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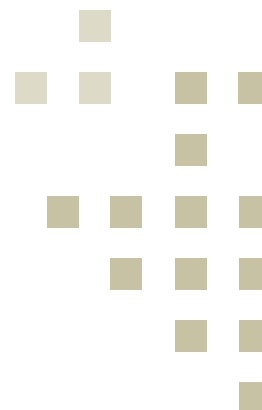
Norway's Fredskorpset Youth Program

Study of selected exchange projects

Axel Borchgrevink
Torild Skard

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Besøksadresse: C.J. Hambros plass 2d
Adresse: Postboks 8159 Dep.
0033 Oslo
Internett: www.nupi.no
E-post: pub@nupi.no
Fax: [+ 47] 22 36 21 82
Tel: [+ 47] 22 99 40 00

Norway's Fredskorpset Youth Program

Study of selected exchange projects

Axel Borchgrevink
Torild Skard

[Abstract] The Fredskorpset Youth program is a North-South exchange program facilitating the exchange of young people between partner organizations or institutions of Norway and countries of the South. The present study was commissioned in order to assess the degree to which stated goals of the exchanges were realized. Four exchanges were selected to be studied: between a Norwegian and Kenyan student organization (AIESEC); between a Norwegian missionary organization (NMS) and its counterpart church in Madagascar (FLM); between local Red Cross organizations in Norway and Uganda; and between a Norwegian (VUC) and two Malawian teacher training institutions (CC, LTTC). Objectives of the programs included acquiring new knowledge, attitudes and commitment at the level of individual participants, organizational strengthening and development of international contacts at the institutional level, and dissemination of information. As goals were mostly quite loosely formulated, it was difficult to assess the degree to which they were realized with any precision. Findings varied between the exchanges, but in general individual objectives were reached to some extent, while results might have been even stronger with more systematic attention to them. Institutional goals were achieved in most of the cases. In terms of information dissemination, this could be strengthened in most of the exchange programs.

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1 Executive Summary

Fredskorpset is a Norwegian program started in 2001 to support exchanges between partner organizations in Norway and countries in the South. The Fredskorpset Youth program was established in 2002, and involves exchanges of people between 18 and 25 years, for a duration of three to twelve months. A main purpose is to foster knowledge, understanding and commitment among participants with respect to North-South issues. As part of its ongoing monitoring and evaluation, Fredskorpset commissions yearly studies of the degree to which stated goals are achieved in a selected number of exchange projects. In 2004, the following four exchanges under the Youth program were selected for study:

1. AIESEC in Norway and Kenya
2. The Norwegian Missionary Society (Det Norske Misjonsselskap, NMS) in Norway and the Evangelical Lutheran Church (FLM) in Madagascar
3. The Faculty of Education at the Volda University College (VUC, Distriktshøyskolen i Volda), Norway, and Lilongwe Teachers' Training College (LTTC) and Chancellor College (CC) at the University of Malawi, both Malawi
4. The Federation of Norwegian Youth Organisations (Landslaget for Norske Ungdomsorganisasjoner, LNU) exchange between Red Cross in Troms, Norway, and the Masindi Red Cross in Uganda.

The focus of the study was on whether planned activities and goals had been realized, on the factors that affect goals achievement, and on the results of information activities under the program. The Norwegian Institute of International Affairs (NUPI) was asked to do the study, which involved visits to all partner institutions, and interviews with participants, ex-participants and exchange coordinators/contact persons. Interviews were carried out in person when possible, and by phone and e-mail in other cases. The study was conducted during November-December 2004.

Goals achievement

It should be pointed out that this study is based on a very limited sample. Only four exchange programs have been analyzed, and these are all relatively recent programs with only one round of exchanges completed. Furthermore, each exchange involved relatively few participants – only two to four persons from each country. At the same time, these exchanges are quite different – for instance in terms of types of partner institutions, requirements of participants, activities involved and length of exchange periods. Finally, we should point out that the success or failure of any one placement may be just as due to the personal characteristics of the exchange participant as to one (or more) of these particularities. What all this points to, is that it is quite difficult to draw general conclusions on the basis of these findings. While the following conclusions are warranted with respect to the exchanges we have studied, we would warn against expecting that they can be easily generalized for all Fredskorpset Youth exchanges.

The stated objectives of the exchange programs included individual learning objectives, objectives at the institutional level, and information objectives. Individual learning objectives comprise learning i) about other countries, societies and cultures; ii) about core activities of the institutions involved; iii) personal growth; and iv) developing attitudes and motives that are expressed in actions, decisions and continued interest. In general, the three first types of

learning seem to have been achieved in all exchanges. Though views varied, on the whole participants were enthusiastic about the exchange program, felt that they had learned a lot, acquired new perspectives and matured personally. This is perhaps not very meaningful, however, as these objectives – unless they are further specified – are close to self-fulfilling. One can equally well conclude that in all cases, more could have been achieved if learning goals had been clearer and more specific, and exchange activities had been more directly tailored to facilitate this type of learning.

It may still be early to gauge achievements in terms of the objective of inspiring and motivating the participants to take part in organizational and international solidarity activities, so soon after the end of the first round of exchanges. Still, our findings indicate that such results are found in three of the four cases. The tendency seems strongest among the North participants – perhaps due to greater opportunities for both professional and voluntary involvement – but is also found among the participants from the South.

Objectives at the institutional level differ somewhat between the exchanges studied. They comprise strengthening the participating institutions and the cooperation among them, as well as the establishment of business relations between the two countries. Stated goals have been reached in two of the exchanges. For another, it is too early to evaluate, while in the last case institutional objectives remain to be operationalised.

In general, information objectives are not specified with much precision. In many cases, this seems more to be activities that are added on because Fredskorpset requires it than integral elements of the exchange programs as such. In one or two cases, it seems fair to say that there is little systematic emphasis to ensure that these activities are realized with any conviction. We find that in only one of the cases – the Red Cross – is the information work a truly integrated element of the exchange. This integral character, and the fact that information work is carried out by North and South participants together, results in a well-organized information activity with considerable outreach. For the other exchanges, efforts are much less systematic, and impacts are difficult to estimate. Summing up, it seems that these four Fredskorpset Youth exchanges together are far from realizing their full information potentials.

Factors affecting goals achievement

The exchanges are organized by the partner institutions, and characteristics of these institutions are therefore fundamental for the potential achievements. From our examples it seems that previous experience of exchanges and international cooperation is of prime importance for the ability to implement the exchanges in an efficient and successful way. Similarly, the organizational capacity of the institutions involved has great significance.

The character of the partnerships likewise influences the exchanges. In most cases, these are dominated by the North partner. There are a number of practical and structural reasons for this. One potential effect of this skewed relationship, however, that is found in at least two of the exchanges, is that the flow of communication between partners is constrained in various ways. This again leads to deficient and lopsided planning of the exchanges, where more attention is given to the placements in one of the countries. A lack of correspondence between the activities and the objectives of the exchange easily follows. Furthermore, these problems often lead to situations where participants arrive in host countries with few and/or misconceived ideas about what the exchange and posting will entail. Such mistaken expectations, often accompanied by a mismatch between the skills of the participants and the

requirements for the postings, lead to frustrations and make the achievement of objectives more difficult.

A well-conceived idea for the exchange, where there is a good fit between the qualifications of the participants, their interests, and the institutional contexts into which they are placed, can outweigh a number of other weaknesses in the set-up.

Recruitment, preparation and team organization are ways of ensuring the quality of the human resources upon which any exchange program ultimately depends. One program experienced recruitment problems and both North and South participants were selected partly outside the criteria originally established. Clearly this limits the possibilities of achieving stated goals. In the other programs, recruitment on the whole apparently went smoothly. Preparation is deficient in a number of projects, often related to unclear or mistaken ideas about the activities and placements to be realized in the other country. Deficient preparation leads to lost opportunities for systematic learning and well-planned information work. Finally, the Fredskorpset Youth program emphasizes that it is a group program. Yet only the Red Cross exchange makes use of the opportunity for organizing participants into a team, jointly realizing a number of activities together. It would seem that there is a potential for realizing synergies through team organization also in other exchanges.

While learning objectives generally are quite loosely formulated, and therefore not very useful for measuring achievements, it should in some of the exchanges be possible to be a lot more specific about what themes one expects the participants to learn about. This allows much more targeted and systematic designing of activities that are logically linked to these goals. Through such a systematic effort, more can be achieved in terms of learning. Only one program really exemplifies such an approach.

A lack of social integration threatens goals achievement both because opportunities for learning about the host society are lost and because this may result in a difficult psychological situation for the young participants of the Fredskorpset Youth program. The material indicates that social integration is often more difficult for South participants who come to Norway. There are a number of reasons for this, relating to North-South issues, class and race, language, and perhaps other cultural issues. In any case, it means that it is particularly important to ensure that mechanisms for social integration – whether through forms of accommodation, social contacts and networks, specific activities, or in other ways – are in place for the postings in Norway.

In three of the four cases, information activities appear in many cases more as add-ons and afterthoughts than as integrated elements of the exchanges. Participants and partner institutions therefore do not focus on the tasks in a systematic way, do not dedicate sufficient resources and energy, lack appropriate materials and effective strategies, miss good opportunities and implement activities in a less than optimal way. Thus, the specific advantages of doing information work while in the host country are neglected in many cases. Where North and South partners are able work together on information activities, they are able to complement each other and offer an information package of greater impact than any of them could have realized on their own. On the other hand, there are other programs where information activities are divorced from the core activities of the exchange, largely limited to the post-exchange period, and given little priority by the partner institutions. In these cases, the objectives of the information activities also seem quite unclear, and neither target groups nor contents are defined. It is not surprising that such exchanges achieve much less on the

information side. Here the individual participant is to a large extent left to his or her own devices, and it should not be surprising that in some cases few activities are realized.

Finally, as Fredskorpset has not defined the goals for the information work in the South, it may be difficult to develop and implement focused information activities there. In two of the cases studied, this has been resolved through a focus on the organizations' missions – i.e. missionary work and spreading knowledge of and international humanitarian law – but for the other organizations, it remains unclear what should be the focus of the information activities in the South.

Recommendations

The original idea of Fredskorpset consisted in young people from Norway going to live and work in the South as a means to assist developing countries and to create understanding and support for development aid at home. The idea of partnership and reciprocity between North and South, with Fredskorps participants not only coming from the North and going South, but also South participants going North, is a relatively new idea and only partly integrated into the original concept. Questions therefore arise in relation to the objectives and set-up of the Fredskorpset Youth exchanges: to which extent they not only are, but should further the basic Norwegian intentions - or to which extent they might mirror genuine South perspectives and preoccupations? This ambiguity might need some further reflection on the part of Fredskorpset Youth to clarify differences or similarities between North and South partner institutions and participants.

Balancing partnerships

There are many reasons why North partners tend to become dominant in partnerships, including the direct contact with Fredskorpset, the power-laden donor-recipient relationships that permeate all development assistance, and the general differences in resource endowments between North and South. As unbalanced partnerships negatively affect goals achievement, Fredskorpset should explore ways of strengthening South partners in the exchanges.

Clearer information goals

While the Fredskorpset Youth program seems to have its strongest rationale in the information impacts it achieves, we do not think the institution is sufficiently clear in what kind of information dissemination it wants to promote. There are two fundamental questions that need to be answered:

- Is any information about the other country sufficient, or are there particular kinds of information that Fredskorpset wishes to promote?
- Are information objectives the same in Norway and the South, or are there different goals?

Integrating information

In the Fredskorpset Youth program, information activities are largely conceptualized as something that is done after the end of the exchange period. This contributes to marginalizing this aspect, making it something additional, that is included as an afterthought, because Fredskorpset requires it. This should be countered by giving information objectives a more central place during planning of the exchanges as a whole, including the exchange periods.

Clearer learning objectives

In planning, more emphasis should be put on what one wants participants to learn – this can to a great extent be derived from the information goals of the exchange. With explicit goals on

areas and issues the participants should learn about, activities can be tailored to facilitate such learning.

Relating to the vulnerability of youth

The Fredskorpset participants are between 18 and 25, and many have little or no previous experience of exposure to new cultural or social contexts. Sending young people on exchanges across the globe involves huge responsibilities. Difficult exchange situations may lead to life choices with consequences participants have no ways of foreseeing. Cultural shocks and isolation, mental strains due to unfamiliar circumstances, interpersonal relationships and health hazards can have life-long implications. Currently, Fredskorpset uses the preparation course to address such issues. Apart from that, it is the partner institutions that are responsible for dealing with them. In many cases, this means that responsibility is in practice left with the youth themselves. Fredskorpset should consider whether further general measures are necessary to ensure that minimum standards for the protection of participants are met in all Fredskorpset Youth exchanges.

Monitoring and evaluation

As the Fredskorpset Youth program is based on a decentralized structure and mainly use public financing, the monitoring and evaluation of results – by the partner institutions themselves as by Fredskorpset – should be a central concern. Fredskorpset should consider whether it is possible to develop procedures which, without becoming unnecessarily bureaucratic, nevertheless could ensure a more systematic evaluation of the different programs, evaluations which should be accessible to scrutiny by outside persons and bodies.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background of the Fredskorpset Youth Program

Fredskorpset¹ is a Norwegian exchange program that was started in 2001. The aim is to contribute towards the overarching objectives for Norway's cooperation with developing countries: to contribute to permanent improvements in economic, social and political conditions for the people of developing countries, with special emphasis on aid benefiting the poorest of the poor. To this end, Fredskorpset has twin objectives : On the one hand to contribute to development efforts and poverty reduction in the developing countries, and on the other hand, to promote contact and cooperation between individuals, organisations and institutions in Norway and in the developing countries, based on solidarity, equality and reciprocity.

In 2002, the Fredskorpset Youth program for young people aged 18-25 was initiated. from different parts of the world meet and share activities and work experiences. The aim of the encounters is to promote commitment among young people, offer an inspirational means of reciprocal learning and thereby create a basis for new involvement and alternative approaches. Thus, in contrast with the Main Fredskorpset program, the emphasis of the exchange is less on making an impact through professional work or tasks realized during the exchange. Instead, the focus of the Youth Program is on the participants acquiring new knowledge, attitudes and inspiration, which should be disseminated through information activities linked to the program, as well as realized through continued interest and engagement in international issues.

The Fredskorpset Youth program is based on exchange and partnership between organizations and institutions in the South and in Norway. It is the partner organizations that set the goals for the exchange and assume responsibility for planning and implementation of the projects. The partners recruit, send out and receive the participants. Fredskorpset assists in development of the projects, quality controls and funds activities in whole or in part. An exchange project under the Fredskorpset Youth program takes place within a maximum period of a year and includes a posting abroad of at least 3 months. The participants attend a preparatory course and travel to their posting in large or small groups. Within 2 months of their return home, they carry out follow-up activities, the aim of which is to promote greater awareness of, and commitment to, North-South issues in Norway.

2.2 Terms of reference for the study

In order to learn from experiences and improve practices, Fredskorpset has decided to have yearly studies of the degree to which stated goals are achieved in a selected number of Fredskorpset projects. For the Fredskorpset Youth program, four exchanges were selected to be studied. The overall objectives of the study include assessing whether and to what extent planned activities and stated goals are achieved in the short term; assessing the experiences and results of the follow-up information activities; and indirectly, to strengthen the

¹ Literally the term means "peace corps" or "volunteer" service, but the Norwegian term is preferred so the program is not confused with apparently similar, but actually different programs in other countries.

Fredskorpset Youth partner organizations consciousness about objectives, goal formulations, and realism of achieving them.

According to the terms of reference (see appendix 6.3, in Norwegian) the study should focus on the achievement of objectives by the partners according to the formulated goals in the partner- and collaboration agreements. Special emphasis should be placed on the content and results of the follow-up activities: to which extent the planned activities have been implemented, to which extent the follow-up activities have contributed to the achievement of objectives, if there have been results or effects which were not planned, and if the results are reasonable in relation to the resources that have been utilised. Lessons learned should be summarised in such a way that they can contribute to concrete improvements in the future implementation of follow-up activities with regards to the preparation, content and means of transmission. Further, the study should clarify results as a consequence of the exchanges which were not foreseen or planned. Both the North and South partners should be visited in the course of the study.

The study should be based on document studies, and interviews with partners as well as present and former participants in the exchange programs. Where personal interviews were not feasible, questionnaires were to be sent by e-mail to partners and participants.

The study comprises the programs of

1. AIESEC in Norway and Kenya,
2. The Norwegian Missionary Society (Det Norske Misjonsselskap, NMS) in Norway and the Evangelical Lutheran Church (FLM) in Madagascar,
3. The Faculty of Education at the Volda University College (VUC, Distriktshøyskolen i Volda) and Lilongwe Teachers' Training College (LTTC) and Chancellor College (CC) at the University of Malawi, and
4. The Federation of Norwegian Youth Organisations (Landslaget for Norske Ungdomsorganisasjoner, LNU) exchange between Red Cross in Troms and the Masindi Red Cross in Uganda.

2.3 Team and data collection

NUPI (the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs) was selected to do the study, within a total frame of seven weeks, from the signing of the contract on 11 October till the first draft report was to be delivered to Fredskorpset Youth on 1 December 2004. The study was undertaken by Axel Borchgrevink (team leader) and Torild Skard².

A first step of the study was to summarise the objectives of the individual exchange projects, as these are specified in the partnership agreements and concept documents established by the North and South partners. The resulting goals statements were presented to the North partners for approval (see appendix 6.1).

The study is largely based on interviews and on questionnaires distributed by e-mail and followed up by telephone. All the partner institutions in Norway were visited (AIESEC in

² Axel Borchgrevink doing the fieldwork for the AIESEC and Red Cross programs and Torild Skard for the Norwegian Missionary Society and Volda University College programs.

Oslo, NMS in Stavanger and Red Cross in Troms) with the exception of Volda University College, where the airplane broke down underway. The planned face-to-face interviews with VUC were replaced by extensive telephone conversations. In addition AIESEC Kenya was visited in Nairobi, NMS/FLM in Antananarivo, Red Cross in Masindi (Uganda), Lilongwe Teachers' Training College in Lilongwe and Chancellor College in Zomba in Malawi. Interviews were conducted with the contact persons for the exchange programs both in the North and South institutions; sometimes also other representatives of the institutions (such as local contact persons and host families, co-workers or superiors); former and present participants (both from the North and South). The focus was mainly on the 2003-2004 exchange, but sometimes information was included regarding the 2002-2003 exchange (AIESEC) and the 2004-2005 exchange (NMS, AIESEC). The 2004-2005 exchanges had just started up at the time of the study, making it unrealistic to assess goals achievement at this stage. (An overview of the conducted interviews is included as appendix 6.4).

The face-to-face and telephone interviews were open-ended and free discussions, though the questionnaires elaborated for the e-mail interviews with contact persons and participants (see appendix 6.2) were used as checklists for themes to cover. In some cases respondents just filled in the questionnaires which were sent by e-mail. The questionnaires focused on the participation in the exchange program, the information activities and the results of the exchange (see appendix 6.2.)

Generally, the response to the study was positive, nearly all informants accepting to be interviewed. In the case of AIESEC seven (out of eight) participants and ex-participants, two coordinators and two superiors/co-workers were interviewed. In the case of the Norwegian Missionary Society/FLM six contact persons and seven out of eight former and present participants were interviewed. For the Red Cross exchange, three former participants (out of four) and three coordinators/contact persons were interviewed. With regards to the VUC/LTTC/CC exchange five contact persons and other representatives of the institutions and seven out of eight former participants were interviewed, while the eighth former participant filled out the questionnaire. Three e-mail questionnaires were not responded to.

The limitations of the data material should be made clear: First, the information is uneven: the face-to-face interviews providing more in depth understanding than the telephone interviews. For three of the exchanges, face-to-face interviews were only carried out with the South participants due to the geographic dispersion of the North participants. The telephone interviews, on the other hand, provided more complete information than only the written questionnaires would have done.

Second, the material is necessarily subjective, entailing personal impressions and judgements, possibly exaggerating or underreporting events and experiences. The respondents were told that the selection of programs in the study were random, simply ensuring a certain variation, and did not imply a certain approach on the part of Fredskorpset. The aim of the study was to improve arrangements, not end any specific program. Even if these statements might have reduced tendencies to exaggerate success or problems (according to the view of the respondent), such biases cannot be excluded. Also, cultural differences in relating to consultants from the North and in the ways activities were described and attitudes expressed might influence the material. Nevertheless, the general impression was that respondents answered eagerly and honestly to the questions, and the broad coverage of respondents (though the numbers were not always very great) ensured that different views were expressed on arrangements and incidents.

Thirdly, the fact that most of the information work carried out had consisted of oral presentations that we were unable to witness, and that written information material was only available in one case, poses great limitations on the potential for judging the content, quality and impact of these activities.

Furthermore, it is also important to emphasize the difficulties of assessing the results of a program such as the Fredskorpset Youth program. Results are changes as a result of the program, and to know them one needs to know what the situation was beforehand and compare it with the present situation, and determine whether any changes are due to the program or to other factors. Here we are looking for results in terms of changes in the individual participants (new knowledge and attitudes), changes at the institutional level of the partner organizations, as well as results from the information activities in a wider audience. Sources of information vary, but none of them are unproblematic. For the individual level, we depend largely on statements from the former participants themselves and our impressions of them during interviews, together with statements from coordinators and contact persons. The assessments we make on this basis are necessarily subjective, and of course liable to bias where informants wish to exaggerate positive results or criticisms. For results at an institutional level, interview data are again important, in some cases complemented by written sources. In some cases, more objective indicators exist for this level. For the information activities we have not had the opportunity of interviewing representatives of the audiences or target groups – nor have we seen much information material – and our assessments of the results of these activities are largely based on how seriously and systematically they have been undertaken.

In this way, then, the general findings and conclusions are arrived at, based on the material as a whole and the impressions of the consultants. There is an element of subjectivity, but efforts are made as far as possible to give the factual bases for judgements and recommendations. On the other hand, the potential for illustrating with concrete examples is somewhat hampered because of concerns for anonymity. With a small sample, both of exchanges and participants, such examples are easily traced to the individuals they concern. For this reason we have largely avoided such examples, even if they might have been both illustrative and revealing.

The reader should be warned not to draw too many inferences about the Fredskorpset Youth program in general on the basis of the material presented here. For one thing, Fredskorpset is a constantly changing and developing institution, and much of the material of this report refers to the first round of exchanges under the Youth program. Since then, some of the problems noted in this report have been addressed. Secondly, the sample is quite limited. There are only four exchanges, with only 2-4 participants in each, and these are highly different exchanges, exposed to different challenges and social and practical mechanisms. With so many variables and such a small sample, general conclusions are hard to draw. We therefore have little way of knowing whether the level of achievement of objectives observed in these projects is representative for all the Fredskorpset Youth exchanges – in all probability this is not the case.

However, while the material is not suited for quantitative analysis, we believe that the advantage of qualitative analysis of a limited number of cases is the way it allows tracing out causal patterns and understanding the reasons behind observed outcomes. For this reason, the report dedicates considerable space to the process of the exchanges, to show how the achieved

results depend on different factors. In this sense, there are general lessons to be learnt also from this study, in the way different factors affect goals achievement.

3 The exchange projects

3.1 AIESEC

3.1.1 The exchange program

AIESEC is an international organization for business and economics students. A principal objective of the organization is to arrange traineeships in corporations or institutions that will allow students and recent graduates to have working experience in a new country. National AIESEC organizations are independent units that cooperate under the common umbrella. Both Norway and Kenya have national organizations that have existed for several decades.

Before entering the Fredskorpset program, the exchange experience of AIESEC Norway had mainly been with Western countries. Upon learning about Fredskorpset, it was realized that this offered an opportunity to add a North-South dimension to the AIESEC exchanges. Kenya, Nigeria and India were selected as partner countries (due in part to the perceived capacity of the AIESEC organizations in these countries to host exchanges), and Fredskorpset funded a pilot project that involved visits to the three countries, as well as return visits to Norway. This study has only focused on the exchanges between AIESEC Kenya and AIESEC Norway.

The first round of exchange (2002-2003) was organized under the Fredskorpset Main Program, while the second round (2004-2005) is under the Youth Program. Formally, this study should then only focus on the second round. However, given the fact that few substantial changes have been made to the program for the second round, and that it is impossible to gauge the results and impacts of the second round barely two months into a nine months exchange, it has been decided to include also the first round of exchange in the study. Indeed, much of the discussion will focus on this first round as this is where results can be assessed.

The first exchange period was from November 2002 to December 2003, starting with a four week Fredskorpset preparation course in Mandal, Norway. Two Norwegian exchange participants (both male) went to Kenya to work in an IT company, while two Kenyans (male and female) went to Norway to work in two different software companies. This exchange was realized as part of the main program of Fredskorpset. In evaluating the experience, some changes were made before the second round of exchanges. One of these was to define the new exchange as part of the Youth program. This involved a somewhat shorter exchange period, and meant that AIESEC Norway was no longer *employer* of the exchange participants. The latter point was seen as important by AIESEC, as it reduced heavy administrative burdens on a small and inexperienced administration, and it was hoped that it would lead the companies to assume greater responsibilities for the participants. The second round of exchanges was initiated with three weeks of preparation course (two weeks AIESEC, one week Fredskorpset) in July/August 2004. The exchange involves three (two female, one male) Norwegians in Kenya (two working in a parastatal investment promotion institution and one working in a web design company) and one (female) Kenyan in Norway (working in a power company). The intention was to have three Kenyan participants, but so far AIESEC Norway has been unable to identify additional companies interested in taking on trainees.

Participants are selected in similar ways in Kenya and Norway, as candidates are nominated by the local AIESEC committees at the different educational institutions, and interviewed and screened by a national committee. Thereafter, the resumes of the approved candidates are sent

to the other country, for selection by the companies hosting the traineeships. While similar in form, there is still a difference in outcome, as all the Kenyan participants so far have been members of AIESEC, while none of the Norwegians have been members.

3.1.2 Objectives and planned activities

Overall objectives

Develop youth leadership

Promote (business) relations between Norway and Kenya

Planned exchange activities

The participants were to work as management trainees in private companies. Their assigned tasks should be professionally fulfilling.

They should function as ambassadors for Fredskorpset, AIESEC and their home country.

They should also attend learning workshops

Learning objectives of exchanges

Develop leadership and change agent characteristics

Increased cultural awareness and knowledge of host country

Insight into business practices of other countries

Networking

3.1.3 Implementation and results

The first round of exchanges was largely carried out as planned, although in two cases the candidates did not complete the exchange period in the company where they started. In one case, after the bankruptcy of the Norwegian company where one of the Kenyan participants was working, she completed the planned stay in Norway working at the AIESEC office. In another case, a Norwegian participant changed to another place of work due to a conflict with his superior.

While AIESEC is an organization that is primarily geared at organizing exchanges, it is clear that the Fredskorpset program has taxed the organization to a greater extent than what was foreseen. As a student organization dependent on minimal staff and voluntary work³, it has not always been easy to comply with all requirements of the exchange program. During the first round of exchange, being employer for 14 participants coming from and working in four different countries and handling the finances and accounts for such a large program, overstretched the capacity of AIESEC Norway. While the formal requirements were fulfilled, it was decided that the Fredskorpset Youth model was more appropriate for the second round of exchange. For this round of exchange the problem was further alleviated by strengthening the secretariat of AIESEC Norway. But organizational problems of the exchange program are still apparent in the late selection of candidates, which meant that some of the Norwegian participants in this year's exchange were only notified that they had been approved a couple of weeks before the preparatory course started, when they had already initiated other plans for the year. There have also been complaints about too little information about the companies and the kind of tasks they were going to have. While this was a big problem for the first round of exchange – when particularly the Kenyan participants had little understanding of what was

³ While this general description holds for both Kenya and Norway, AIESEC Norway is still somewhat better off in terms of having some paid administrative capacity.

actually going to happen – the lack of information has not been completely resolved for the second round of the program. Furthermore, it seems that there has been little capacity of AIESEC to follow up the placements of the participants and in particular to take action where there have been problems. While the characteristic by one participant of AIESEC as just a ‘booze and party organization’ seems to be unjust, it is clear that for a student organization relying largely on voluntary work, it is difficult to follow up all the requirements of administering a complex exchange program.

One main difficulty for the program has been identifying appropriate companies to host the traineeships. Some companies have been wholly inappropriate – such as the Norwegian company where one Kenyan participant (together with a Nigerian participant) worked during the first round, which had a staff of only one, the owner, and which folded relatively early in the exchange period. Other placements have been less than wholly successful because the profile of the participant has not matched the needs of the company, or because the company has lacked resources necessary to make use of the capacity of the participant, or because the company has not made many efforts to make use of the participant. Generally, these problems seem to have been greatest during the first round of exchange. As part of the changes introduced before the second round, the companies were obliged to pay a greater part of the participants’ remuneration (which it was hoped would lead to increased sense of ownership of the program), and more emphasis was put on screening possible companies. Thus, of the four current placements, three are reported to be fairly successful (two in Kenya and one in Norway), while there is only one case where there is limited work for the participant. However, it should be pointed out that the more careful screening of companies means that so far it has only been possible to identify one placement in Norway (instead of the planned three), while the three placements in Kenya are all the result of contacts made by a previous Norwegian participant (now living in Kenya) and have thus not been identified through the ordinary routines of AIESEC Kenya for recruiting companies.

A strength of AIESEC as an organization has been its ability to promote social integration for the participants. From the time of arrival in the new country – both to Norway and to Kenya – participants have been drawn into an active social network of likeminded people (business and economics students of roughly similar age). While this is in part an effect of the type of organization, it is also a result of very conscious efforts from the national and local AIESEC committees to welcome and integrate the participants from the very start of the exchange period.

The objectives of the exchange were twofold: on the one hand to related to individual learning and personal development, and on the other hand to foster stronger links between Norway and Kenya, particularly related to business. The exchange seems to have been successful on both accounts, as far as we can ascertain. The individuals taking part in the first round of exchange seem all to have grown from it. According to own statements and those of coordinators, they have developed along the dimensions of the change agent, as these are specified in the concept document⁴. They also seem confident in the knowledge they have acquired about how to interact in the cultural environment of their host country. Both the Norwegian ex-participants appear to have developed a strong commitment for Kenya.

All Norwegian participants, from the first as well as the current exchange, concurred in expressing that the program was a golden opportunity for them in terms of experiencing and

⁴ ‘Socially responsible, value driven, open minded, able to manage change, active learner, entrepreneurial, proactive, passion for change, culturally sensitive and leading by change’.

learning about a new country. 'The best year of my life' and 'personally, a wonderful experience' were expressions used. The Kenyan participants were maybe not quite as enthusiastic, but all saw the exchange as a useful learning experience. This difference in evaluations may have more to do with different motivations and expectations than with how much they had learned. For young professionals from a country in the South going to work in private companies in a country in the North, advancing one's career and income opportunities will inevitably be an important part of the motivation. For the Norwegian participants, on the other hand, taking part in the exchange program will hardly be understood in this light, and the motive of meeting a new culture and country will consequently be more dominant.

The first round of exchanges has also been successful in establishing new business relations between Norway and Kenya. One Kenyan participant is now starting up a business based on the marketing in Kenya of the software product developed by the company he worked with in Norway. The other Kenyan participant has taken part in the founding of an NGO working with computer technology in the health sector, based largely on contacts with American health professionals she acquired during her short spell at the Norwegian company that went broke. One of the Norwegian participants has settled in Kenya, where he has started several companies that deal with business and aid affairs with Norway, partly in cooperation with Kenyan contacts. And the last participant has established a personal relationship with a Kenyan orphanage, and is moreover in the process of developing a business idea based on exports from Kenya to Norway. Thus, in four out of four cases the exchange has led to new types of (business) relations with Kenya – an extremely impressive record.

3.1.4 Information activities

The planned post-exchange information activities were to hold seminars at Fredskorpset networking events, AIESEC national conferences and/or universities and schools, with the objectives of disseminating knowledge about North-South issues and Fredskorpset; letting participants practice change agent characteristics, and fostering business relations between the two countries. Designated target groups for the information activities were:

- Students, universities
- AIESECers, other trainees
- Companies
- Media

Information activities have taken place both during the exchanges and after. During exchanges, these have largely consisted in presentations about home country and the exchange program at local and national AIESEC meetings – and at the places of work of the participants. After the exchanges, there has been a similar focus on AIESEC and business/economics students as the main target group for the information activities.

In the Norwegian context, the program has an important potential, in that by bringing skilled young Kenyan business professionals to Norway, and letting Norwegian participants work in the modern business sector of Kenya, there are great opportunities for challenging stereotypes of Africa that are prevalent in Norway. Showing a more nuanced picture of Africa has undoubtedly been an important information effect of the program.

Still, it seems that the opportunities offered by the program could have been made better use of. The obligatory information work after the exchange period seems in most cases to have been limited to presenting the program at an AIESEC meeting. As AIESEC only has a couple

of hundred members in each country, this is a very restricted target group. Moreover, AIESEC as an organization does not seem to have backed up the participants in their information efforts. In one case where the participant did not take part in any AIESEC information activities, he reported lack of interest from the organization as his reason for this. Instead he limited himself to arranging for a newspaper interview about the exchange as his way of fulfilling his information obligation. Of course, the four participants who have completed the exchange and the information work afterwards were part of the Fredskorpset Main Program, where the emphasis on information activities after the program period is less than for the Youth Program. Thus, it is possible that for the present round of exchange, information activities after the program period will be more emphasized and given greater backing from the organization. However, the fact that the current participants at the moment of interviews (2-3 months into the program) have made no preparations, and have only very vague ideas about what their information activity should entail, may be an indication that this is not a priority area in this round either.

3.1.5 Conclusions

This exchange is based on a very good idea, where the participants' interests in gaining professional experience from international work, the wish of private companies to host international trainees, and the potentials for establishing business links between Norway and Kenya seem to go hand in hand. This has led to very strong results in terms of the objective of furthering business relations between the two countries. Moreover, all participants appear to have learned a lot and developed as persons, and especially among the Norwegian participants, enthusiasm about the program and a commitment to Kenya appear to have been instilled.

The fact that the participants have been resourceful young persons, and that AIESEC has provided a good social network in the new country, have probably contributed to minimize the negative impacts of the frequent less-than-ideal placements. Difficulties in identifying companies in Norway, mismatches between the skills of the participants and the requirements of the companies, limited administrative capacity of AIESEC and lack of emphasis on information activities are weaknesses of the program that if addressed might serve to make the program even more successful.

3.2 Norwegian Missionary Society

3.2.1 The exchange program

The Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS) has long experience with missionary activities including evangelisation and development assistance in many parts of the world. Together with Strømmestiftelsen and Norway's Christian Student and School Association (NKSS or Laget) the NMS has established Hald International Centre in Mandal to promote intercultural understanding and communication among young people from different countries. Studies related to missionary work, aid and leadership are offered at Hald and the participating organisations organise work experiences for the students abroad. For NMS this takes place in the context of Team Nettverk. To strengthen the North-South involvement and in particular increase participation from the South (as youth from poor countries often are unable to finance such participation themselves) NMS suggested the establishment of a Fredskorpset Youth and receives support for exchanges with a number of countries. But the present study only includes collaboration with the Fianganana Loterana Malagasy (FLM), the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Madagascar.

The program is established between the NMS and the youth department of the FLM. The FLM was created in 1867 to continue the evangelistic activities carried out by the NMS. It is an independent Lutheran church, but NMS supports activities and projects. As the NMS has missionary activities in Madagascar and an office in Antananarivo, the Fredskorpset Youth is in practice managed by the NMS in Stavanger and Antananarivo, Hald International Centre and FLM together. The NMS is clearly the lead partner, being mainly responsible for the Norwegian participants both in Norway and Madagascar and for the Malagasy participants in Norway. The FLM recruits the Malagasy participants and organises follow-up activities in Madagascar after their stay abroad. Partner meetings to discuss the exchanges are held annually in Norway or Madagascar, the next being in January 2005 in Norway. Partners also meet during NMS in-field visits to Madagascar.

The first exchange related to Fredskorpset Youth took place in 2003-2004 and the second started in the fall of 2004. The study focuses mainly on the first exchange, as the second had just started at the time of data collection, but the South participants who had just come to Norway, shared their experiences so far. The preparations and debriefing of both the North and South participants take place at Hald, where Fredskorpset also organises a mandatory one-week course. The Norwegians are posted 6-7 months in Madagascar, while the Africans stay 10 months in Norway, including preparatory and debriefing courses. Information and follow-up work lasts a few weeks for the South participants and a couple of months for those from the North.

The participants in the exchange program are supposed to be Christian young people with experience from children- and youth ministry in the local churches or other organisations. The participants both from the South and the North are selected according to agreed-upon criteria emphasizing their language skills (first of all English and for the Norwegian participants preferably also some French), skills in music and sports and personal qualities such as independence, flexibility, ability to take responsibility and to lead. After advertising in the Church in Madagascar and in various newspapers and the Internet in Norway the participants are selected by a panel consisting of representatives for FLM and NMS in Madagascar and for Hald and NMS in Norway.

3.2.2 Objectives and planned activities

Overall objectives

Obtain greater understanding and knowledge about each other's cultures and increased competence in intercultural communication, human understanding and tolerance among young people

Obtain greater understanding and knowledge about mission and development work and increased involvement in church and mission work

Share experiences and new knowledge with other young people in NMS and FLM and in society in general to improve understanding and strengthen relationships between cultures and churches

Planned exchange activities

In the program period four students from Norway go to Madagascar and two students from Madagascar come to Norway.

The participants shall work together with local NMS/FLM and church workers.

The North participants shall teach music, computing and English in schools and youth groups, participate in music and sport activities among students and young people in the church, work with children in schools and institutions and possibly participate in agricultural work.

The South participants shall participate in the work of NMS and local churches in Norway: in music, sport, talks, presentations etc., with special emphasis on children- and youth ministry and possibly do practical work at campsites and in churches.

Learning objectives of exchanges

The North participants shall gain greater knowledge about political, social and religious conditions in relevant countries; differences in culture as a valuable part of the world society; central approaches within mission work and development aid; Christian faith and church work. The participants shall also get to know themselves better, their own faith, values, background and attitudes towards their own and other cultures. The knowledge and experience shall be continued in work for a more just world and be used to change attitudes in their own society and create an active involvement in mission and development aid.

The South participants shall give young members of the church a broader understanding of the mission of the church in the world and encourage them to share their faith in Jesus Christ. More young people shall become actively involved as members of the church and FLM shall grow and develop through youth participation.

3.2.3 Implementation and results

Generally, the planned activities were implemented, though everybody did not necessarily perform all activities.

The preparations, monitoring and debriefing in relation to the exchange program were exceptionally thorough. The participants participated in extensive preparatory and debriefing courses in an international environment at Hald, including personal counselling in addition to informative lectures, and in-field seminars were held in the middle of the posting abroad in the country of posting. During the program each participant wrote two papers relating to the exchange. Support systems were organised in the place where the young people were posted.

In Norway, the Malagasy youth were placed in local congregations with a host family, a local contact person representing NMS or the congregation, an advisor from NMS and a helpmate in the local student milieu. In 2003 the Malagasy participants (both women) were placed in Levanger. They participated in the youth choir, Sunday school, kindergarten and other children- and youth activities within the congregation. This worked well in many ways, but problems in the social relations made the NMS move the participants to other places (Mandal and Stavanger) during the posting period. The Malagasy participants in 2004 (a man and a woman) were placed near Sandnes. In Madagascar, the Norwegian youth (also women) had a special Malagasy course in Antsirabé upon arrival in the country. Then two went to an NMS-supported agricultural school in Morondava and two to a teacher training college in Fandriana, both institutions financed by Norwegian aid funds (from NORAD). In Fandriana they lived in the same boarding house as the Malagasy students, but had their own rooms and could choose if they wanted to eat by themselves or with the others. In Morondova they were lodged in an empty teacher's house, where they could make their own food. A maid assisted them. They could also eat in the student boarding house. In both cases a Norwegian missionary family lived quite near and served as a contact family. In addition, an advisor in Antsirabé could assist, if necessary, though the distances were considerable (145 and 495 kilometres) and communications difficult.

The arrangements nevertheless give room for improvement. The Malagasy participants had no briefing course before they left Madagascar and felt that they were insufficiently prepared to meet a foreign culture. There was no team-building, either, for Malagasy youth from different backgrounds who were supposed to travel together. The course at Hald was useful, but limited, in their view. Coming from a French-speaking background there were language problems in an environment dominated by English and the food was solely Norwegian. In Levanger, the participants both learned relatively rapidly to communicate in Norwegian. Their social relations varied, being partly good and partly unsatisfactory. When there were problems, the support of the NMS advisor proved to be insufficient among others due to the fact that she was placed in Trondheim, 80 kilometres from Levanger. The Norwegian participants at the outset applied for admission to Hald, and the Fredskorpset Youth entered into the picture afterwards. The participants thought the preparatory course at Hald was very good, though some felt it could have focused more directly on Madagascar. Due to communication problems, the participants, and partly also the contact families, did not get appropriate information about the tasks the Fredskorpset Youth were to perform during the field postings. In Morondova the young women were not prepared to do agricultural work. Instead it was arranged so they could teach English and also some computering at the agricultural school and the theological seminar. In Fandriana the Fredskorps participants mainly taught English at the teacher training college. The participants gradually got good contacts with Malagasy youth in the schools and boarding houses, but some regretted that contacts were not established at an earlier stage.

Both the North and South participants were of the view that the work they performed was meaningful and interesting. They managed new assignments in spite of language constraints and unfamiliarity with the tasks, the work was useful for the beneficiaries and they established good social relations. The planning could have been better for the Malagasy youth in Levanger, and the Norwegians teaching English in Fandriana and Morondova lacked both teaching experience and materials. They did their best with simple means and the Norwegians were impressed by the gratefulness of their Malagasy pupils. NMS has acquired proper materials for English teaching for the students in 2004-2005. During the stay abroad, the Norwegian participants wrote papers relating to themes such as "Education in Madagascar",

“Religious revivalist movements” and “Cultural understanding”. The Malagasy participants focused on “Who is really poor?” and “Church and mission”.

The partner institutions and participants, from the South as well as the North, were of the opinion that the overall objectives of the program were achieved to a great extent. The participants were generally enthusiastic about their stay abroad and shared their experiences with other people. They felt that their way of thinking changed during the program, they gained new knowledge and understanding of other cultures as well as their own, obtained a wider horizon and greater openness of mind. They also acquired new skills, matured intellectually and got to know themselves better. The Norwegian participants learned to appreciate missionary work more than before. Two changed their vocational plans as a result of their experiences during the program, focusing on teaching and nursing to increase their chances to go abroad again to contribute to development efforts. The African participants felt that the program changed their lives. When they came home, they wanted to make a difference, so they engaged themselves more in church activities and inspired others. After two years the NMS will send out a questionnaire to clarify the activities of the former Fredskorpset Youth participants and results of the exchange.

3.2.4 Information activities

The planned post-exchange information activities for the North participants were to visit and share experiences in local schools in Mandal and neighbouring cities, attend NMS’ Christian summer festival “Nettverk”, visit and/or take responsibility as leaders in different activities in NMS or the local church (primarily among young people) or work as youth leaders in summer camps and festivals. Target groups were local communities, members and supporters of NMS and young people in general.

The South participants were expected to give interviews in the national and Christian radio channels, in national newspapers and in church magazines, work two weeks in FLM’s youth centre in Antananarivo to share ideas, thoughts and new knowledge with other youth workers and members, make a two weeks roundtrip to present the youth work in FLM and share experiences from the exchange period in schools, choirs, youth groups etc. in various cities and be involved weekly as leader or assistant in the children- and youth work in the church.

Both during the preparatory course and the debriefing seminar at Hald there was an extensive exchange of information about Norwegian as well as different cultures in the South (Kenya and Brasil among others in addition to Madagascar). Before travelling some Norwegian participants informed local newspapers and schools about the exchange. During the stay abroad all the exchange students told fellow students and others about their home country, often in informal settings. Some Norwegians shared their experiences with local communities and newspapers at home.

After the posting abroad information plans were elaborated both for the Malagasy and Norwegian participants. The Malagasy youth would have liked more debriefing when they came home, and they experienced problems implementing the information plan. There were time constraints, transport and other costs and the lack of appropriate materials. Though there was enthusiastic response to their presentations, the exchange participants were obliged to reduce the number of places they visited. The youth regretted this, feeling greatly inspired by their experiences abroad. The Norwegian participants were also very enthusiastic and some did more information work than planned. The group had a whole evening at the Team Nettverk summer festival and presented their experiences. There was a team trip to Troms, in

Northern Norway, and individual participants gave lectures at schools, to elderly people and youth organised by the local church or NMS, wrote newspaper articles, made photo exhibitions and stands. The work still continued at the time of the study. The participants benefited from the papers they wrote during the exchange in connection with the information work, but it is difficult to evaluate the quality and results of the information activities. Though a certain amount of information undoubtedly has been transmitted, the themes of the information and the impact are not clear and the question remains open of the cost effectiveness of the program information-wise.

3.2.5 Conclusions

The Fredskorpset Youth exchange takes place within the framework of a large Norwegian organisation that is well established in international collaboration and has a professional set-up for exchange programs. The participants were also generally enthusiastic about their experiences abroad. They felt that their way of thinking changed during the program, they gained new knowledge and understanding of other cultures as well as their own, obtained a wider horizon and greater openness of mind. They also acquired new skills, matured intellectually and got to know themselves better. The South participants felt that the program changed their lives and engaged themselves more in church activities when they came home. Two of the North participants changed their vocational plans to be able to go abroad again and contribute to development efforts. Thus the overall objectives of the program were apparently achieved to a great extent. However, the formulation of the objectives is such that they can be achieved by practically any posting abroad. The quality and impact of the program are therefore important to ensure that it is cost-effective. These aspects are difficult to evaluate, particularly at this early stage, and therefore require special attention during the follow-up. Special focus should be on the information activities. A number of activities were implemented in connection with the program, but the themes and results are not clear.

A special question concerns the role of the South partner, which is very limited. Is this the most appropriate arrangement, all conditions taken into consideration, or should it change? The Fredskorpset Youth aims at reciprocity between the North and the South, but an increased role for the FLM might not be in accordance with the organisation's own capacity and priorities or the efficiency requirements of the Fredskorpset Youth/NMS.

3.3 Red Cross

3.3.1 The exchange program

This exchange is between Troms Red Cross (one of twenty local branches of the Norwegian Red Cross) and Masindi Red Cross (one of 52 districts in Uganda). The history of the partnership goes back to 1990, and several exchanges of shorter and longer duration had been carried out before the Fredskorpset exchange. The partnership has also involved some support from Troms to Masindi for organizational development, including the construction of an office and storehouse.

This exchange is special, in that it has not come about through direct contact between Troms Red Cross and Fredskorpset. It is rather one of several exchanges that have been organized under the framework agreement that LNU (Landslaget for norske ungdomsorganisasjoner - the Federation of Norwegian Youth Organizations) has with Fredskorpset. This framework agreement – called the Youth Leadership Program – allows the membership organizations of LNU to apply for support for exchanges from LNU. The exchange was planned during a pilot project consisting of mutual visits to the partner organizations. This allowed detailed and thorough discussions and planning, involving both staff and voluntary elected officials of the two branches, as well as representatives from the national Red Cross organizations. The resulting plans are detailed (more than 60 different activities are listed), concrete, and clearly linked to objectives and expected outputs – and of a much higher quality than what is generally found in such plans. While this testifies both to the seriousness of the organizations and the constructive dialogue between them, it seems that some of the credit should also go to LNU for producing what has been reported as very relevant and helpful formats and guidelines for this planning process.

Two youths from each country – one male and one female – were to take part in the exchange. One innovative characteristic of the exchange was that these four participants were to work together during the whole exchange period, dividing their time between Uganda and Norway. As information was a main activity throughout – and half of the time in one's own country – there was no final period of post-exchange information work as is normally required in Fredskorpset exchanges.

The first round of exchanges took place between January and November 2003. Due to difficulties with obtaining longer-term visa to Norway for the Ugandan participants, the stay in Norway had to be divided into two separate periods. Thus, the participants were first three months in Norway (roughly one month of preparation course and two months of Red Cross activities), thereafter four months in Uganda, and finally two new months in Norway. In both places the participants combined information and recruitment work with taking part in regular Red Cross activities.

3.3.2 Objectives and planned activities

Overall objectives

Strengthen Masindi and Troms Red Cross (targets involving among others establishing one new and reactivating two former youth groups in Troms, and recruiting 200 new youth members and re-establishing two sub-branches in Masindi)

Mobilize and empower young people to participate in humanitarian activities

Planned exchange activities

Detailed and comprehensive activity plan – courses, meetings, seminars, information visits to schools, local Red Cross youth branches, hosting youth camps, newsletter and web information work, mobilization, leadership training, start income-generating activities, etc.

Learning objectives of exchanges

Participants will get practice/experience/knowledge as instructors and activity leaders, teamwork and teambuilding, Red Cross values and international humanitarian law, cross-cultural insights and knowledge of countries and history.

Empower young people to be aware of rights and obligations and enable them to take part in decision-making processes and become change agents

HIV awareness and disaster preparedness

3.3.3 Implementation and results

On the whole, the exchanges have been carried out successfully and according to the well-specified plans. While practical difficulties were encountered and led to some improvisations, the overall plans were still realized. Difficulties in obtaining visas for the Ugandan participants meant that the stay in Norway had to be split in two, with resulting changes in the time plan. Moreover, problems with the transfer of funds to from Norway to Masindi required credit to be obtained and some activities to be postponed. Still, these were minor hitches in a well-organized program.

The particular model of the exchange, where North and South participants worked together as a team and lived together during the whole period proved successful. This was undoubtedly an advantage for social integration – especially important for the Ugandans in Norway, as many Africans participants encounter problems with social integration outside of their place of work. Moreover, it was undoubtedly an advantage for the information work, as the combination of Ugandans and Norwegians going together to give presentations in schools and Red Cross meetings was successful in both countries. While the one in his home country could introduce, explain, help with translations where necessary and so on, the one from abroad was obviously more interesting and credible in presenting his home country.

While the team model thus was a success, it nevertheless seems that the team composition was rather imbalanced. The Norwegian participants were older, better educated, more experienced in traveling and seeing other countries and cultures, and maybe more mature. While this implied resources and capacities that were obviously good for the team as a whole, it seems likely that the inherent imbalance had implications for intergroup dynamics, and that a more balanced composition might have led to a more equal role distribution within the group. The differences of course take on added importance because of the great cultural, social, economic and climatic distance between Northern Norway and rural Uganda. Furthermore, while such imbalances may be common in many Fredskorpset exchanges – at least to some extent it is an expression of the developmental distance between North and South – it does of course become particularly visible when the exchange is organized so that the North and South participants work together the whole time. To a certain extent Red Cross is trying to address the issue in the planned upcoming exchange by raising the minimum age limit. (While one of the Ugandan participants was only 19 at the start of the previous exchange, 21 will now be the minimum.)

At the end of the exchange, the participants and coordinators together evaluated the program. The resulting document is excellent, particularly in the way it focuses directly on the extent to which the stated objectives of the exchange were reached. (This compares very favorably with the regular 'run of the mill' evaluation exercises that tend to focus only on process.) Relevant indicators are used, while caution is exercised by not attributing all positive changes to the program. Some quantitative targets are reached, others not: Two youth groups in Troms have been reestablished while a new one had not yet been started at the time of the evaluation (– but now, one year later, it is functioning); 247 new members were recruited in Masindi (47 more than the target), while there was not sufficient time in the communities to reach the goal of reestablishing two of the sub-branches. Nevertheless, as the detailed discussion testifies to, the program has had an evident effect in terms of mobilizing young people and strengthening the branches, both in Uganda and Norway.

At the level of the individual participant, learning goals were also achieved to a great extent. In general, it seems that depth of insights into a new cultural and social setting that is achieved, is greater the older and more mature the participants are – in this case the Norwegian participants had the advantage. In addition to experiencing and learning about a new country and culture, the participants also received different courses related to various Red Cross and international issues as well as to practical first aid instruction, and they also gathered a considerable amount of experience in making presentations and taking part in new Red Cross activities. For the two Norwegian participants, the exchange has also led to a greater involvement in Red Cross activities. The participant who was not a Red Cross member before the exchange is now active in different ways, among others on the regional board, while the other participant also appears to have increased her level of involvement. In Uganda, participation has gone down for one member, largely due to her having moved to Kampala for studies.

Currently, an application for a new round of exchange is being prepared. While the details are still to be worked out between the two partners, in general terms the new program will largely follow the last. Thus, the North and South participants will continue to work and live together as a team. Some changes are being introduced as a result of the evaluation, which pointed out that staying at the Red Cross center in Haraldvollen (Troms) – which offers excellent facilities but is quite isolated – was not successful in terms of social integration. Thus, for the Norwegian phase of the next exchange, the participants will live in one of the places where there is an active youth group. Furthermore, the schedule will be changed to spare the African participants the full force of the winter in northern Norway.

3.3.4 Information activities

The objectives of the information work were to create awareness among young people of their rights, as well as of Red Cross values and work, and international humanitarian law. Among the many Red Cross activities that the participants took part in, information activities took up a considerable part of the time. Most important were presentations at schools and at Red Cross meetings and activities. Both in Norway and in Uganda, a large number of schools were visited – focusing on the age group 12-18. To some extent themes of presentations were adapted to the wishes and requirements of the schools, but in addition to informing about life and conditions in the other country, common themes included Red Cross values and work, international humanitarian law, and HIV/AIDS issues. Also in Red Cross contexts the information work would focus on these themes, as well as on practical issues such as first aid training.

In Uganda, the team also produced the first issue of a branch newsletter. Unfortunately, so far is it also the last, as lack of access to computers and printers have prevented the production of the second issue. Still the produced newsletter has been useful both for internal Masindi Red Cross information flow and for external audiences. In Norway, a number of articles have been written about the exchange, published both in local newspapers and in Red Cross magazines.

By making information work an integral and central part of the exchange activities, by systematically targeting schools as well as 'internal' Red Cross audiences, and by letting North and South participants cooperate in this information work, we believe this exchange program to have a real and significant impact in terms of disseminating information about North-South and international issues. This is evidently related to the way in which information activities form a necessary part of the recruitment and mobilization that are the key objectives of the program. For this reason, information clearly has a more central position in this program than in most exchanges, and the impact is consequently greater.

While it is undoubtedly true that such a program requires considerable resources – both in terms of administration and follow-up, as well as for the travel necessary for school visits – we would still hold this program to be cost efficient information-wise, in particular when compared to other programs that are less systematic with respect to information activities. (Of course, the fact that some of the costs of the first round of exchange have been carried by the Red Cross themselves makes the cost-benefit ratio even more favorable for Fredskorpset.)

As the participants had limited previous experience and knowledge of information work and how to build up and make presentations, it is possible that by giving greater emphasis to such issues during the preparation courses, the exchange program could be further improved.

3.3.5 Conclusions

This is a tightly-planned and well-organized exchange program, which benefits from being organized by serious and well-functioning organizations. The particular model of letting North and South participants work together is successful both from the point of view of social integration, and as an efficient way of doing information work. The program has been clearly successful with respects to its objectives mobilizing youth both in Norway and Uganda. Furthermore, the fact that these objectives imply a focus on information activities mean more systematic information work – and consequently greater impact – than what is the case for most exchanges. In terms of individual learning and continued organizational engagement, it is difficult to conclude strongly from the limited sample, but results appear to be somewhat stronger among the older (Norwegian) participants.

3.4 Volda University College

3.4.1 The exchange program

The Volda University College (VUC) is a medium size college in Norway, where around 1 000 students are in teacher training, some for kindergarten and most for primary and lower secondary schools. The Faculty of Education has since the 1970s offered a social science course with a study trip to Africa. Participation in Fredskorpset Youth is however recent. VUC sees it as an opportunity to increase the knowledge about education, poverty and environmental issues in Africa and thereby strengthening the role of teachers in North-South collaboration. Following a feasibility study in 2003, where representatives from Norway went to Africa and a partner meeting was held in Norway, the first (and so far only) student exchange took place in 2004. On the basis of existing contacts the VUC originally proposed a collaboration with Kenya and Namibia, but Fredskorpset Youth preferred Malawi in stead of Kenya, as Malawi was a main partner country for Norwegian development aid with less involvement in Fredskorpset. The present study only includes the VUC exchange program with Malawi.

The exchange program is established between Volda University College (VUC) and two teacher training institutions in Malawi: Chancellor College (CC) at the University of Malawi in Zomba and Lilongwe Teachers' Training College (LTTC) in Lilongwe. The program is conceptualised and planned by the VUC and the North partner also dominated the implementation of the first exchange, though the CC in particular made valuable contributions. In November 2004 the second partner meeting took place in Malawi to discuss experiences with the first exchange and implementation of the second, in 2005.

According to the original partnership agreement, VUC is responsible for organising a preparatory course for the North and South participants lasting several weeks, while Fredskorpset organises a mandatory one-week course. The stay abroad for all the participants is 3 months. The Norwegian students study in Malawi from February to April and during the first weeks the African students act as hosts for them, while the Norwegians inform them about conditions in Norway. Then the Malawians go to Norway, from mid-March to mid-June. When the Norwegian students come back, they act as hosts for the Africans (during May and June). After the stay abroad it is foreseen that a debriefing seminar, information and follow-up work will last for 1 month for the South participants and 2-3 months for those from the North.

The participants in the exchange programme are supposed to be students at college/university studying to become future teachers of geography/social science. The participants both from the South and the North are selected according to joint criteria emphasizing their qualifications at college/university level and interest in studying didactics and geography/social science in an international context, in addition to qualities such as personal integrity, flexibility, ability to communicate, take initiatives and responsibility. The students write an application in English and are interviewed by a panel of the local college staff before selection.

3.4.2 Objectives and planned activities

Overall objectives

The student teachers (participants) shall acquire knowledge about and understanding of societies of different continents with special focus on host country and interact and share their teaching and learning experiences and thereby enhancing their professional growth.

The institutions (partners) shall establish long term educational links between the colleges with special focus on social science education.

Planned exchange activities

In the program period four students from Norway go to Malawi and four students from Malawi come to Norway.

The basic documents were accepted by all the partners. As teachers' education was considered in principle to be the same in the South and the North, the documents did not distinguish between the tasks and responsibilities of the North and South participants. Though the activities mainly were planned according to the set-up and interests of the North partner, the only indication of activities in the South was "same as North partner".

All the participants are supposed to participate in activities prepared by the host institution such as excursions, field trips, classroom activities, literature studies and practice teaching (observation and teaching) in primary/secondary school nearby. They should work on a subject area of special interest, especially collect information on which to base a project report and information work after returning home. They should prepare and present information about the home country to fellow students and to primary/secondary schools in the nearby area and inform the students of the host institution who are chosen for exchange stay at home college, about home country, home town/city and college.

The VUC has elaborated a special study plan for the exchange for development course. According to the plan, the course lasts half a year, including the stay abroad, and includes both Norwegian and African students. For both groups the curriculum literature related to the course is approved by the teacher/tutor at the VUC. The final assessment of the course (by VUC) is based on the project report and adjusted through an oral exam and the students receive study credits. The LTTC and the CC have no such special plans related to the exchange program.

Learning objectives of exchanges

Both the Norwegian and African students shall acquire knowledge about and understanding of the host country with particular focus on childhood/adolescence and education, natural resources, culture, society and transcultural communication. Founded on theoretical knowledge, personal experience and engagement it is an objective to create positive attitudes to justice, development and cooperation in the relationship the North and the South.

According to the VUC study plan it is important for the students to experience and reflect on transcultural communication and didactics: what we teach and how we teach about each other in the North and the South. They shall therefore acquaint themselves with different types of plans, textbooks and methods of instruction/didactics for geography/social sciences in basic, compulsory school and encounter everyday life in school through observation and practice teaching.

3.4.3 Implementation and results

In spite of planning problems and initial difficulties the planned activities were generally implemented, though in a modified form for the South participants.

To ensure good results of the program, the planned exchange arrangements were changed during the implementation. The participants from Norway were all women (practically all the applicants were women), and it was not considered advisable to lodge them in the dormitories at the LTTC due to insufficient security measures and poor material standard. The teacher training at the LTTC - with periods of intensive teaching interrupted by periods of work experience - further made it difficult to organise an effective study program for visiting, foreign students. So instead of two Norwegians studying at the LTTC and two at the CC, as was originally foreseen, all four were enrolled at the CC. It was nevertheless maintained that two African students should come from LTTC and two from CC. The LTTC participants were both men, while the CC participants were women.

During the recruitment process, the selection criteria were not applied strictly. Not all of the Norwegian participants were social science/geography students and some did not plan to become teachers. The LTTC participants were accepted in spite of the fact that they were more than 25 years old.

The unexpected departure of the Fredskorpset contact person at LTTC in January 2004 created problems for the program. He was the only LTTC staff member who participated in the negotiations of the agreement, and the only one with e-mail. He continued to fulfil some tasks after having moved to Zomba (around 300 kilometres south of Lilongwe), communicating among others with the LTTC participants while there were abroad, but could no longer function as a staff member at the college. A new contact person was appointed, but had little knowledge of the program and no e-mail. The LTTC experienced serious financial constraints and in spite of efforts, involving also the Norwegian Embassy in Lilongwe, communication gaps arose between VUC and the LTTC.

With improved design and implementation better results could have been achieved from the exchange program. Generally the participants felt that they were not properly prepared before they went abroad. No preparatory courses or seminars were organised for the African students before they left for Europe. In Norway they participated in the Fredskorpset briefing course, which they found useful, but it came late during the stay. The Norwegian participants were not all at VUC and not all were following social science courses. The VUC distributed written information about the exchange program and gave lectures and briefings about Africa, development issues and cultural differences. Nevertheless, the information was insufficient, according to participants, and lacked specific focus on Malawi. The Fredskorpset Youth preparatory course was appreciated, but some participants were confused about what they actually were supposed to do during their study trip abroad. There were no arrangements with host families for the foreign students neither in Malawi nor in Norway. The contact persons for Fredskorpset Youth monitored the visiting students and to a certain extent those who were abroad. In addition, the CC appointed a special contact teacher. Upon arrival in the host country the Norwegians were assisted, though in a limited way, by the African Fredskorpset participants and other students. The African students only got Norwegian student hosts at a later stage, when the Fredskorpset participants came home from Malawi.

In spite of the changed arrangement, problems arose for both the South and the North participants with regards to accommodation. At Chancellor College the Norwegian

representatives found that accommodation for the Norwegian participants on the university campus was not satisfactory, so the women lodged together in a hotel in town. The conditions were good, but contacts with fellow students on the campus were not always easy, especially after dark. Some of the Norwegians experienced good social relations in spite of tensions due to different economic and cultural backgrounds, while others had more difficulties. In Norway, the African students experienced considerable problems getting to know Norwegian fellow students. They were all placed (together with the Namibian students) in the same boarding house at a folk high school in Ørsta, 10 kilometres from Volda, where the main meals also were provided. All VUC and student activities took place in Volda, so the students took a bus back and forth. Dinner was served at Ørsta as early as 3 pm, so it required an extra effort to participate in social activities in the evening in Volda. To begin with the participants thought they received too little pocket money to cater for their social needs, but this problem was soon solved.

At the CC, the contact person made weekly programs with courses and excursions for the foreign students. The African host students often joined them during the excursions. The Norwegians were not placed in ordinary classes, but participated in courses in social science, partly also drama, which were deemed to be appropriate, together with Malawian students. It was not always easy to set up a satisfactory program for the Norwegian students, due among others to the different ways Norwegian and Malawian institutions ordinarily organize the teaching programs. In addition a student strike created unexpected problems. In general, the courses only amounted to a few hours per week, so the Norwegians spent considerable time – some felt too much time – looking for information in the library. Access to the Internet was extremely slow and cumbersome and some would have liked more assistance with their project work. The students wrote project reports about different themes: girls' education, theatre for development and development of democracy. The participants who focused on girls' education, collected information from Malawian school children. The participants also visited local schools to make observations or contribute to the teaching. Back in Volda the students filled out evaluation forms and three passed the course exam. For one the exam was postponed for practical reasons.

The situation was different for the African students in Norway. They did not focus on a subject of special interest while they were abroad, but studied three themes presented by VUC: social studies, education in Norway and geography teaching about Norway. The students wrote reports and VUC assessed those relating to geography teaching in connection with the course exam. In addition to the college courses the VUC arranged a number of excursions around in Norway and the students felt that they acquired interesting knowledge. But they deplored the fact that they were practically always given special treatment. The teaching was targeted to the needs of the foreign students and took place in English (other VUC courses being in Norwegian). Thus they did not provide opportunities for contact with Norwegian students. A special arrangement was when Norwegian and African Fredskorpset Youth participants taught together in local schools. In relation to their studies in Malawi, the trip to Norway was basically an "extra" which was difficult to integrate into the ordinary teaching program. The LTTC students travelled during a period of work experience and the teaching courses at the LTTC were not affected. At CC the students were given credit for their reports about geography teaching, but they had to catch up with the ordinary teaching at CC while they were away, to be able to pass their exams. All the African students obtained diplomas from VUC.

The partner institutions and participants, from the South as well as the North, were of the opinion that the overall objectives of the program related to the participants were achieved to a great extent. Nearly all the participants criticised different aspects of the program implementation, because they felt the benefits of the exchanges were reduced. Nevertheless they generally answered that the objectives of the program were achieved to a great extent. The participants felt that they gained new knowledge about the host country: the geography, economy, education, social and cultural conditions. The Norwegian participants increased their knowledge about Sub-Saharan Africa in general and Malawi in particular. They were particularly enthusiastic about their visits to local schools in Malawi. The Malawian participants also appreciated visiting Norwegian schools and were impressed by the approaches to environmental protection, equality, gender relations, the handicapped and animal rights which they generally observed in Norway. They felt that a three month stay was very short, and said they would very much like to go back. In addition to learning about Norway, the Malawian students learned quite a bit about Namibia (the other country with an exchange program with the VUC). Besides learning about other cultures, the students were of the opinion that they acquired new perspectives on their own culture and that they became “wiser” and more “mature”. Several stated that they grew more personally than professionally during the program, became more independent and socially oriented, and it affected their thinking about the future. Some expressed the wish to contribute to more justice and development in the world in general and in Malawi in particular, though they did not quite know how at the present stage. One of the Norwegian participants joined a humanitarian NGO after she came home. Regarding the establishment of long term links between the institutions in Norway and Malawi, this remains to be operationalised.

3.4.4 Information activities

The planned post-exchange information activities were to finish/write their project report where up to 20% of the report might be a lesson-/teaching plan aimed at a defined age group of students, make a project report popularisation and present/publish it, present information from exchange stay for students at VUC soc. Science and students at schools in near by area and teach for future students. All through their future work as teachers of geography/social studies, the students were expected to convey information and attitudes among other things on the basis of their stay in Africa.

In fact, the exchange students started sharing information before and during their study trip. Some Norwegian participants wrote newspaper articles before they left for Africa. Both the African and the Norwegian participants told about their home country to fellow students while they were abroad. The Norwegian participants taught about Norway to primary school children in Malawi, though the teaching materials they had were limited. After the Norwegians came home, the Norwegian and African students went together and taught about Malawi in different schools in Norway (Sunnmøre). Some local newspapers covered the event.

Both the CC and VUC organised debriefing seminars with the foreign students before they left. The follow-up and information activities were not finished at the time of the study, and the work done so far was of limited scope. Norwegian participants presented their experiences at the VUC and were interviewed by local newspapers. Some wrote articles, but did not always succeed in getting them published. A video from Malawi as well as a power point presentation were being prepared for information purposes and future geography/social science teaching, but were not yet ready. At the same time the students were getting involved

in other study courses. The African participants were also waiting for a video that was taken during their stay in Norway. At the LTTC there had so far been no time during the teaching periods to present learning experiences from Norway, but the contact person was planning to organise a special Norwegian evening. Nevertheless, the two participants did information work at different levels in the school system in their home communities, though they lacked appropriate teaching materials. There was no information plan at CC, but the students presented their experiences abroad to the department, faculty and groups of students. Later they planned to teach about Norway in primary and secondary schools, though they lacked some teaching materials.

It was underlined that the effects of the exchange program could not only be reflected in short term information activities, but in the future teaching of the teachers. How this should be evaluated, remains an open question, though.

3.4.5 Conclusions

The VUC/LTTC/CC exchange program is very much in its early stages, the first exchange clearly having the character of an experimental operation. The idea of a study exchange program among future school teachers is good, but demanding. The brief duration of the posting abroad and the planned interlinkages between North and South participants do not make the exchange easier.

While participants felt that the benefits of the program were reduced by planning and preparation problems, ad hoc organisation of accommodation and activities and limited emphasis on follow-up information work, they nevertheless were of the opinion that the overall objectives of the exchanges were achieved to a great extent. They stated that they gained new knowledge about the host country: the geography, economy, education, social and cultural conditions. Besides learning about other cultures, they felt that they acquired new perspectives on their own culture and that they became “wiser” and more “mature”. Some expressed the wish to contribute to more justice and development in the world in general and in Malawi in particular. One North participant joined a humanitarian NGO after she came home. Regarding the establishment of long term links between the institutions in the North and South, this remains to be operationalised.

The conceptualisation and implementation of the program were dominated by the North and a fundamental challenge was the adjustment of the program to the partner institutions in the South. The second partner meeting in Malawi in November 2004 provided an opportunity for renewed dialogue and the partners discussed the study plan, project work, daily program, role of the coordinators, budget, housing, preparation for going abroad, information work and calendar for 2005. Agreement was reached on a number of measures to improve communications and the balance of the program, the quality of the preparations and implementation.

4 General findings

4.1 Partnership, planning, preparations

4.1.1 Partnerships

“Partnership” does not only imply a collaboration between two or more partners, but also a symmetry in the relationship. Generally, the Fredskorpset Youth partnerships are based on a profound asymmetry in power and influence, resources and organisational capacity between the North and South partners. Not only do the North institutions work in a country with overwhelming wealth, technological development, infrastructure and education in relation to the conditions that generally prevail in poor countries in the South, but they have access to funds, technical know-how and organisational resources that most South institutions lack. The North institutions also apply for funds from Fredskorpset Youth and negotiate the terms of support. A crucial question is therefore what efforts are made to overcome what might seem as insurmountable asymmetries between the collaborating partners. Do the North and South institutions exchange views on the program and frankly state their views, beliefs, intentions, motivations and concerns – or do the South institutions keep a low profile so as not to provoke undesirable financial or organisational consequences? Are the North as well as the South partners willing to go some considerable way to modify concepts, arrangements, norms and practices to accommodate the concerns of the other actor? Are the contributions of the South partner recognized and valued and are conditions arranged so that they can participate in the most effective manner?

The study reveals considerable communication problems between North and South institutions. North institutions base themselves more and more on e-mail communication. South institutions on the other hand often lack or only have outdated and poorly working computers and data systems and must rely on a combination of telephone, fax and ordinary mail to transmit information. Outside of the capital many places are without regular electricity and telephone services. In addition information gathering, processing and filing systems might be inadequate. In several cases information gaps created problems for a satisfactory functioning of the program.

The exchange partners have partner meetings, but it is difficult to involve the South partners in all phases of the application and negotiation of Fredskorpset Youth support. The North partners easily acquire a dominant position in the conceptualisation and operationalisation of the program. How the partners dialogue, we do not know. But the program set-up varies.

The North partner took the initiative and defined the basic concepts in the exchange of *Volda University College*. In the first exchange VUC also monitored the activities of both North and South participants. South partners made important contributions, but changes in the set-up were evidently needed to adjust the program to conditions in the South. The arrangements were discussed at the second partner meeting in Malawi in November 2004 and a number of changes agreed upon. A meeting of a number of Fredskorps participants/partners in Malawi was very useful, according to the contact person at Chancellors College, clarifying guidelines and options for this kind of program. The basic documents of the *Norwegian Missionary Society* exchange reflect both North and South views. The FLM and the NMS have a longstanding collaboration and the role of the FLM has been strengthened over the years. Nevertheless, NMS is clearly the lead partner in the implementation of the Fredskorpset

Youth program, managing the North-South exchange and most of the South-North exchange also. The FLM has limitations related to capacity and effectiveness, according to the NMS. The FLM is of the view that the cooperation works well and they can make minor changes to the set-up if they want to. Recently they made a proposal to include the acceptance of the parents in the exchange contracts of participants and this was accepted by the NMS. In the case of *AIESEC* also, the North partner has been dominant in the development and organization of the program. Administrative capacity has undoubtedly been a major limiting factor for *AIESEC* Kenya's participation. However, as the program is modelled on the traineeship program with which *AIESEC* in both countries have much experience, the imbalanced participation in planning has not led to significant misunderstandings between the partners, nor to failures to take specific concerns of the South partner into consideration. For the *Red Cross*, it seems that the more than ten years of partnership experience between Troms and Masindi before the start of the Fredskorpset exchange, as well as the very thorough common planning sessions, have succeeded in involving both partners to a similar degree in the program.

4.1.2 Objectives of the exchanges

The objectives of the exchanges are specified in partnership agreements and concept documents. The degree to which these are specific, elaborated and linked to activities varies. Furthermore, objectives differ in type, as some relate to the participants and their learning or development, while others relate to the partner institutions. Even higher-level objectives can be found in terms of establishing relations between Norway and the South country. (There are also specific objectives for the information activities that are dealt with further below.) Moreover, objectives may be specific in terms of distinguishing between North and South participants (or institutions).

All four exchange programs have the individual learning of participants as their main objective, focusing on the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of other cultures and societies. In addition, the *AIESEC*, *NMS* and *Red Cross* programs seek to develop leadership and the ability to change attitudes in society. The main aim of the teacher colleges (*VUC*, *LTTC* and *CC*) is to enhance the professional growth of the students, while *NMS* and *FLM* seek to increase the competence in relation to intercultural communications, human understanding and tolerance. For both teachers and missionaries the sharing with others of experiences and views is a fundamental part of their role. In addition a wider perspective is included: both the teachers' colleges and the religious organisations wish to promote positive attitudes for justice, development and cooperation in the relationship between the North and the South. *NMS* and *FLN* also underline the involvement in mission work and development aid. All four programs have important higher-level institutional objectives. The *AIESEC* program aims to foster new relations between Norway and Kenya, in particular new business relations, while the *VUC* wishes to establish long term educational links between the teacher training colleges with special focus on social science education. The *FLM*, *NMS* and *Red Cross* seek to strengthen their organizations through youth participation.

A fundamental problem with the individual learning objectives for exchange participants is that personal development is not easy to measure, and in fact, whatever happens during an exchange program – of a positive or negative character – the objectives can be said to be achieved, because the participants have gained greater knowledge and understanding. When requested to describe which indicators the institutions will apply to measure the results of the program, they often mention reports from the participants, meetings and talks with them. In

addition the teacher students (both Norwegian and African) pass an exam at the *VUC* and it is expected that their teacher practice will improve. The *NMS* will send a questionnaire to the participants after two years to see how the program influenced their choices of further studies, spare time activities and work and verify the number of participants who have become members or in other ways actively involved in *NMS* after the exchange period. (If this is followed up in practice, and findings are analysed and used to further adjust the exchanges, this will be a good monitoring and evaluation mechanism.) The documents from *Red Cross* and *AIESEC* are not very explicit on how the achievements of individual goals are to be measured. The *Red Cross* document, however, has clear indicators to be used for evaluating the achievements in terms of institutional strengthening.

Measuring the achievement of objectives related to institutional development is more straightforward, but might at this point in time be a bit early in the process. The *NMS* plans to look into this two years after the exchange took place. *Red Cross* have specified indicators for measuring goals achievement, and these are used for a joint evaluation exercise at the end of the exchange period. *AIESEC* has no mechanism for monitoring what kinds of new business relations between Norway and Kenya arise through the exchange, even though this objective itself should be well suited as an indicator of success. With regards to the *VUC* exchange, the institutional objectives have not yet been operationalised.

Red Cross and *NMS* have specified separate objectives and indicators for the North and South partners. This responsiveness to the differences between the North and South institutions and the contexts they operate in is an indication of a well-planned exchange program. The documents from *AIESEC* and *Volda University College* do not reflect this kind of reciprocity in the development of their programs.

4.1.3 Recruitment

For a successful exchange the candidates recruited must have a background, qualifications and personal characteristics suited for the program. Usually candidates were recruited from social settings within or around the partner institutions. In some cases, participants felt that the exchange program was not sufficiently advertised and the number of candidates therefore too limited. The participants were selected on the basis of written applications and interviews, generally in English, by a panel or committee representing the home institution. The institutions apparently made efforts to ensure that the selection of candidates was objective and well founded, but in some cases the young people lacked sufficient information about the program or their qualifications were not well suited for the requirements of the program. In the context of a youth program, the level of technical know-how to be expected from the participants is not necessarily clear. But limited command of English and a marked discrepancy between tasks and skills reduced the effectiveness of the learning process in some cases, in spite of considerable efforts and courage on the part of participants. According to the basic documents the partners in a program shall have the mutual opportunity to evaluate each other's candidates. This apparently takes place to a limited extent in several of the exchanges, but is basic in the *AIESEC* program.

The gender balance among the participants is intentionally brought about in the *Red Cross* program, as one male and one female from each country are supposed to take part in the exchange. In the other programs, there are no specifications with regards to gender, but implementation of the program was adjusted in relation to the gender composition of the exchange group. In many settings in the South male and female gender roles differ to a greater

extent than in Norway, and special security arrangements are sometimes perceived as necessary, particularly for young women. In the *NMS and VUC* programs mainly Norwegian women presented themselves as candidates. In the VUC program the selection of only female Norwegian participants raised the requirements in relation to accommodation in Malawi and the CC selected only female African participants, due to the hosting responsibilities of the two groups. The LTTC sent two men and there was some uneasiness about both male and female African participants sharing the same hostel in Ørsta, but it worked out. In 2004 the *FLM* and *NMS* made special efforts to recruit men in addition to women and the exchange groups were more gender balanced. While gender balance seems not to have been a conscious concern for AIESEC, the actual selection of candidates have resulted in a very balanced distribution between the sexes, both among the North and South participants.

In the *VUC* exchange the maximum age limit of Fredskorpset youth was exceeded in the case of the LTTC participants, but this was accepted. In fact, LTTC does not have very young students and is of the view that very young people are not sufficiently mature to participate in an exchange program. It is possible to sympathize with this latter view. While the sample is not large enough to draw very firm conclusions, there seems to grounds for saying that generally the youngest participants are more prone to experience problems with adaptation and culture shock, while those participants who have passed twenty seem often to achieve learning of a more reflected and integrated form. *Red Cross* is raising the minimum age limit to ensure more homogeneous exchange groups age-wise.

It is assumed that Fredskorpset Youth participants are single, but some were married, of which one had a small child. The host institution only became aware of this after arrival of the participants and was somewhat confused about what to do, as the arrangements do not include measures related to family responsibilities. No couples were selected as Fredskorpset Youth participants and the *NMS/FLM* chose people who did not know each other beforehand.

Fredskorpset Youth emphasizes that the program is a group program, the young people preparing themselves and traveling in smaller or larger groups. The assumption probably is that the participants thereby can assist and support each other. This is commendable in theory, but it does not necessarily work in practice. In some exchanges group tensions arose within the group during the posting abroad, creating problems for members of the group. Generally there appears to be little focus on the team composition of the exchange groups during the selection of candidates and on team building during the preparation processes. *NMS/FLM* and *Red Cross* are exceptions. The efforts of *NMS/FLM* to recruit both men and women in 2004 was based on the assumption that gender balanced groups might function better than groups with only one gender. This might be correct, but tensions can also arise between women and men. They can be attracted to each other, or the contrary, or men might play a dominating role in relation to women. With groups that are more homogeneous age-wise the *Red Cross* wishes to improve team dynamics and prevent imbalances due to older and more experienced Norwegian participants.

4.1.4 Preparations

In spite of considerable efforts to ensure a successful exchange program, problems were encountered due to insufficient preparation. Before arrival participants from *AIESEC*, *CC*, *FLM*, *LTTC*, *NMS* and *VUC* were ignorant or confused with regards to their tasks at the place of posting – even with respect to where they would be posted. Regarding the teacher students,

the LTTC did not receive North participants after all, as the accommodation was considered inappropriate. Further, the exchange was not integrated into the study programs at LTTC and CC. In the second round of the AIESEC exchange, it has so far only been possible to find one placement in Norway, instead of the planned three.

The arrangements for preparation courses have changed, from most of the course being organized by Fredskorpset⁵ to the current praxis with one week organised by Fredskorpset and the rest organised by the partner institutions. One problem of this arrangement is that the courses sometimes overlap and repeat themselves. At Hald the Fredskorpset course is being integrated into the preparatory course as a whole.

Most South participants said they would have liked to be better prepared before they travelled abroad, in some cases better prepared generally. Some North participants also found the preparations insufficient.

The *NMS* has well established, extensive preparatory, in-field and debriefing courses for North and South participants together. There is an international environment and different kinds of teaching and the participants generally appreciated the stay. But all takes place in Norway with the exception of the (brief) in-field seminars and the broad participation reduces the focus on specific countries. The *VUC* distributed written information and gave lectures and briefings at the beginning of the program period, but only for North participants and of a relatively general character. Some participants felt the preparations could be more focused and provide more information about Malawi. For *AIESEC* and *Red Cross* participants, the Fredskorpset course seemed to be perceived as the most important and relevant.

There are marked differences between North and South participants in their evaluations of the Fredskorpset course. The course was generally appreciated, but some North participants found it too long, dealing too much with things they already knew. South participants, on the other hand, often said they would like even more preparation for their stay in a new society and an alien culture. It was felt, though, that the course was too much directed at Norwegians going South, and did not focus sufficiently on what South participants should expect when coming to Norway. As one South participant pointed out, the culture shock is experienced very differently in a setting where the newcomer is looked up to because he or she is stereotyped as rich, knowledgeable, upper class and coming from the powerful part of the world, than in the context of an African coming to Norway, where expectations generally are very different. Several South participants proposed concrete and practical elements for a 'survival course in Norway', that they would have liked to have included in the preparations – with warnings about what visitors often experience as a Norwegian lack of courtesy, information about dress codes, the need to bring your own drinks when you are invited to a party, and so on. Having classes where people from South countries spoke of the culture shock of coming to Norway, in addition to the classes given by Norwegian experts, was recommended by several. Food from countries in the South could also supplement the completely Norwegian menu.

The different needs of North and South participants with regards to the preparatory courses should be considered in light of their very different backgrounds. The experience with travelling and visiting other countries as well as the knowledge of the rest of the world are not the same. In some cases the cultural distance between home in the African countryside and a house in Norway has been reported as so great that even turning on the light with the light

⁵ For the first round of AIESEC exchange (organized under the Fredskorpset Main Program), all four weeks were arranged by Fredskorpset.

switch when it gets dark in Norway, needs to be taught. Further, the expectations of South participants coming from a poor country to an affluent society are essentially different from those of North participants going South. Possibly the asymmetry in the backgrounds of North and South participants is even greater for the Youth Program than for the Main Fredskorpset program, and it should be taken into account in the design of both the Fredskorpset and the partner organizations' preparatory courses.

4.1.5 Administrative capacity

It is clear that a successful Fredskorpset Youth program across two continents requires extensive administrative capacity of the partners. The workload of the contact persons is considerable and in many institutions – for instance the *teacher colleges* and *Red Cross* branches – this comes in addition to the ordinary burden of work. At the *NMS* – and to some extent the *AIESEC* organisations – the program can more be seen as part of a broad exchange activity. In any case there is a need for administrative services and capacity, which often are scarce in the partner institutions, particularly in the South. This is most clearly the case for the *LTTTC*, *FLM* and *AIESEC Kenya* and to some extent also the *CC* and *AIESEC Norway*. The challenges for the more well equipped institutions are to adjust their requirements in connection with the program according to the resources of the weaker part, to find ways of working that function for both parties and, possibly, consider ways of providing special assistance to the weaker part. Here there is room for improvement in several cases.

4.2 The exchange period

4.2.1 Type of activities and work integration

There are great differences between the types of activities carried out under the different exchanges, making these very different types of programs. On the one hand, in the *Volda University College* exchange, the participants were students who basically continued their studies at a new institution during the exchange. On the other hand, in the *AIESEC* program, the participants worked as professionals in private companies that had no direct links to the partner institutions. The professional aspect of this exchange makes it in some respects more similar to the Fredskorpset Main program. The two exchanges with the most in common are probably the *Red Cross and NMS* programs: Both involve broad-based civil society organisations where the participants take part in regular activities with the objectives of disseminating information and mobilizing people, thereby strengthening the organizations. However, the fact that in the Red Cross exchange, the North and South participants worked together throughout the exchange period, sets this exchange apart.

The differences in types of activities led to different experiences in terms of how participants were integrated into institutional contexts and given tasks that were experienced as meaningful. Students of geography/social science can benefit from many types of knowledge, and the participants of the *VUC* exchange generally felt they learned a lot, though the exchange period only lasted three months. The question nevertheless remains if the studies could be more directly focused on the work of future teachers in an African or Norwegian setting. Due to the language barriers, the study program of the Africans at *VUC* was not a part of the ordinary program and the foreign students were not integrated with the others. Only when teaching in nearby schools did Africans and Norwegians collaborate. The Norwegians

followed ordinary courses at CC, but still experienced problems being integrated into the teaching and the social life on the campus in an effective way.

The *AIESEC* participants worked in management jobs in different private companies. While there were many cases of less than perfect matching of participants' skills and the needs of the companies, and *AIESEC* had little capacity to take action when there were problems, most participants and companies were satisfied. Even if the participants did not work within their areas of specialisation, or felt they had little to do, they generally felt that they had learnt much during the exchange. While language was not a problem in Kenya – as English was very widely used in the offices –, not speaking Norwegian was a limitation for some of the Kenyan participants, both for engaging fully in the work, and for social integration with colleagues.

The participants of the *NMS* exchange were engaged in missionary activities related to congregational work of different kinds and, in Africa, also to various development projects. The *Fredskorpset Youth* participants had limited technical skills and the African participants focused to a great extent on children and youth ministry. The Norwegians were involved in teaching (English and computer skills) for which they lacked materials and were not specifically qualified, but had some general knowledge. Some of the Norwegians would have liked more varied activities. In all cases the participants found the work interesting and it entailed extensive contacts with Malagasy/Norwegian people of different age groups.

The *Red Cross* participants were engaged in various Red Cross activities – youth camps, rescue corps, training courses, etc. Information dissemination with recruitment and mobilization objectives was a central task, and involved a large number of presentations at schools and other places. The fact that the two Kenyans and the two Norwegians worked together the whole exchange period meant that they were tightly integrated into a team. This facilitated the adaptation to a new cultural setting on the part of the two who at the moment were not in their home country.

4.2.2 Social integration

Fredskorpset Youth focuses on a special age group, those from 18 to 25 years. Formally they are no longer children, but they are in most cases not established adults, either, with regards to various social roles, though this varies from culture to culture and from case to case. There are also cultural variations with regards to norms and expectations related to the behaviour of young women and men. Though it is not necessarily stated explicitly, in practice it is taken for granted that the *Fredskorpset Youth* participants are single. This means that they might be searching for a partner or be open for initiatives. At the same time they are placed in a foreign setting, without insight in local codes and conditions, and without their usual support persons and networks. Further, they might - without being aware of it - represent special attractions for people from another background. Thus they can be extremely exposed and vulnerable, physically, emotionally and socially, and all the more so as many of the participants are young women.

The partner institutions have a real, if not formal responsibility for the social relations that might develop during the exchange period. This entails preparations before departure and arrangements during the posting abroad that do not expose participants too much and include various support systems. The question then arises as to how much the institutions can and should intervene and control what might be considered the “private” sphere of young adults?

The *NMS* has taken a clear stand, requiring that the participants sign a form indicating that they will not enter into a relationship during the exchange program. In boarding houses in Madagascar there are also very strict rules for male/female contacts. To our knowledge, none of the other institutions have included a reference to relationships in their participant contracts. Issues related to gender roles, social contacts, health, HIV etc. are discussed in the preparatory courses. During the exchanges there have been cases of both Norwegian and African participants engaging in love affairs. As far as we know, the affairs have mostly been of short duration, though in one case the participant married a person from the host country, left the posting, and later on tried to have the marriage annulled, amid serious psychological difficulties. When the partner institutions have become aware of love affairs, they have sometimes intervened, warning against or even taken measures to stop further development of the contacts. However, in some cases, the partner institutions have limited contact with the participants during the exchange and will have little possibility of keeping track of the developments. What the correct approach in these cases should be and to which extent relations should be left to the discretion of the concerned individuals, to the different partner institutions, or whether this area should be subject to stricter guidelines from Fredskorpset, are by no means simple questions and need careful reflection.

The accommodation is fundamental for social integration. The *FLM* participants had host families and support systems in Norway, worked within a congregation and participated both in work and social activities with Norwegians. In Madagascar the local contact families were Norwegian, but the participants lodged in or near boarding houses for Malagasy youth and joined in social and spare time activities with them in addition to the contacts they made at work. Both groups learned to speak some Malagasy/Norwegian. In the *VUC* exchange some (though not all) Norwegian teacher students obtained good social contacts on the CC campus even if they lived a bit apart. It was more difficult for the Africans who lodged in a neighbouring town to Volda and many complained about social isolation. Excursions gave possibilities for interaction, but even then contacts were limited. The *AIESEC* participants were staying in apartments. This arrangement might easily have led to social isolation, had it not been for the active *AIESEC* network which was very efficient in integrating participants into a group of similar people with a host of recreational activities. In the case of the *Red Cross* exchange, the North and South participants stayed together, which made for a tight and well-integrated group. Getting involved in social activities outside the group proved more difficult in Norway, however, as they were staying at the Red Cross centre at Haraldvollen where there were few people after office hours (apart from the periods when camps were hosted there). In Uganda getting in touch with people outside the team proved to be much easier.

Generally it seems to be more difficult for South participants to achieve satisfactory social integration in Norway than for Norwegians staying in a country in the South. There are a number of reasons for this, relating for instance to differences in resource endowments in the North and South, issues of class and race, language, and maybe to other cultural factors. It is perhaps important to ensure that all exchanges have some kind of safety mechanism to ensure that participants do not end up alone and isolated outside of the work situation, whether this is achieved through accommodation arrangements, social activities, the teaming up of North and South participants, or other mechanisms.

4.3 Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring of the exchange programs is of crucial importance. While all programs have partner meetings, there are considerable variations in monitoring systems from one exchange to the other. The *NMS/FLM* and *Red Cross* programs seem well organized with continuous monitoring of developments. The *Red Cross* participants not only work together, but work closely with the contact persons of the program in each country, thereby ensuring constant monitoring and support. The *NMS/FLM* in addition to preparatory, in-field and debriefing seminars provide personal follow-up by local contact families. Partners exchange written reports twice a year, while participants write reports to partners every three months. This entails a systematic monitoring, even if contact problems arise or reports sometimes are incomplete or dropped. The *VUC* exchange planned for several monitoring mechanisms: in particular inclusion of the visiting participants in the student community and in a working group for quality assurance at host institution, accommodation of the participants in the same area as the national students and designation of a personal contact for each participant among the regular students in addition to the *Fredskorpset* contact persons. Even if these measures do not ensure very close monitoring, considerable problems arose putting them into practice. Participants also experienced difficulties reporting to home college once a week and this was only rarely done. *AIESEC* does not appear to keep very close track of the exchanges.

While the basic documents focus specifically on monitoring in most cases, there is less emphasis on evaluation and little documentation is available to throw light on how the different exchange programs work. Partner institutions usually have to indicate which indicators will be applied to measure results, but there are few established procedures to synthesize the results or provide an evaluation of each exchange program as a whole. In all exchanges, debriefing seminars were organized by partner institutions and/or *Fredskorpset*, in some cases before participants left the host country and in some cases after they returned home, but not all partners organized debriefings. The debriefings gave opportunities for exchanges of views, feedback and evaluation of experiences. In most cases the exercises took place orally, though some participants made written comments. The seminars provided useful inputs, according to the partner institutions that organized them, but some participants felt that the time allocated was insufficient for in-depth discussions and they did not always feel free to speak their minds in an open and honest way. In any case, the views expressed are not accessible to people who did not participate in the seminars. In addition to the debriefing seminars, participants in some cases made written reports on their information activities. Totally, however, there is little systematic evaluation in a written form available to outside persons. The *Red Cross* exchange presents an exception. Here the evaluations of participants and coordinators were brought together in an excellent document, focusing directly on the extent to which the stated objectives of the exchange were reached.

4.4 Results

4.4.1 Individual/participant level

The learning objectives for the individual participants are largely similar for all the exchanges. Learning about a new society, country and cultural context, thereby achieving greater intercultural understanding, are goals that are expressed in all of them. Furthermore, all of the exchanges specify goals related to better knowledge of how to perform or take part in the core activities of the institutions in question: Church, missionary and development

activities (NMS); business and management issues (AIESEC); enhanced professional development as teachers (VUC); and knowledge of core issues, areas and practical skills related to the organization's work (Red Cross). Personal growth, in terms of achieving better understanding of oneself, and developing leadership and 'change agent' characteristics are also included for three of the four the exchanges.

The *NMS/FLM* specifies that the exchange should inspire and motivate the participants for continued involvement in international solidarity and missionary work. The *VUC/CC/LTTC* should develop positive attitudes towards international collaboration. As we understand that an important objective of the Fredskorpset Youth Program is to instil into the participants a continued interest in North-South affairs and to spur them to further activities in the area of international cooperation – perhaps particularly with respect to the Norwegian participants – we feel it is fair to assess all the exchanges with respect to impacts of this kind.

It should be pointed out that it is by no means easy for us to assess these kinds of achievements in a relevant and precise way. On the one hand, there is the fact that some of these goals, as they are expressed in the partnership documents, are really self-fulfilling. Almost by definition, you will have learnt *something* about a different country, society and culture after spending a considerable period of time there. Even if you have had the worst experience of your life and come out deeply traumatized, you have learnt something – perhaps even more than a participant for whom everything has gone smoothly. Still, this can hardly be an indication of a successful exchange. On the other hand, how much you should learn is not specified in the goal statements, and at any rate, we have not had the opportunity to try to measure what learning has in fact taken place. Assessing goals achievement in this respect must therefore be somewhat impressionistic and subjective. However, by combining statements from participants and ex-participants, our impressions from discussing with them, statements from coordinators and contact persons, and information about what participants are doing after completing the exchange program, it is possible to make some informed observations.

In terms of learning about a new society, culture and country, this is, as stated above, necessarily achieved in all exchanges. However, such learning can be of very different kinds and be achieved to a smaller or greater extent. We are not really in a position to compare the different exchanges in this respect, but will point out that such learning generally will be greater to the extent that the participants are exposed to systematic learning experiences, participate in informative work activities and are immersed into the social life of the host country. The exchange programs provide learning experiences in different ways – by leaving the participants to fend for themselves to a large degree in an instructive work environment (AIESEC), by having North and South participants work and live closely together over an extended period of time (Red Cross), by letting the participants work and live together with people in the host country (NMS/FLM) and by providing a structured set of courses and excursions for the participants in the host country (VUC/CC).

If the learning achievements of individual participants are sufficient to justify the efforts and costs of the exchange programs is difficult to measure and evaluate. In all cases, however, it seems that the learning experiences *could* be organised in a more systematic way – ensuring more intensive and thoughtful learning processes. This could have happened if learning goals had been clearer, if the exchanges had been better planned and implemented, the emphasis on learning experiences had been greater in the selection and organisation of activities, the social integration had been promoted in a more effective way and the preparation of the participants

had been more thorough and focused. The preparation, integration and follow-up activities of the South participants present a particular challenge.

In our material the number of participants in each team only varied between two and four, though the Malawian participants in the VUC exchange lived and worked together with a group of Namibian students while they were in Norway, creating a group of eight Africans. A number of factors determine how a group functions (the personal characteristics of the participants, the tasks and the relation of the group to the social environment, among others), but in general the social immersion will be greater the smaller the group of participants. This might not hold for a single participant, who (if no easy network is available) may react in the opposite way by withdrawing and isolating him or herself. But when a group becomes over a certain size there may be a tendency to become socially self-sufficient, reducing the contacts and receptivity in relation to the wider social setting. On the other hand, a very small group might provide less support to the members, due to the limited choice of personal contacts. The groups in the four exchanges generally did not appear to be too large, rather on the small side.

Another factor that might be considered is age. Our sample is too small and our data too imprecise to conclude definitively on this or on which personal characteristics are the most appropriate in this type of exchange program, but we have the impression that age and maturity contribute positively to achieving a deeper understanding of different social structures and cultural settings.

Increased knowledge of core activities also seems to be achieved in all cases. For the *AIESEC* exchange, this is usually the participants' first experience in a professional work situation, and even if the fit between specialisation and assigned tasks is far from perfect in most of the cases, it nevertheless gives important professional learning – the more so as one also learns about routines and business culture in a different country. For the *Red Cross* participants, the exchange program includes both taking part in different courses on issues ranging from Red Cross values and international humanitarian law to more practical skills related to first aid instruction, as well as participating in a range of different Red Cross activities. Participants thus achieve increased and deeper knowledge of these areas. The *NMS/FLM* youth engage in various kinds of church/missionary activities during the posting abroad and participate in extensive courses dealing among others with religious questions at the Hald International Centre and during in-field briefings. The teacher students at *VUC* and *CC* have teaching practice in both countries and study themes which they can pursue as teachers, though all might not be very relevant to the primary/secondary curriculum.

As for personal growth and development, this is perhaps the most difficult for us to assess. We did not know the participants before the exchange, and our contact with them after or during the exchanges is also quite limited. However, from the well-reflected manner in which many of them spoke of their experiences and the challenges they had had to face, we have a strong impression that many of them have developed considerably through the exchanges. This is also corroborated by statements from coordinators and contact persons who have followed them throughout the period. It is difficult to differentiate between the exchanges in this respect. But as a general trait, it seems clear that having to take responsibility for yourself in new and challenging situations is an important contributing factor.

When it comes to inspiration and motivation for continued international and voluntary engagement, there are two types of indicators. On the one hand, there are statements to us by participants and contact persons, and on the other hand there is what participants actually do

after completing the exchanges. The latter must of course be the central element – it does not really matter if people claim they are greatly motivated to work for international solidarity, but never do anything about it. However, as in many cases little time has expired between the end of the exchange period and our fieldwork, there has been little time to show good intentions in practice. In these cases, then, we must rely on the statements. Here, however, there is a need to distinguish between different forms of statements. On the one hand, there are general expressions of enthusiasm about their experience: ‘The best year of my life’, ‘a wonderful experience’, ‘would never have missed it’. While this enthusiasm is of course nice in itself, we find that alone, such statements are not very useful for the purpose of the evaluation. The Fredskorpset Youth Program has not been established in order to give young people an enjoyable experience. It is when such expressions are linked to intentions of engaging actively in international or voluntary activities that they become important.

Even though samples here are small and the time frame short, the tendency seems to be that this objective is achieved to a certain extent. Both the Norwegian *AIESEC* participants have a continued engagement with development or solidarity work with Kenya, as do one of the Kenyan participants (albeit maybe in a more professional than voluntary capacity). Of the Norwegian *Red Cross* participants, one was an active member of the organization before, and continues – perhaps with a more extensive involvement, while the other – a former non-member – has become active, even holding an elected position. For the Ugandan *Red Cross* participants, one remains active as before, while the other has reduced her involvement due to studies. Most of the *NMS/FLM* participants have become more positive to missionary activities, two even changing their choice of future occupation so it should be easier to combine with development work abroad, possibly a missionary engagement. Some of the *CC*, *LITC* and *VUC* participants will probably use the knowledge they have acquired in their social science/geography teaching, but it is not clear that all of the participants in fact will become teachers or teach social science/geography. It is worth pointing out that this program is shorter – only three months exchange period – and the impact with respect to creating motivations and commitments may for this reason be smaller, but several participants expressed the wish after the exchange to contribute to more justice and development in the world in general and in Malawi in particular, though they did not know quite how at the present stage. One North participant joined a humanitarian NGO.

4.4.2 Organizational/partners level

Objectives at organizational or institutional level vary. The objectives are only specified for the *AIESEC* and *Red Cross* exchanges. The *FLM/NMS* seek to strengthen their organisations in general terms, while the *VUC* exchange wishes to establish long term-links between the partners.

For the *Red Cross*, the objectives are the strengthening of the local youth organizations in the two countries, for which clear quantitative targets were set. Not all of these targets were fully met during the exchange period, and not all of the organizational strengthening is necessarily attributable to the exchange itself. It can still be confidently concluded that the exchange has been close to achieving the targets set, and that a significant strengthening of local youth organizations took place in both countries as a result of the exchange. There may be some doubts as to the sustainability of these results in Uganda, where the experience has been that it is easier to recruit new members than to retain them. *Red Cross Uganda* is aware of this, and

the activity plan for the country in the next round of exchange will be directly aimed at addressing this issue.

For *AIESEC*, one of the main goals of the exchange was to foster business relations between the two countries. All four of the participants who have completed their contracts are or have been involved in setting up different new business activities that link the two countries (in one case the link is really between Kenya and the US, but it is based on contacts the Kenyan participant acquired while working in Norway). Thus, this goal has been achieved to a surprising extent.

The institutional goal of the *VUC* exchange is not yet operationalised and cannot, in any case, be evaluated in the short term. Achievement of the *FLM/NMS* objective will be considered two years after the exchanges on the basis of a questionnaire. At the time of the study, both Malagasy participants wished to be more involved in church work, but only one had obtained additional tasks. As far as we know, only one Norwegian participant was actively involved in NMS work.

4.5 Information activities

Information activities are strongly emphasized in the Fredskorpset Youth program. While this program is less oriented than the Main program towards the participants doing a skilled or professional job during the exchange, the Youth program finds its main rationale in giving young people important experiences that should inspire them to work for international solidarity and understanding. This is directly expressed in the design of the exchange program, in particular in relation to the post-exchange period, which is dedicated to information activities in the home country. However, it is important to realize that information dissemination also takes place during and even before the exchanges, and that particularly the period during the exchanges may offer special opportunities for reaching out with information work.

In a two-page document on information activities given to the Norwegian partner organizations ('Etterarbeid for Fredskorpset-ung deltagere', no date) Fredskorpset distinguishes between 'information activities' and 'communication of experiences'. The first is defined as 'information activities about North-South issues with the intention of influencing attitudes or creating commitment', while the latter refers to 'communication of experiences with a focus on feedback of professional knowledge and experiences, as well as new ideas and methods that can be used to strengthen own activity'. Furthermore, there is a distinction between internal information – within own organization – and external information. The emphasis is placed on 'information activities' – aimed at influencing attitudes and creating commitment – whether internal or external. Internally, 'communication of experiences' may also be relevant. Currently, Fredskorpset is also recommending that information activities be linked to the Millennium Development Goals. The document is focused information within Norway. A short paragraph at the end about South participants opens for smaller information requirements for them, often related to 'communication of experiences'. As the document is in Norwegian, it is not directly accessible for South partners.

All the exchange programs studied include objectives related to information activities, stressing the dissemination of knowledge about North-South issues in general and about the

partner countries and the areas of competence of the different institutions in particular (education, church and missionary work, humanitarian work and business relations), promoting understanding of other cultures and international cooperation.

With regards to the information activities, the *Red Cross* exchange is a special case. Here, information work is an integral and central part of the exchange activities, as information forms a necessary part of the recruitment and mobilisation that are key objectives of the program. Information activities therefore took up a considerable part of the time during the exchanges. In both countries a large number of schools were visited as well as Red Cross meetings. Information was provided about life and conditions in the other country and in addition there were common themes related to Red Cross values and work, international humanitarian law and HIV/AIDS issues. By having North and South participants cooperate in this information work it had a special impact.

Sharing information is fundamental to both teaching and missionary work. In the *Volda* and *NMS* programs, information activities were pursued both before the participants travelled abroad and during their stay, though to a limited extent, mainly in informal settings and according to individual initiatives. In some settings the focus was on the home country and in others on the host country. In the *VUC* exchange, host students shared information in connection with excursions in the country. Norwegian participants taught about Norway in Malawian schools and during one week African and Norwegian participants went together and taught about Malawi in Norwegian schools. Particularly the last set-up was appreciated by both the participants and the schools. The main information activities of these two exchanges were supposed to take place after the posting abroad. The planned activities had a broader scope in Norway than in Africa, with the aim of creating understanding and support for North-South collaboration. *NMS/FLM* exchange participants engaged in more information activities than the *VUC*, among others presenting their experiences at a large youth camp and travelling to different places in Norway and Madagascar to speak to NMS and church members. The teacher colleges did not organise much information work after the exchanges and some planned activities remain to be implemented at the time of the study. The information provided by the *NMS/FLM* and *VUC* participants was mostly of a general character, the *NMS/FLM* participants in addition focusing on church and missionary activities. The African participants in both exchanges were enthusiastic about their experiences abroad and wanted to share them, but they lacked materials, and there were noticeable time constraints and limitations related to costs.

In the case of *AIESEC* there was little emphasis on information work, both in the planning and the implementation of the program. However, some information activities did take place, both during the exchanges and after. These largely consisted of presentations to *AIESEC* and business/economics students, in addition to places of work of the participants. In the Norwegian context, the program has an important potential of challenging stereotypes of Africa by letting African and Norwegian participants share their experiences of the modern business sector in Kenya, but these opportunities were not fully exploited. The impression is that information activities are not given sufficient priority in the program.

There are limits to how much in-depth learning and understanding of a foreign culture Fredskorpset Youth exchange participants can acquire within a brief period of a few months. This of course places limits on ambitions for information work. Still, simple facts based on personal experiences can also have an impact. Of special value, of course, are presentations participants can make about their own country, but it is not always clear how systematically

this potential was utilized during the exchanges. Much of the information work that took place, was surely interesting and well received, thus contributing to achievement of the objectives. However, it must be admitted that since these often consisted of talks, while for three of the exchanges we have not seen any written information material produced through the exchanges, the precise content and quality of the information remains unclear.

Except for the *Red Cross* exchange the question arises if this work was mainly an add-on and not an integrated task in the planning, conceptualisation and implementation of the exchange program as a whole. The lack of information materials in several cases is an indicator of activities that were not properly prepared. It is not always stated, either, what information is supposed to be communicated, to whom and with what purpose. This is particularly the case for the information activities of the South participants when they return back home. The effectiveness of the information work in the South was also hampered in many cases by the lack of resources, appropriate equipment, objects and materials. In many cases the focused target groups of information activities were relevant, but limited. There was some outreach by means of local newspapers, but apparently not very much.

Though information activities have been implemented to a greater or lesser extent within the framework of all the programs, the existing material does not provide a basis for a full evaluation of the results or impact. A proper cost-benefit analysis therefore cannot be done. But the study clearly shows that generally, there is room for considerable improvement in the planning and implementation of information work and in integrating it more fully into the individual exchange programs. This seems necessary in order to increase the impact of the specific activities and thus make the total information impact worth the (high) costs of the Fredskorpset Youth program. The most promising efforts appear to be made within the *Red Cross* program, where information work is an integral and central part of the exchange activities, and where North and South participants do information work together both in Norway and Uganda.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Goals achievement

Among the stated objectives of the exchange programs, we have distinguished between individual learning objectives, objectives at the institutional level, and information objectives.

Individual learning objectives comprise learning i) about other countries, societies and cultures; ii) about core activities of the institutions involved; iii) personal growth; and iv) developing attitudes and motives that are expressed in actions, decisions and continued interest. In general, the three first types of learning seem to have been achieved in all exchanges. Though views varied, on the whole participants were enthusiastic about the exchange program, felt that they had learned a lot, acquired new perspectives and matured personally. This is perhaps not very meaningful, however, as these objectives – unless they are further specified – are close to self-fulfilling. One can equally well conclude that in all cases, more could have been achieved if learning goals had been clearer and more specific, and exchange activities had been more directly tailored to precisely facilitate this type of learning. Thus, these kinds of objectives are not very useful for measuring the success of exchanges, unless they are specified to a much greater degree regarding the learning that is supposed to take place: The themes to be covered and the depth of learning aimed for.

Only one of the exchanges studied explicitly state as an objective that the participants should be inspired to take part in organizational and international solidarity activities, though it seems to be implicitly assumed in others. However, we understand this to be a general objective of the Fredskorpset Youth program, and therefore find it to be applicable for all exchanges. While it may still be early to gauge achievements in this respect, so soon after the end of the first round of exchanges, our findings indicate that such results are found in three of the four cases. The tendency seems strongest among the North participants – perhaps due to greater opportunities for both professional and voluntary involvement – but is also found among the participants from the South.

Objectives at the institutional level differ somewhat between the exchanges studied. They comprise strengthening the participating institutions and the cooperation among them, as well as the establishment of business relations between the two countries. These goals have been reached in both the *AIESEC* and *Red Cross* exchanges. For the *NMS/FLM* exchange it is too early to evaluate the impact of the program on the organisations. The *VUC* institutional objectives remain to be operationalised.

In general, information objectives are not specified with much precision. In many cases, this seems more to be activities that are added on because Fredskorpset requires it than integral elements of the exchange programs as such. In one or two cases, it seems fair to say that there is little systematic emphasis to ensure that these activities are realized with any conviction. It should be pointed out that information activities are not only carried out after the return to the home country – they are also done before and during the exchange. In particular, it should be pointed out that information work while in the host country may offer particular advantages. In most cases, as no material produced is available, the actual content of the information activity is impossible to determine – as well as its quality and depth. We find that in only one of the cases – the *Red Cross* – is the information work a truly integrated element of the

exchange. This integral character, and the fact that information work is carried out by North and South participants together, results in a well-organized information activity with considerable outreach. For the other exchanges, efforts are much less systematic, and impacts are difficult to estimate. Summing up, it seems that these four Fredskorpset Youth exchanges together are far from realizing their full information potentials.

5.2 Factors affecting goals achievement

It should be pointed out that this study is based on a very limited sample. Only four exchange programs have been analyzed, and these are all relatively recent programs with only one round of exchanges completed. Furthermore, they have involved relatively few participants – only two to four persons from each country. At the same time, these exchanges are quite different – for instance in terms of types of partner institutions, requirements of participants, activities involved and length of exchange periods. Finally, we should point out that the success or failure of any one placement may be just as due to the personal characteristics of the exchange participant as to one (or more) of these particularities. What all this points to, is that it is quite difficult to draw general conclusions on the basis of these findings. While the following conclusions are warranted with respect to the exchanges we have studied, we would warn against expecting that they can be easily generalized for all Fredskorpset Youth exchanges.

The exchanges are organized by the partner institutions, and characteristics of these institutions and the relations between them are therefore fundamental for the potential achievements. From our examples it seems that previous experience is of prime importance. *NMS*, *AIESEC* and *Red Cross* all have previous experience with exchanges of different kinds. For the two first ones the experience is of very long duration. The study indicates very clearly that this previous experience has been a great help for implementing the exchanges in an efficient and successful way. *NMS* and *Red Cross* also have strong organizational structures that have greatly helped planning and implementation of the exchanges. For *Red Cross*, own organization was further bolstered with support from the umbrella program of LNU.

The character of the partnerships also influences the exchanges. In most cases, these are dominated by the North partner. There are a number of practical and structural reasons for this. One potential effect of this skewed relationship, however, that is found in at least two of the exchanges, is that the flow of communication between partners is constrained in various ways. This again leads to deficient and lopsided planning of the exchanges, where more attention is given to the placements in one of the countries. A lack of correspondence between the activities and the objectives of the exchange easily follows. Furthermore, these problems often lead to situations where participants arrive in host countries with few and/or misconceived ideas about what the exchange and posting will entail. Such mistaken expectations, often accompanied by a mismatch between the skills of the participants and the requirements for the postings, lead to frustrations and make the achievement of objectives more difficult.

A well-conceived idea for the exchange, where there is a good fit between the qualifications of the participants, their interests, and the institutional contexts into which they are placed, can outweigh a number of other weaknesses in the set-up. Thus, the *AIESEC* exchanges seem

to be quite successful even in a context of comparatively weak organizational structures implementing the exchanges.

Recruitment, preparation and team organization are ways of ensuring the quality of the human resources upon which any exchange program ultimately depends. One program experienced recruitment problems and both North and South participants were selected partly outside the criteria originally established. Clearly this limits the possibilities of achieving stated goals. In the other programs, recruitment on the whole apparently went smoothly. Preparation is deficient in a number of projects, often related to unclear or mistaken ideas about the activities and placements to be realized in the other country. Deficient preparation leads to lost opportunities for systematic learning and well-planned information work. Finally, the Fredskorpset Youth program emphasizes that it is a group program. Yet only the *Red Cross* exchange makes use of the opportunity for organizing participants into a team, jointly realizing a number of activities together. It would seem that there is a potential for realizing synergies through team organization also in other exchanges.

While learning objectives generally are quite loosely formulated, and therefore not very useful for measuring achievements, it is in some exchanges possible to be a lot more specific about what themes one expects to be covered. This allows much more targeted and systematic designing of activities that are logically linked to these goals. Through such a systematic effort, more can be achieved in terms of learning. To some extent, the *Volda* exchange can exemplify this: Courses, trips and other activities are combined with specific learning purposes in mind, and an exam at the end both serves to focus the participants and to monitor and evaluate their achievements.

A lack of social integration threatens goals achievement both because opportunities for learning about the host society are lost and because this may result in a difficult psychological situation for the young participants of the Fredskorpset Youth program. The material indicates that social integration is often more difficult for South participants. There are a number of reasons for this, relating to North-South issues, class and race, language, and perhaps other cultural issues. In any case, it means that it is particularly important to ensure that mechanisms for social integration – whether through forms of accommodation, social contacts and networks, specific activities, or in other ways – are in place for the postings in Norway.

With the exception of the *Red Cross* program, information activities appear in many cases more as add-ons and afterthoughts than as integrated elements of the exchanges. Participants and partner institutions therefore do not focus on the tasks in a systematic way, do not dedicate sufficient resources and energy, lack appropriate materials and effective strategies, miss good opportunities and implement activities in a less than optimal way. Thus, the specific advantages of doing information work while in the host country are neglected in many cases. Where North and South partners are able work together on information activities, they are able to complement each other and offer an information package of greater impact than any of them could have realized on their own.

On the other hand, there are other programs where information activities are divorced from the core activities of the exchange, largely limited to the post-exchange period, and given little priority by the partner institutions. In these cases, the objectives of the information activities also seem quite unclear, and neither target groups nor contents are defined. It is not surprising that such exchanges achieve much less on the information side. Here the individual

participant is to a large extent left to his or her own devices, and that in some cases few activities are realized should not be surprising.

Finally, as Fredskorpset has not defined the goals for the information work in the South, it may be difficult to develop and implement focused information activities there. In the case of the *Red Cross* and the *NMS*, this has been resolved through a focus on the organizations' missions – missionary work and spreading knowledge of Red Cross values and international humanitarian law –, but for the other organizations, it remains unclear what should be the focus of the information activities in the South.

5.3 Recommendations

To a certain extent, this is a study of a moving target. Fredskorpset is a new and constantly developing organization. As our review focuses on exchanges that were mainly planned and started up in 2002 and 2003, there are many later developments in planning and implementation procedures that are not captured. In a debriefing meeting in December 2004, the evaluation team was made aware of a number of developments that to some extent make certain elements of the following recommendations redundant. Where this is the case, we have added information about what changes Fredskorpset has already introduced in footnotes.

The idea of a peace corps, consisting of young people from the North going to live and work in developing countries, arose in the West as a means to assist developing countries and create understanding and support for development aid. The basic goal of Fredskorpset is still to help implement the objectives for Norwegian cooperation with developing countries. The idea of partnership and reciprocity between North and South, with Fredskorps participants not only coming from the North and going South, but also South participants going North, is a relatively new idea and only partly integrated into the original concept. Questions therefore arise in relation to the objectives and set-up of the Fredskorpset Youth exchanges: to which extent they not only are, but should further the basic Norwegian intentions - or to which extent they might mirror genuine South perspectives and preoccupations? This ambiguity might need some further reflection on the part of Fredskorpset Youth to clarify differences or similarities between North and South partner institutions and participants. In the present situation, the ambiguities entail some confusion within the different exchange programs and frustration among Fredskorpset Youth partners and participants.

A constant dilemma for Fredskorpset is how to balance the wish to leave the partner institutions as responsible for shaping and implementing their own exchanges with the need for making sure that there are system in place for achieving overall objectives, ensuring that public funds are used optimally and protecting participants. The following are areas where we believe Fredskorpset should consider whether the introduction of stricter guidelines and control mechanisms are necessary.

5.3.1 Balancing partnerships

There are many reasons why North partners tend to become dominant in partnerships, including the direct contact with Fredskorpset, the power-laden donor-recipient relationships that permeate all development assistance, and the general differences in resource endowments between North and South.

As unbalanced partnerships negatively affect goals achievement, Fredskorpset should explore ways of strengthening South partners in the exchanges. This could for instance involve training of South coordinators and contact persons (including South-South visits and exchanges)⁶; more direct communication Fredskorpset – South partners; direct reporting routines for South partners; specific manuals, including best practices cases; increased funding for South coordinators and for South participation in planning processes; promoting

⁶ Fredskorpset is planning to start up this in 2005.

awareness among North partners⁷; arranging South-South network meetings that may give South partner coordinators greater understanding of the opportunities offered by the Fredskorpset Youth program⁸; develop application and planning routines that do not exclude the South partner (a minimum requirement would seem to be to have all relevant documents available in English).

5.3.2 Clearer Fredskorpset information goals

While the Fredskorpset Youth program seems to have its strongest rationale in the information impacts it achieves, we do not think the institution is sufficiently clear in what kind of information dissemination it wants to promote. There are two fundamental questions that need to be answered:

- Is any information about the other country sufficient, or are there particular kinds of information that Fredskorpset wishes to promote?
- Are information objectives the same in Norway and the South, or are there different goals?

The first question is important because if one is clear about the types of information one wants, this has important implications for which kinds of exchanges are best suited as the basis for such information.⁹

The second question is important because information goals generally seem to be linked to a Norwegian context, where promoting international solidarity and support for Norwegian development assistance are underlying objectives. It is much less clear why one would want to promote solidarity with Norway or support for development assistance among countries in the South. If there are different information goals for the North or South, or if information goals are really only tied to the Norwegian context, this needs to be explicitly spelled out, as this has important implications for design of information activities and for the exchanges in general.

5.3.3 Integrating information

In the Fredskorpset Youth program, information activities are largely conceptualized as something that is done after the end of the exchange period. This contributes to marginalizing this aspect, making it something additional, that is included as an afterthought, because Fredskorpset requires it. This is something that needs to be countered, for several reasons. Firstly, information work is carried out also before and during exchanges. Secondly, to improve the quality of information, exchanges need to be designed to give participants the knowledge and understanding required for their planned information work. Thus, information goals must be part of the exchange goals, rather than something to be defined at the end. And thirdly, partner institutions need to be stimulated to place the information activities at the heart of the exchange program. This should ensure that all activities during the program as a whole lead to and support this central objective, that the partner organizations dedicate the

⁷ According to Fredskorpset, the issue is raised in the new (since June 2004) courses for North partners, as well as in some network meetings for North partners and meetings between Fredskorpset and individual North partners.

⁸ Meetings are arranged and networks are sought established in countries with a minimum number of South partner organizations, according to Fredskorpset.

⁹ Currently, Fredskorpset is emphasizing the promotion of knowledge of and commitment to the Millennium Development Goals in the information activities. This seems to be a useful way of focusing information work.

necessary resources for it, and that opportunities for efficient information work are not missed.

Thus, in concept documents and partnership agreements describing the exchanges, the information objectives should not come in a separate section but be included among the overall objectives. Moreover, it should be shown that the planned exchange would be relevant for enabling the participants to realize these information goals.

5.3.4 Clearer learning objectives linked to information goals

If the emphasis within the Fredskorpset Young program is placed on the information objectives, this will help develop clearer and more specific learning objectives. If partner institutions start by making plans for what it is that they want to communicate (and to whom), it will also be clearer what the participants need to learn. Thus, on the basis of clear and fundamental information goals, individual learning objectives follow. Having clear learning objectives will again help to design exchange activities that are specifically geared at allowing the participants to learn what they need in order to realize their information objectives.

5.3.5 Relating to the vulnerability of youth

The Fredskorpset participants are between 18 and 25. Some participants – especially from the South – have little or no previous experience of exposure to new cultural or social contexts, let alone new countries. Sending young people on exchanges across the globe involves huge responsibilities. Being on one's own in an alien cultural and social setting may put great strains on individuals who may not all be strong and mature enough to handle this pressure. Difficult exchange situations may lead to life choices with consequences participants have no ways of foreseeing. Cultural shocks and isolation, mental strains due to unfamiliar circumstances, interpersonal relationships and health hazards can have life-long implications.

Currently, Fredskorpset uses the preparation course to address such issues. Apart from that, it is the partner institutions that are responsible for dealing with them. In many cases, this means that responsibility is in practice left with the youth themselves. We think Fredskorpset should consider whether further general measures are necessary to ensure that minimum standards for protection of participants are met in all Fredskorpset Youth programs. Measures that might be considered could include recommendations or requirements for recruitment procedures; greater emphasis on safety related issues in preparation courses; higher minimum age; tighter monitoring mechanisms or requirements.

5.3.6 Improved evaluation

As the Fredskorpset Youth program is based on a decentralized structure and mainly use public financing, the monitoring and evaluation of results – by the partner institutions themselves as by Fredskorpset – should be a central concern. Partners organize various forms of self-evaluation including participants and evaluation items are included in partner meetings, sometimes with Fredskorpset. But this is rarely synthesized in publicly available written material. Fredskorpset should consider whether it is possible to develop procedures which, without becoming unnecessarily bureaucratic, could ensure a more systematic

evaluation of the different programs and result in evaluation documents which are accessible to scrutiny by outside persons and bodies.

6 Appendices

6.1 Goals statements for the exchange projects

6.1.1 AIESEC goals

(Combined from 2002-2003 (Fredskorpset main program) and 2004-2005 (Fredskorpset youth program) program documents.)

Overall objectives

Develop youth leadership

Promote (business) relations between Norway and Kenya

Planned exchange activities

Each program period 2 participants from exchanged from each country.

Participants will work as trainees in management teams of business and economic areas in private companies.

Assigned tasks should be professionally fulfilling.

Ambassador for Fredskorpset, AIESEC and home country

Attend learning workshops

Learning objectives of exchanges

Develop leadership and change agent characteristics

Increased cultural awareness and knowledge of host country

Insight into business practices of other countries

Networking

Planned post-exchange information activities

Hold seminars at Fredskorpset Networking events, AIESEC national conferences and/or universities and schools

(Not emphasized in program documents for first round of exchange)

Objectives of information activities

Increased knowledge about North-South issues and Fredskorpset

Letting participants practice change agent characteristics

Foster business relations between countries

Target groups:

Students, universities

AIESECers, other trainees

Companies

Media

Observations:

- No distinguishing between North and South partner or participant objectives
- First round under main Fredskorpset program had little emphasis on information activities in program documents

6.1.2 NMS goals

Overall objectives:

- Obtain greater understanding and knowledge about each other's cultures, and in that way increase their competence in relation to intercultural communication, human understanding and tolerance.
- Obtain greater understanding and knowledge about mission and development work, and through that become more actively involved in their local churches, in the universal church and in mission work of NMS.
- Share their experiences and new knowledge with other young people in NMS and FLM and in society in general, and through that to contribute to our common work for better understanding and stronger relationships between our cultures and churches.

Objectives of information activities:

For South partners

- Share experiences and basic skills in church matters that they have acquired in Norway
- Inform / teach the Malagasy people about the meaning of cooperation in the church,
- Teach parents about the importance of letting the children attend church activities.
- Encourage children to participate actively in the work of the church.

For North partners

- Motivate Christians in Norway to support mission and humanitarian aid projects.
- Make Team Nettverk and the youth exchange programs at Hald International Centre known among young people in Norway.
- Increase the tolerance, knowledge and interest in foreign cultures among young people and Norwegians in general.

Participants:

From the North

Obtain greater understanding and knowledge about
political, social and religious conditions in relevant countries,
Differences in culture as a valuable part of the world society
Central approaches within mission work and development aid
The profile and distinctive character of the activities in the parent organisation
The relevant joint venture partner and its projects
Christian faith and church work
Obtain knowledge and experience which
Are continued in the work for a more just world
Are being used to change attitudes in their own society
Create an active involvement in mission and development aid
Get to know better:
Themselves, their own faith, values, background and attitudes towards their own culture
Their own attitudes towards other people and cultures

Activities

- Teach music, computering and English in schools and youth groups.

- Participate in music and sport activities among students and young people in the church.
- Work with children in schools and institutions
- Possibly participate in agricultural work
- Work together with local workers (national and foreign) in FLM

From the South

- See more young people actively involved as members of the church, especially through Sunday services and the different activities in the children- and youth department of FLM
- See FLM grow and develop through youth participation.
- Give the young members of the church a broader understanding of the mission of the church in this world, and encourage them to share their faith in Jesus Christ.

Activities

- Participate in the work of NMS and local churches in Norway: music, sport, talks, presentations etc., with special emphasis on children- and youth ministry.
- Do practical work at campsites and in churches.
- Work together with local NMS- and church workers.

Information activities

For North partner

- Visit and share experience in local schools in Mandal and neighbouring cities
- Attend NMS' Christian summer festival "Nettverk"
- Visit and / or take responsibility as leaders in different activities in NMS or the local church (primarily among young people) or work as youth leader in camps and festivals during the summer.

For South partner

- Give interviews in the national and Christian radio channels, in national newspapers and in church magazines before and after the stay in Norway.
- Work in FLM's youth centre in Antananarivo to share ideas, thoughts and new knowledge with other youth workers and members.
- Make a roundtrip to present the youth work in FLM and share experiences from the exchange period in schools, choirs, youth groups etc. in cities like Antananarivo, Antsirabé, Fandriana, Fianarantsoa, Tulear.
- Be involved as leader or assistant in the children- and youth work in the church.

6.1.3 Red Cross goals

Overall objectives

Strengthen Masindi and Troms Red Cross

Mobilize and empower young people to participate in humanitarian activities

Planned exchange activities

2 participants from each country, participating together first in Norway, then Uganda, and finally Norway again.

Detailed and comprehensive activity plan – courses, meetings, seminars, information visits to schools, local Red Cross youth branches, newsletter and web information work, mobilization, leadership training, start income-generating activities, etc.

Learning objectives of exchanges

Participants will get practice/experience/knowledge as instructors and activity leaders, teamwork and teambuilding, Red Cross values and international humanitarian law, cross-cultural insights and knowledge of countries and history.

Empower young people to be aware of rights and obligations and enable them to take part in decision.-making processes and become change agents

HIV awareness and disaster preparedness

Planned information and organization-building activities

See exchange activities

Objectives of information and organization-building activities

Target groups youth 7-30 (later narrowed down to 12-18)

Spread of RC values and knowledge on RC, leading to mobilization and empowerment

Observations:

- Very clear goals statements
- Focus on institutional level
- No information activity as specific phase after exchange, but information dissemination an integral part of exchange activities
- Excellent program evaluation in final report to LNU

6.1.4 VUC goals

Overall objectives:

The student teachers (participants):

- acquire knowledge about and understanding of societies of different continents with special focus on host country
- interact and share their teaching and learning experiences and thereby enhancing their professional growth.

The institutions (partners):

- establish long term educational links between the colleges with special focus on social science education

Objectives of information activities:

Convey updated information about the host country with special focus on adolescence and education, natural resources, culture, society and transcultural communication. Founded on theoretical knowledge, personal experience and engagement the information should create positive attitudes for justice, development and cooperation in the relationship between the North and the South.

North and South partners/participants

During the stay:

- take personal initiatives in order to acquire knowledge and attitudes in accord with the general objectives of this program
- share educational experiences with others

- where possible prepare a presentation on some areas of general interest
- abide by rules and regulations of host institution

by

- participating in the activities prepared by host institution
- working on project on a subject area of special interest, especially collecting information on which to base the project report and information work after returning home
- preparing and presenting information about home country to fellow students and to primary / secondary schools in nearby area
- informing the students at host institution who are chosen for exchange stay at home college about home country, home town/city and college and
- reporting to home college (local coordinator) once a week

During the follow-up phase:

- inform about the program and inspire other future teachers to join the in program

by

- finishing / writing their project report where up to 20% of the report may be a lesson- / teaching plan aimed at a defined age group of students
- making a project report popularisation
- presenting information from exchange stay for students at Volda University College soc. Science and students at schools in near by area
- teaching for future students. All through their future work as teachers of geography / social studies, the students will convey information and attitudes among other things on the basis of their stay in Africa.

6.2 Questionnaires

6.2.1 Questions for Fredskorpset Ung exchange partners (contact persons)

A) Results of exchanges

1. Below you will find a list of the activities that were supposed to be realized during the exchange [see appendix 6.1]. Please detail whether and to what extent they have been realized.
2. Below you will also find a list of the objectives that were defined for the exchange [see appendix 6.1].
 - a) Please describe to what extent these results have been achieved for your institution (or are being achieved, in the case of exchanges that are still on-going). Try to be concrete and specific in terms of how results are seen and experienced, and what difference they make for the work your organisation is doing.
 - b) Try also to assess the extent to which the goals were achieved by the North participants, South participants or both, depending on who you have had contact with.
3. Have there been other positive impacts of the exchange project, that were not foreseen when the project was planned? Or have there been any negative effects? (Please be specific.)

B) Information activities

4. What was the planned information work (type of information activity, scope, target group(s), objectives, etc.) – both during and after the exchange period?
5. To what extent were the plans realized?
6. How do you assess the results (impacts) of the information activities?

C) Participating in the exchange program

8. Why did your institution want to participate in Fredskorpset Ung?
9. Was the planning and preparation of the exchange project adequate? Were there issues that were not foreseen? Could Fredskorpset have helped more in this process?
10. What did you particularly emphasize in the recruitment of participants for the exchange project? Were the participants well prepared for the exchange, in your view? (Explain how they were or were not well prepared and why).

11. What challenges or difficulties were encountered during the exchange project? (Typical problems often involve language or cultural differences; unequal expectations among exchange participants and the institutions where they are placed; mismatch between qualifications and requirements; lack of realistic plans for what the exchange participant would be doing. Were problems of these types encountered, or other types of difficulties?)
12. How were these challenges met? Were the problems overcome, or did they affect the extent to which the goals of the exchange were achieved?

6.2.2 Questions for Fredskorpset Ung exchange participants

A) Results of exchanges

1. Below you will find a list of the activities that were supposed to be realized during your exchange [see appendix 6.1]. Please detail whether and to what extent they have been realized.
2. Below you will also find a list of the objectives that were defined for your exchange [see appendix 6.1]. Please describe to what extent these results have been achieved (or are being achieved, in the case of exchanges that are still on-going).
3. Goals were also defined for the institutions involved in the exchange. Below you will find these objectives (if applicable). Please try to assess the extent to which these goals are being reached. If you only feel capable of answering for one of the institutions, then only answer for this one. Try to be concrete and specific in terms of how results are seen and experienced, and what difference they make for the work your organization is doing.
4. Have there been other positive impacts of the exchange project, that were not foreseen when the project was planned? Or have there been any negative effects? (Please be specific.)

B) Information activities

5. What were your plans for information work (type of information activity, scope, target group(s), objectives, etc.) – both during and after the exchange period?
6. To what extent were these plans realized?
7. How do you assess the results (impacts) of the information activities?

C) Participating in the exchange program

8. Why did you want to participate in the exchange program?

9. Were the planning and preparation of your exchange project adequate, including the preparation you were given yourself? Were there issues that were not foreseen? Could Fredskorpset have helped more in this process?
10. What challenges or difficulties were encountered during the exchange project? (Typical problems often involve language or cultural differences; unequal expectations among exchange participants and the institutions where they are placed; mismatch between qualifications and requirements; lack of realistic plans for what the exchange participant would be doing. Were problems of these types encountered, or other types of difficulties?)
11. How were these challenges met? Were the problems overcome, or did they affect the extent to which the goals of the exchange were achieved?

6.3 Terms of reference

OPPDRAGSBESKRIVELSE

Studie av måloppnåelse i prosjekter i Fredskorpset Ung 2004

Hovedformål

Det skal gjennomføres en studie av resultatoppnåelse hos utvalgte partnere på vegne av Fredskorpset. Studiens hovedformål er å vurdere resultatoppnåelsen hos utvalgte partnere i prosjekter innen Fredskorpset-ung i forhold til formulerte mål.

Videre gjennomføres studien for å

- vurdere i hvilken grad planlagte aktiviteter og formulerte resultater på kort sikt er realisert i de utvalgte prosjekter.
- vurdere hvilke resultater som er oppnådd gjennom prosjektenes etterarbeid og kartlegge erfaringer partnerne har gjort av dette.
- bidra til å styrke partnernes bevissthet om deres egne prosjektmålsettinger, målformuleringer og reelle muligheter for å nå disse.

Premisser:

- Måloppnåelse: Studien skal kartlegge om partnerne når sine målsettinger slik de er spesifisert i partner- og samarbeidsavtaler.
- Det skal legges spesiell vekt på innhold og resultater av *etterarbeid*
 - Med utgangspunkt i planer for etterarbeidet skal studien spesielt undersøke i hvor stor grad de planlagte aktivitetene *har blitt gjennomført*.
 - Studien skal kartlegge i hvilken grad etterarbeidet *har bidratt til måloppnåelse* og kartlegge eventuelle resultater/effekter (positive og negative) som ikke var planlagt.
 - Studien skal inneholde en *kost-nytte vurdering* av om etterarbeidet har gitt resultater som står i forhold til de tildelte midler som er benyttet til formålet.
 - Studien skal også oppsummere partnernes erfaringer med etterarbeid på en måte som kan bidra til konkrete forbedringer ved ny gjennomføring av etterarbeid, m.h.t. forberedelser, innhold og formidlingsmetode) .
- Resultater for øvrig: Studien skal i tillegg søke å kartlegge resultater som følge av utvekslingene som ikke er forutsett/planlagt (ihht. partner- og samarbeidsavtaler).
- Ovenstående skal studeres hos partnere i Nord og i Sør som inngår i prosjektet.

Metode: Studien blir basert på følgende:

- a. Dokumentstudier
- b. Intervjuer av partnere og deres nåværende og tidligere deltakere/ansatte som har vært utvekslet.
- c. Spørreundersøkelser pr.e-post overfor partnere (og deltakere).

Utvalg av prosjekter

Totalt 4 prosjekter inngår i studien. De aktuelle partnerne/prosjektene er:

AIESEC Norge	Norge
AIESEC Kenya	Kenya
Det Norske Misjonsselskap	Norge
The Evangelical Luth. Church in Madagascar (FKTLM)	Madagaskar
Høgskulen i Volda	Norge
Chancellor College (CC), University of Malawi	Malawi
Lilongwe Teacher Training College (LTTC)	Malawi
Troms Røde Kors	Norge
Masindi Red Cross	Uganda

Forventet innhold i rapporten

- Generell del (basert på analyser av intervjumateriale og spørreundersøkelse)
 - o Hvilke faktorer påvirker graden av måloppnåelse.
 - o Generell oppsummering av enkeltelementene i undersøkelsene.
 - Måloppnåelse i forhold til partner- og samarbeidsavtaler
 - Resultat av etterarbeid og partnernes generelle erfaringer med etterarbeidet (vektlegges spesielt)
 - Resultater for øvrig.
 - o Forbedringspunkter for Fredskorpset
- Prosjektsesifikk del med følgende elementer fra hvert prosjekt.
 - o I hvilken grad når partnerne når sine målsettinger slik de er spesifisert i partner- og samarbeidsavtaler.
 - o Innhold og resultater av etterarbeid (vektlegges spesielt).
 - o Resultater for øvrig.

Kildedokumenter

Følgende dokumenter er tilgjengelig som grunnlagsmateriale for studien:

- Avtaledokumenter med prosjekt- og målbeskrivelse.
- Årsrapport for 2003.

Språk

Rapporten fra studien skal være på engelsk.

Framdriftsrapport før datainnsamling

Før datainnsamlingen starter presenterer konsulentene en framdriftsrapport med plan for datainnsamling med, intervjuguider og skjema for intervju pr. e-post.

6.4 Interviews conducted

Date	Exchange	Name	Position	Interview
13.10.04	AIIESEC	Benedicte Omre	Contact person	Oslo
20.10.04	AIIESEC	Lorna Ndei	South participant	Oslo
22.10.04	AIIESEC	David Mugambi	Co-worker IPC	Nairobi
22.10.04	AIIESEC	Julie Bringsdal	North participant	Nairobi
22.10.04	AIIESEC	Pius K Rotich	Co-worker IPC	Nairobi
22.10.04	AIIESEC	Håvard Bauck	Ex-participant	Nairobi
22.10.04	AIIESEC	Chege Wachira	Co-worker BIT	Nairobi
22.10.04	AIIESEC	Anniken Esbensen	North participant	Nairobi
23.10.04	AIIESEC	Kenneth Kaniu	Ex contact person	Nairobi
23.10.04	AIIESEC	Belinda Muriuki	Ex-participant	Nairobi
23.10.04	AIIESEC	Joseph Wambuki	Ex-participant	Nairobi
03.11.04	AIIESEC	Stian Nygaard	Ex-participant	Phone
04.11.04	AIIESEC	Carl Fredrik Smith	Ex contact person	Oslo
21.10.04	NMS	Per Ørjan Aaslid	Contact person	Stavanger
21.10.04	NMS	Merete Heintz	Coordinator	Stavanger
21.10.04	NMS	Barson Lahivelo Mahafaly	South participant	Stavanger
21.10.04	NMS	Sujeanne Philomene Mbohitako	South participant	Stavanger
21.10.04	NMS	Malvin Tomren	Contact person	Stavanger
02.11.04	NMS	Onisoa Tahina Andriamandimby	Ex participant	Antanarivo
03.11.04	NMS	Guri Bjerås	Contact person	Antanarivo
03.11.04	NMS	Samoela Georges	Contact person FLM	Antanarivo
03.11.04	NMS	Hantadrainy Rasoa- herinomenjanahary	Ex participant	Antanarivo
08.11.04	NMS	Per Ørjan Aaslid	Contact person	Phone
09.11.04	NMS	Anders Rønningen	Contact person	Holmestrand
10.11.04	NMS	Maria Kristensen	Ex-participant	Phone
11.11.04	NMS	Kjersti Magelsen Godø	Ex-participant	Phone
12.11.04	NMS	Hanne Marte Grimstad	Ex-participant	Phone
24.10.04	Red Cross	Deo Mukii	Coordinator	Masindi
24.10.04	Red Cross	Christopher Monday	Ex-participant	Masindi
24.10.04	Red Cross	Enock Karamagi	Contact person	Masindi
25.10.04	Red Cross	Deo Mukii	Coordinator	Masindi
26.10.04	Red Cross	Lawrence Lutaaya	Coordinator	Kampala
26.10.04	Red Cross	Jackie Kamurasi	Ex-participant	Kampala
01.11.04	Red Cross	Arnulf Prestbakmo	Ex-participant	Phone
10.11.04	Red Cross	Britt Gunnberg	Contact person	Tromsø

22.10.04	VUC	Norleif Vik	Contact person	Phone
22.10.04	VUC	Elin Roksvåg	Ex participant	E-mail
27.10.04	VUC	Virginia Chavula	Principal LTTC	Lilongwe
27.10.04	VUC	Goodson Kanudzi	Contact person LTTC	Lilongwe
27.10.04	VUC	Lovemore Azele Mbewe	Ex participant	Mataka
27.10.04	VUC	Lenai Wester Mkutumulu	Ex participant	Kalolo
29.10.04	VUC	Symon Ernest Chiziwa	Ex-contact person LTTC	Zomba
29.10.04	VUC	Matthew Noel Chilambo	Contact person CC	Zomba
30.10.04	VUC	Jenipher Mbukwa	Participant	Zomba
30.10.04	VUC	Twambilele Mwangonde	Participant	Zomba
31.10.04	VUC	Matthew Noel Chilambo	Contact person	Zomba
08.11.04	VUC	Norleif Vik	Contact person	Phone
11.11.04	VUC	Cathrine Sjøholt Wirzen	Ex-participant	Phone
12.11.04	VUC	Rita Bogholm Knutsen	Ex-participant	Phone
15.11.04	VUC	Ane Marte Botn Brattli	Ex-participant	Phone, e- mail

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