	National	Information Training
CIEETS	Church related organization (evangelical)	National	Information Training
ILFE	Church (Lutheran)	National	Information, Training

Resource Organisations			
NOT IDENTIFIED			
Strategic Alliances			
Foro ACT Nicaragua	Church related organizations.	National	Information Training Advocacy Investigation
SINAPRED		National	Information, Network
CEPREDENAC		Regional	Information, Network

6.3 Protection from Violence and Insecurity

Overall goal: Violence against and insecurity of vulnerable women, girls and boys in Nicaragua reduced.

1. Specific Objective Increased social awareness in society at large regarding the negative impact of gender-based and domestic violence in Nicaragua.	Indicators Increase in the number of people in favor of legislation against gender-based and domestic violence.	Sources of Verification Survey on opinion on legislation against gender-based and domestic violence. Personal testimonies. Interviews. Articles in media.
1.1 Expected result Social debates on gender-based and domestic violence in Nicaragua have been promoted.	Indicators The magazine ENVIO has published several articles on gender-based, sexual and domestic violence against women, girls and boys.	Source of Verification Project plans. Project Reports. Media reports. Personal testimonies. ENVIO magazine.
1.2 Expected result Specific arenas have been created for interchange of experiences between NCA partners and Catholic and Evangelical Churches, church-related and civil society organizations; and for the joint involvement against gender-based and domestic violence.	Indicators Meetings and/or seminars arranged	Sources of Verification Reports from meetings/seminars Personal testimonies Project plans and reports
1.3 Expected result Women, girls and boys have been informed about their rights to be protected against gender-based and domestic violence.	Indicators Approximately, 300 vulnerable women and girls know gender-based violence researches done by NCA's partner ENVIO. 300 vulnerable women and girls have participated in the advocacy actions done by partners regarding sexual reproductive rights.	Source of Verification Research findings documented by partners. Personal testimonies. Focused group discussions. Articles in media, Interviews, Publications.

<p>2. Specific objective NCA and partners have contributed to the reduced involvement of men and women in violent youth gangs.</p>	<p>Indicators Reduction registered in vulnerable marginal neighborhoods</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Articles and researches published</p>
<p>2.1 Expected result Former and rehabilitated members of violent youth gangs sensitized to advocate against stigmatization of youth</p>	<p>Indicators Former and rehabilitated members of violent youth gangs in Nicaragua participate in the Executive Board and Assembly of the Central America Youth Parliament.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Personal testimonies. Interviews. Focused group discussions. Articles in media. Press publications.</p>

Assumptions:

- Women and girls are interested in empowering themselves and to working for the claiming of their rights and human dignity.
- Due to the trend of increased attention towards gender based and domestic violence in the region, there will be a stronger demand, more attention given to the problem by society, and more organized civil society participation around this theme.
- Church-related organizations have strong influence in opinion building as well as a potential for mobilization of constituencies in the Nicaraguan society for anti-discrimination and social inclusion.
- The experience from this thematic program in Guatemala is relevant for Nicaragua.
- New partner(s) have been identified and included in the programme.

Risks:

- Lack of partners and alliances to implement program.
- Lack of NCA legitimism within the thematic issue in the country.
- The macho-culture is so strong as to reduce the effects of campaigns and advocacy efforts both when it comes to public opinion accepting gender based violence as normal, as well as the society being characterized as having highly patriarchal power structures.
- Due to the need to prioritize the daily struggle for subsistence, there might be a lack of relevant participation of women and girls in training activities.

Links between Partners and Program Objectives

Core Partners	Type of Organisation	Geographic Focus	Intervention
NOT IDENTIFIED			
Resource Organisations			
ENVIO	Church related organization	Regional	Investigation
Strategic Alliances			
Red de Mujeres	Civil society organization	National	Advocacy

6.4 Communities for Safe Water and Sanitation

Overall goal: Men and women of vulnerable communities have access to water and sanitation services of high quality

<p>1. Specific Objective Men and women of the most vulnerable communities are empowered and demand the access to qualified water and sanitation.</p>	<p>Indicators Increase in the complaints regarding insufficient water and sanitation services. Increased participation and organisation by vulnerable communities regarding insufficient water and sanitation services.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Records for State institutions. Personal testimonies and interviews. Minutes</p>
<p>1.1 Expected result Women and men of the poorest communities are informed on their rights to access safe water and sanitation.</p>	<p>Indicators Information campaigns implemented by partners. Trainings in water and sanitation related issues (hygiene, conservation etc) implemented by AMC and CIEETS in vulnerable communities.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Campaign Project plans and reports Trainings records</p>
<p>1.2 Expected result Poor men and women are involved in decision-making process related to water and sanitation services.</p>	<p>Indicators Women and men from vulnerable communities are participating in RASNIC</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Minutes Public agenda Personal Testimonies Interviews</p>
<p>2. Specific objective Catholic and Evangelical Churches, Civil organization and Church-related organizations advocate for the access of water and sanitation services of high quality.</p>	<p>Indicators Catholic and Evangelical Churches, Church-related and civil society organizations make public announcements related to the issue. Specific actions from Catholic and Evangelical Churches, Church-related and civil society organizations.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Press releases Personal testimonies Interviews Articles in media Reports</p>
<p>2.1 Expected result Catholic and Evangelical Churches, Church-related and civil society organizations are involved and equipped in actions regarding insufficient water and sanitation services.</p>	<p>Indicators Specific arenas for involvement of Catholic and Evangelical Churches, Church-related organisations with NCA partners and or NCA strategic alliances are implemented.</p>	<p>Sources of Verification Reports from meetings/seminars Personal testimonies Project plans and reports</p>

Assumptions:

- Pressure, mobilization and proposals from civil society will provoke a political will from decision makers to enact legislation that secures equitable access to safe water and sanitation services.
- Civil society mobilization will contribute to an increased willingness of local authorities to implement sound management of water resources at community level.
- Discussions and interests are increased regarding matters of water and sanitation due to macro-economic and geopolitical policies linked with free trade treaties.
- Debates regarding global warming promote analysis regarding access and conservation of natural resources.
- The new authorities continue discussions regarding different proposals for the Law of Water in the country.

Risks:

- Governmental authorities undermine social demands by favoring the aggressive exploitation of water resources by large private enterprises, in particular mining.
- Asymmetrical power relationships between stakeholders will result in conflicts where government will favor the interests of the business sector, i.e. mining expansion.
- Due to the need to prioritize the daily struggle for subsistence, there might be a lack of relevant participation of local community in training activities.

Links between Partners and Program Objectives

Core Partners	Type of Organisation	Geographic Focus	Intervention
CIEETS	Church related organization (evangelical)	Leon	Information Training
Resource Organisations			
NOT IDENTIFIED			
Strategic Alliances			
Water and sanitation network of Nicaragua (RASNIC)	Civil society and government network		

Note: The relevance of CIEETS as a Core Partner for the thematic issue will be evaluated. Centro Humboldt is former resource partner that will be considered re-entered as a recourse partner.

7.0 Rationale for Choice of Partners, Resource Organisations, and Strategic Alliances

In order to implement the strategies for Nicaragua, NCA will work through specific projects implemented by the partner organizations identified in this plan. NCA will work with key core partners, resource organizations and strategic alliances.

For most of the thematic issues, the church and church related organizations have the potential to act as change agents and NCA will therefore use these partners to link the rights holders with the duty bearers. However, in several instances these organizations do not have the required specialized knowledge and/or the trust of some of the right holders and resource organizations from the general civil society.

A *core partner* for NCA in Nicaragua is therefore a national organization that has a Christian diaconal nature (Church and Church-related organization), a *resource organization* is a civil society organization with technical and professional competences and capacities in a thematic area, and a *strategic alliance* is a organization that can generate important links for advocacy and thematic issues at national and international level. These three kinds of partner relationships could include funding agreements with NCA.

The selected and categorized partners for the Nicaragua Country Programme Plan for 2008 and 2009 are:

Thematic Focus	Core Partner	Resource Organization	Strategic Alliance
Faith Communities addressed to HIV and Aids	Acción Médica Cristiana (AMC) Iglesia Luterana Fe y Esperanza (ILFE)	Not identified.	Caritas Nicaragua.
Protection from Natural Disasters and Complex Emergencies	(AMC) Centro Interecelisal de Estudios Teológicos y Sociales (CIEETS) (ILFE)	Not identified	SINAPRED CEPREDENAC Foro ACT Nicaragua
Protection from Violence and Insecurity	Not identified	IHCA / ENVIO	Red de Mujeres
Communities for Safe Water and Sanitation	(CIEETS)	Not identified	RASNIC

In relation with all those partners not identified yet, NCA has the challenge to look into new partnerships and/or the strengthening of the current relations and to re-categorize them.

It should be mentioned that due to the long presence that NCA has in the region some core partners have been chosen as core partners for a long time with different development agendas and their potential for further cooperation has to be evaluated.

7.1 Capacity of NCA Partners

In general the current partners have the experience and capacity to address the issues raised in the specific thematic focus areas and broad experience from working together with other civil and government actors for advocacy actions at various levels. In some of the thematic areas however, NCA sees the need to identify new core and resource partners (as indicated in the table in Ch.7.0) as well as to evaluate the potential of some existing partners within the thematic areas.

In the recent years, these organisations have proved themselves as accountable partners. In some cases there have been a need to strengthen some organizational capacities; but almost all of them came out as stronger partners after being evaluated with the NCA partner capacity assessment.

Programme and financial reporting has generally been good and efficient.

7.2 Partnership Strategy

NCA's work in the region is partner based and the implementation of the thematic issues is thus through the partners. Identifying the right core partners and the right partner relations within the thematic issues is therefore crucial. NCA core partners must have ability to mobilize duty bearers on behalf of the rights holders. NCA will in 2008-2009:

- Evaluate some of the existing core partners in respect to their relevance for the present thematic priorities and strategies.
- Identify and start working with new core partners.
- Strengthen the core partners bonds with resource partners and strategic alliances.

NCA will also be looking for and selecting new specialized partners where relevant (at present this in Emergency).

7.3 Overview of Partners

Core Partners

Name of partner	Christian Medical Action (AMC)
Year of Foundation	1984.
Mission	Implement actions for community based health services and development from a Christian perspective in poor communities in Nicaragua emphasizing women, children and youth populations.
Constituency	Rural and indigenous communities, Christian Medical Students Association Hosanna and Baptist and Pentecostal churches members.
Geographic Focus	Managua and the North- and South Atlantic Coast.
Thematic Focus	1. Preventive and primary health attention with emphasis on sexually transmitted diseases (STD) and HIV/AIDS. 2. Advocacy on public health policies, laws, programs and investment plans.
Strategies	Education and dissemination of health information, training of local health promoters, primary health attention, monitoring and advocacy on public policies on health.
Role in Civil Society	Networking with medical associations and Church-based organizations.
Particular Achievements	AMC is regularly consulted by both the Government and civil society organizations on public policy on health at both local and national levels.
Relationship with NCA	AMC has improved its capacities for monitoring and evaluation and is currently trained on advocacy for water and sanitation under a NCA's project.
Start of Cooperation	Since 2000.
NCA's rationale for relationship	AMC has strong capabilities to work on HIV and AIDS prevention and advocacy, and is also member of ACT and has experience in emergencies response and prevention. Also has participated in the exchange South-South.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	NCA's support to AMC will be approx NOK 850,000 for the next two years.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Promotion of gender based violence prevention actions. AMC will lead advocacy on water and sanitation among NCA's partners in Nicaragua.
Partners, other than NCA	ICCO, DIAKONIA, Church World Services, OXFAM, IBIS, UNICEF, Save the Children, Horizon 3000, Dan Church Aid, SAIH Norway.

Name of partner	Inter Ecclesial Center for Theological and Social Studies (CIEETS)
Year of Foundation	1985
Mission	To facilitate education processes for theological, social and agro-ecological education, aimed at human development in the most vulnerable churches and communities in Nicaragua.
Constituency	CIEETS represents 22 different evangelical churches in Nicaragua.
Geographic Focus	Departments of Chinandega, León, Matagalpa, Managua, Carazo and the autonomous region of the North Atlantic.
Thematic Focus	Theological and pastoral education. Agro-ecological education and community development. Food security.
Strategies	Theological reflections, pastoral and agro-ecological education processes.
Role in Civil Society	Church leaders and agriculture and animal husbandry workers form the major social force supporting CIEETS.
Particular Achievements	The work done by CIEETS led to the creation of the Nicaraguan Evangelical University.

Relationship with NCA	It has made possible for CIEETS to participate in events in Norway that help it become familiar with faith-based organizations working for the poorest and underprivileged.
Start of Cooperation	1988
NCA's rationale for relationship	Faith-based organization.
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	NCA will support CIEETS with approx NOK 700,000 for 2008, and will evaluate the relevance of partner for the thematic issue for 2009.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Socio theological knowledge
Partners, other than NCA	ICCO, HEKS, World Council of Churches, CLAI, Lutheran World Relief, Church World Services, Evangelisches Missionswerk.

Name of partner	Faith and Hope Lutheran Church (ILFE)
Year of Foundation	1983
Mission	education, health services and development in the poorest communities in Nicaragua. It mission is "To announce the Godspeed, and inform about God's word among the poorest of spirit and resources".
Constituency	Displaced people, poor people and member churches of the Lutheran World Federation in 1994.
Geographic Focus	Slum areas of Managua
Thematic Focus	Faith base organizations working with HIV and AIDS.
Strategies	Provide education and health services
Role in Civil Society	Networking with church based organizations
Particular Achievements	member church of the Lutheran World Federation in 1994.
Relationship with NCA	Since its foundation in Nicaragua ILFE has directed its work to community organization as well as providing a framework for its pastoral actions in HIV and AIDS, activities that promote development of the population with which it works, and as with CIEETS and AMC, it carries out actions in the prevention of disasters.
Start of Cooperation	1998
NCA's rationale for relationship	ILFE entered as part of the water and sanitation advocacy work in Nicaragua but is presently included under HIV AIDS
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	Mainly supported through thematic Block Grants.
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Church knowledge in HIV and AIDS
Partners, other than NCA	Lutheran World Federation, ELCA

Resource Organisations

Name of partner	IHCA / ENVIO
Year of Foundation	1981
Mission	Publication of civil society themes—North-South relations, neo-liberalism, globalization, the women's movement, ecology, the foreign debt, etc.
Constituency	Group of revolutionary intellectuals
Geographic Focus	Central America
Thematic Focus	Communication of civil society interests
Strategies	Publications with information regarding Central America, in different languages and themes
Role in Civil Society	Networking of civil society
Particular Achievements	Reorganized between the regions as a reference for updated information regarding different thematic issues.
Relationship with NCA	NCA supported the publishing of different articles related to the following issues: 2005 – Sexual abuse, 2006 - HIV and AIDS, 2007 – Youth gangs.

Start of Cooperation	2005
NCA's rationale for relationship	Resource partner with high level of knowledge about civil society
Planned increase; decrease; phase-out	NCA support will be approx NOK 250,000 for the next two years
Strategic Potential for Future Cooperation	Specific knowledge in several thematic areas
Partners, other than NCA	CAFOD, TROCAIRE, DKA Austria, Finland Embassy,

8.0 NCA Contributions

As part of its political and programmatic accompaniment of partners, NCA in Nicaragua will address particular issues in order to strengthen some strategic activities, For example:

1. NCA will be a facilitator of social awareness processes from partners that enhance advocacy actions from the prioritized excluded people. The relation between rights holders and the identified duty bearers will be important in NCA's facilitation role.
2. To improve impact, NCA will facilitate exchange of experiences between partners on relevant thematic focus areas at national, regional and international levels.
3. NCA will encourage the participation of partners in networks and alliances with ecumenical approach. This allows the advocacy to reach more decisions makers.
4. Through a human dignity perspective, NCA achieves a holistic view of the problems that it has been working on.
5. Programme and technical advice regarding planning, monitoring, evaluation and financial issues from NCA to partners.
6. Those NCA partners that are potentially planned for phase out will be offered fundraising capacity building from NCA.
7. Assure reliable and diversified sources of funding are available for the NCA programs and partners by doubling the existing funding through new sources.

9.0 Monitoring and Evaluation

During the last quarter of 2007 NCA will be subject to a NORAD evaluation of the work in Guatemala, as a follow up of the "Rattsutvalget". The result of the evaluation will probably also have relevance and effect for the Nicaragua program. The period 2008-2009 will focus primarily on how we implement the conclusions from this evaluation and monitor the changes, rather than carrying out further evaluations.

Based on NCA experience, lessons learned and programmatic procedures, high priority will be given to improving the quality of project planning, monitoring, reporting and evaluation. Furthermore, specific attention will be given to monitoring the progress of the partnership strategies outlined in Ch 7.2.

Monitoring activities and visits will be developed in order to assess the project's progress in relation to implementation and achieving objectives. Any planning deviations will be discussed between the partner and NCA.

As part of a coordination strategy, NCA will promote project planning, audits and external evaluations in cooperation with other donors. Conclusions and recommendations of assessments and evaluations will be important matters for future partner planning.

10.0 Assessments

10.1 Assessment of relevance of program in relation to national plans and priorities

This Country Program Plan is of relevance to the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals. In regards to the HIV and AIDS, this program is well in line with the National Strategic Plan 2006-2010.

10.2 Assessment of relevance in relation to Norwegian development objectives

Nicaragua is a focus country for NORAD, and the issues included in this program support the Norwegian cooperation goals. The Norwegian Government has prioritized the following areas for development assistance in Nicaragua a) Good Governance/ development of democracy and b) strengthening of Human Rights issues and c) sustainable natural resources which are also important for NCA's programme in the country.

In addition, this Country Program Plan includes other Norwegian political issues for development and upholding human rights such as: efforts in the fight against HIV and AIDS, poverty, women, and gender equality⁷.

Specific documents, strategies and actions plans that define Norway's priorities areas and focus of its overall development cooperation also form the basis of NCA's priorities⁸.

10.3 Assessment of Risks

Besides the specific risks indicated in each thematic focus on Chapter 6, the main risk at national level is:

- Lack of NCA ability to attract new sources for funds for our thematic issues.

10.4 Assessment of Sustainability

NCA considers sustainability to be an integrated process providing the needed capacities for NCA and partners to work together over time. The three essential capacities are:

- The capacity of NCA staff and partners to plan, implement and evaluate their work effectively. Participatory processes are essential for the involvement of all rights holders, but also for long-term sustainability through local ownership.
- Reliable and diversified sources of funding available for the NCA programs and partners over time.
- The organizational capacities of NCA staff and partners to build relationships, strengthen networks and mobilize support.

⁷ For these issues, Norway and NCA supports the United Nations Global Strategy Framework on HIV/AIDS; Global Funds to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria; United Nations Millennium Development Goals; United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW); ; UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

⁸ The Norwegian Governments Action plan for combating poverty in the south towards 2015, The Norwegian Governments Action Plan for the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security, Action Plan for Women's Rights and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation, MFA 2007, Position Paper for development cooperation. Norwegian HIV and AIDS policy-2006 MFA, Norwegian Action Plan for Environment in Development Cooperation-2006 MFA

11.0 Budget estimates for 2007-2008

Year	2007	2008 (estimates)	2009 (estimates)
Amount (NOK)	2 million	2 million	3 million

**In addition, for 2008 the NCA Regional Office in Guatemala has budgeted for several block grants with a total value of NOK 1,910,000, partly due to the phase-out of work in Peru. These funds will mainly be distributed to projects in Guatemala and Nicaragua.*

NCA plans to maintain its geographical concentration of work under the Regional Office in Guatemala, with a specific focus on Guatemala and Nicaragua. This will mean an increased budget for the Nicaragua Country Programme Plan. New funding opportunities will also be explored.