



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Agency for Development
and Cooperation SDC

CALL FOR PROPOSAL

TO SUPPORT ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAUCASUS NETWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF MOUNTAIN REGIONS (SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS)

In the framework of the project
Strengthening the Climate Adaptation Capacities in the South Caucasus (SCAC)

2021

TABLE OF CONTENT

TABLE OF CONTENT	2
BACKGROUND	3
CONTEXT	3
THE GOAL OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS	4
AVAILABLE ASSIGNMENTS — LOTS	5
LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	5
LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	5
LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS	5
LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL	5
MAIN TASKS AND ELEMENTS — LOTS	5
LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	5
LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	6
LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS	7
LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL	8
IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY — LOTS	9
LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	9
LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	9
LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS	9
LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL ELIGIBILITY	9
EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE	10
LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	10
LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS	10
LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS	10
LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL	10
VALUE AND ELIGIBLE COSTS	11
DEADLINE AND IMPORTANT DATES	11
HOW TO APPLY	11
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION	11
SELECTION PROCESS	12
REPORTING	12
CONTACT	12
ANNEXES AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS	12

BACKGROUND

The Caucasus is a unique region situated at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, straddling the Caspian and Black Seas. Home to around 50 ethnic groups and around 40 languages, the region has a rich and diverse cultural history and heritage. The Caucasus ecoregion is one of the richest and at the same time most threatened reservoirs of plants and animals on Earth – recognised as one of 35 “priority places” by WWF and one of 34 “biodiversity hotspots” by Conservation International.

The Caucasus Mountains naturally draw together the six countries of the region. Efforts to address sustainable development challenges related to poverty reduction, social protection, and environmental quality have a reasonably long history. However, armed conflict and political volatility have undermined the emergence of concerted responses to urgent problems. Against this background, the Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions (Sustainable Caucasus: www.sd-caucasus.com) was founded in 2014 to enhance sustainable development in the Caucasus region by supporting regional co-operation, bringing together key stakeholders, and implementing innovative solutions on the ground.

The mission of Sustainable Caucasus is to facilitate co-operation and coordination for sustainable development of the Caucasus mountain region.

Its objectives are:

- to foster sustainable development in the Caucasus mountain region; and
- to elaborate regional approaches to transboundary problems at national and local levels.

To achieve these objectives, Sustainable Caucasus cooperates with local and central authorities, scientific institutions, businesses, international organisations, local communities/populations, and other parties concerned with sustainable development in the Caucasus mountain region.

To accomplish its objectives, Sustainable Caucasus, *inter alia*: facilitates capacity building; enables the transfer and dissemination of knowledge; develops, analyses, and monitors relevant policies; supports training and education, research, and development; raises awareness; enhances co-operation and experience-sharing; promotes and introduces recognised best practices; and implements other actions targeted at sustainable development in the Caucasus mountain region, as appropriate.

Sustainable Caucasus also accommodates the Coordination Unit of the Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Regions (SNC-mt: www.caucasus-mt.net) which was established in July 2014. The main goal of the Network is to define a shared vision by a scientific network of various institutions and stakeholders working on the Caucasus mountain region, drawing on the experiences of other mountain regions such as the Carpathians ([Science for the Carpathians Network, S4C](#)) and the Alps ([International Scientific Committee on Research in the Alps, ISCAR](#)), as well as the Mountain Research Initiative ([MRI](#)) Europe.

The project "Strengthening the Climate Adaptation Capacities in the South Caucasus (SCAC)," implemented by the Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions (Sustainable Caucasus) and supported by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is, among others, focused on building the capacity of Sustainable Caucasus. Being a relatively young organisation, Sustainable Caucasus receives capacity-building assistance from the SDC.

CONTEXT

Sustainable Caucasus comprises a small team of people based in Baku (Azerbaijan), Tbilisi (Georgia), and Yerevan (Armenia), which is guided by a five-member Board. Five years after its inception, Sustainable Caucasus's management decided to address the capacity needs of the organisation, and to define ways of both meeting emerging challenges related to the implementation of its mission and building-up its organisational sustainability. Therefore, in June 2019, Sustainable Caucasus undertook an organisational self-assessment process, which revealed four organisational development priorities to be tackled in the coming years. These priorities are as follows:

- 1) To ensure the interlinkage and consistency of the primary strategic texts (Mission, Vision, and Strategy), thereby contributing to the organisation's institutional and programming development;
- 2) To increase fundraising effectiveness and co-operation with donors;
- 3) To boost visibility and enhance the efficiency of external communication; and
- 4) To improve financial management to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

Sustainable Caucasus conducted an organisational self-assessment using a technique called the Organisational Mapping Tool (OMT) created by the Ford Foundation. The tool was deemed appropriate for Sustainable Caucasus as it was specifically created to help the staff of civil society organisations (CSOs) to reflect on their organisational performance and, by building organisation-wide consensus, to identify areas in which institutional strengthening could be achieved. The OMT exercise was led by a member of the Board of Sustainable Caucasus who specialises in organisational development. Moreover, all staff and the majority of Board members participated. An organisational self-assessment report (Annex 1 — Organisational Self-Assessment Report) was developed as a result of this process.

This organisational self-assessment has helped the Sustainable Caucasus team to come together to assess the working processes of the organisation and to identify capacity gaps therein. This has, in turn, enabled the organisation to determine priority development areas and potential ways forward formulated in the Organisation Development Options (see Annex 2).

The objectives set to address the priorities identified and described in the Organisation Development Options (ODO) are as follows:

- (A) To diversify and increase the income sources of the organisation by elaborating an effective and flexible fundraising strategy and set-up applicable to the regional and international donors' market within the next 6-9 months.
- (B) Establish a functioning, clear, specific, compelling, value-inclusive, recognised and widely-embraced Mission and Strategy, followed by the Board members and Secretariat staff that will define the added value of the organisation, as well as its niche and strategic directions for the coming years. Moreover, it will delineate the services which the organisation can provide to stakeholders.
- (C) To have a comprehensive communication strategy tailored to the needs, challenges and requirements of the organisation, which will support its promotion and visibility at both regional and sub-regional/international levels.
- (D) To strengthen the financial management of SC in the next six months, by building the organisation's budgeting and accounting practices by implementing a full cost recovery (FCR) model.

THE GOAL OF THE CALL FOR PROPOSALS

The purpose of the given call is to support Sustainable Caucasus in the tackling of the abovementioned objectives set to address the priorities identified and described in the Organisation Development Options (ODO — Annex 2) and, therefore, to ensure:

- 1) Elaboration of the Vision and the Strategy of the organisation for the next 5-10 years (LOT 1);
- 2) Revision and alignment of the Communication Strategy with the Vision and Strategy of Sustainable Caucasus (LOT 2);
- 3) Support for the systematisation of fundraising efforts and formulation of a policy (guiding documents) of Sustainable Caucasus to increase the effectiveness of the fundraising process (LOT 3); and
- 4) Support for the introduction of a Full Cost Recovery (FCR) model (LOT 4).

AVAILABLE ASSIGNMENTS — LOTS

In correspondence with the objectives underlined, assignments available and thus the LOTS announced are as follows. Within each assignment/LOT, selected applicant(s), in close co-operation and with participation from the Board and Staff of Sustainable Caucasus, will be required to perform the variety of tasks/actions described in the chapters below.

Please consider: Applicants may express their interest and thus apply for a single, several, or all the LOTS available under the call.

Assignments/LOTS available under call are:

LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

- a) Draft the methodology for the elaboration of the Vision and Strategy;
- b) Organise two workshops/retreats: The first workshop/retreat should identify strategic directions, key sub-topics and priorities, as well as the timeline for the elaboration of the Vision and Strategy, and the second should facilitate an agreement on the final drafts of both the Vision and Strategy; and
- c) Support, as appropriate, relevant staff and Board members in the drafting of the Vision and Strategy for the next 5-10 years.

LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

- a) Support staff in the alignment of the Communication Strategy with the elaborated Vision and Strategy.

LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS

- a) Conduct an assessment of current practices and challenges related to fundraising for Sustainable Caucasus; and
- b) Based on mapping carried out on potential income structures and sources, including donor funding, supporting/facilitating identification and formulation of modalities of fundraising for each source, and determining the responsibilities of each staff member.

LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL

- a) Conduct an assessment of the current financial management practice/system and consider how it could be amended towards a full cost recovery (FCR) model;
- b) Train staff so that they understand this model;
- c) Design additional supporting policies and procedures;
- d) Design an appropriate and timely cash-flow provision practice; and
- e) Final deployment of an FCR model.

MAIN TASKS AND ELEMENTS — LOTS

LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

Sustainable Caucasus has a written mission and objectives, which are reflected in the organisational charter and are published on the organisation's website: www.sd-caucasus.com. The self-assessment (see Annex 1) demonstrated that, as the mission is rather broad, this creates both advantages and disadvantages when it comes to designing organisational activities.

Sustainable Caucasus's mission declares how it aims to foster co-operation and collaboration among different stakeholders working on sustainable mountain development. However, currently, the organisation is mainly focusing on academia and regional scientific co-operation. Despite academia being among its core stakeholders, the needs of other stakeholders, like local mountain communities and governmental entities, cannot be satisfied only through scientific co-operation or the development of the higher education sector. The Vision and Strategy should support the identification of the areas in which the organisation will address all stakeholders' needs, as well as the corresponding methods.

Further development of the Vision and Strategy, and its subsequent dissemination among stakeholders, might support/facilitate, among other aspects, the definition of programming priorities, an increase in fundraising and external communication effectiveness, and improvements in networking and financial management.

The promotion of this Priority Area envisages the following steps and activities as described under the ODO (see Annex 2):

- Identification and review of relevant policy and guiding documents in the countries of the region and those outside it;
- Assessment/research of the needs of local populations, as well as the impacts of state policies, development projects, and scientific analysis of mountain development;
- Preparation and organisation of a workshop or retreat where the Vision and Strategy will be defined. In doing so, strategic directions, key sub-topics and priorities, and the timeline for the Strategy can be elaborated and agreed;
- Drafting of the Vision and Strategy by relevant staff and possibly Board members as agreed during a workshop or retreat¹; and
- Staff and Board members agreeing on the final document at the workshop or retreat and defining, among other aspects, the roles and responsibilities in its implementation, the means of implementation, and monitoring schemes.

To facilitate the elaboration of the Vision and Strategy, the staff and the Board should identify a set of relevant documents to be shared and reviewed before the workshop or retreat, such as the Caucasus Regional Research Agenda² and national sectoral strategies.

The designated external expert(s)/consultants, in close collaboration with the Board and staff of the organisation, will select and draft a methodology for the elaboration of the Vision and Strategy of Sustainable Caucasus. The Vision and Strategy, among others, shall consider the abovementioned steps and activities as well as the necessity to elaborate documents utilising a participatory approach to identify strategic priorities and directions.

The elaboration of the Vision and Strategy may also imply the elaboration of a list or lists of potential partners and target groups, both within and beyond the region, as well as analysis and discussion of the set-ups of similar organisations and other relevant background documents.

Later, after the elaboration of the Vision and Strategy, the results would feed into the communication strategy. The Board should take on the role of monitoring the implementation of the Vision, Strategy and actions agreed upon by the staff (see Annex 2).

LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

Since the approval of the ODO (see Annex 2) by the Board of Sustainable Caucasus, the Communication Strategy for 2021-2025 has been elaborated (*the Communication Strategy is available upon request*). As external communication cannot be considered a stand-alone activity, the document will need to be revised in line with the Vision and Strategy and other policy documents (i.e. Fundraising Policy) to be drafted. Moreover, the Communication Strategy might need to be updated on account of experiences generated during its

¹ Note: it would be worth preparing the document's main parts during a workshop or retreat and perhaps consider the organisation's Theory of Change.

² www.caucasus-mt.net/regional-research-agenda

implementation, of the external experts' intervention, and of rapidly-developing communication technology, innovation and methods, among others, emerging in the course of the Covid-19.

Sustainable Caucasus's communication has a two-pronged focus:

- Communication within the region at the national level in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia where Sustainable Caucasus has offices/staff; and
- Communication outside the region (at sub-regional and international levels) where Sustainable Caucasus does not have any offices/staff.

The Communication Strategy shall, inter alia, promote the organisation among stakeholders, support the building of its reputation as a reliable partner, better communicate its achievements and establish a reliable and operational network both within and beyond the region.

At this stage, considering that the Communication Strategy is already available, the following steps are suggested by Sustainable Caucasus:

- Revision of the Communication Strategy based on:
 - generated experience arising from its implementation (i.e. gap analysis and evaluation); and
 - emergence of new technologies and methods of communication.
- Align the Communication Strategy with the organisation's Vision, as well as the objectives and priorities of the organisation's Strategy.

The steps that the staff should take here will revolve around the recording of Communication Strategy implementation shortcomings and gaps to be shared with external experts and management to align the Communication Strategy with the organisation's Vision and Strategy to be elaborated with the involvement of abovementioned experts. The external experts should provide necessary advice on the utilisation of appropriate tools, especially those related to promoting Sustainable Caucasus at sub-regional/international levels and ensuring that the Communication Strategy is synchronised with the Vision and Strategy. Such synchronisation would ensure better sharing of resources and greater consistency with respect to organisational needs.

LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS

Successful fundraising is closely linked to, and dependent on, the other three Priority Areas of organisational development. In particular, the availability of a clearly-written Vision and Strategy followed by both the staff and the Board, an effective communication strategy and set-up (including a reliable network of potential partners within and beyond the region) and effective financial management arrangements are essential. However, fundraising effectiveness also depends on the availability of qualified staff and their ability to meet both organisational and donor priorities. Though recent organisational changes have led to improvements in some of these aspects, most of the challenges identified during the self-assessment (see Annexes 1 and 2), such as the need for diversification in terms of donor funding and the need to increase the revenue of the organisation, persist.

The establishment of fundraising modalities and related strategy will boost the financial sustainability of the organisation and help in the fulfillment of its mission and objectives.

To do so, under this Priority Area, the organisation has identified the following needs:

- Defining income structures and identifying potential sources for each 'structure,' especially non-grant structures;
- Mapping of potential donors and defining tactics for approaching them, especially bilateral donors based in the Caucasus countries, which may issue grants/contracts without tendering;
- Elaborating a portfolio of projects for donors, based on the Vision and Strategy of the organisation;
- Keeping up to date with the priorities and interests of donor organisations;
- Defining a set-up to reinforce its three offices (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) with respect to fundraising and through resources-sharing for both regional and national projects;

- Assessment/mapping of potential partners both in and beyond the region which are interested in working in the Caucasus and elaborating lines of communication with them and promoting Sustainable Caucasus and its work among them;
- Defining and delineating responsibilities among relevant staff with regard to fundraising in both the main office and the country offices; and
- Integrating the abovementioned approaches into one common/shared fundraising policy.

Technically, the activities earmarked to address these needs include assessments (carried out by both staff and external experts), covering, among other aspects, the existing practice of fundraising, defining the best applicable set-up for the fundraising process (including the defining of responsibilities of the involved staff), organisational retreats/workshops followed by a final workshop to elaborate the Vision and Strategy, and the drafting of relevant documents. To that end, it will be necessary to draft a clear process/methodology for the elaboration of the fundraising policy and the policy itself, with the assistance of external experts and the involvement of the organisation's management and staff.

At the same time, Sustainable Caucasus, using its resources, will continue its donor-mapping exercise entailing the identification of partners and building co-operation with them, as well as the elaboration of project outlines (portfolio of projects).

LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL

Sustainable Caucasus has robust and appropriate systems and controls in place governing all financial operations, including comprehensive record-keeping and transparent procedures. Moreover, staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage the most pertinent financial aspects of their jobs (most have been trained on the organisation's financial systems, and usually follow the relevant policies).

Nevertheless, the alignment between finance and programs requires specific attention. Specifically, project budgets do not yet correlate with the overall organisational budgeting and expenditure. Thus, while budgeting and planning do occur regularly, budget-to-actual comparison is less consistently applied. Furthermore, budget allocations and tracking are not consistent with a *full cost recovery* accounting practice.

The deployment of the FCR model will ensure effective and accurate cash-flow availability for the management or the Board, and calculation of its overheads and revenue targets, thus boosting the overall sustainability of the organisation (see Annex 2).

To achieve the objectives under this Priority Area, the following steps will be required (see Annex 2):

- An assessment of the current practice/system and how it could be amended towards an FCR model;
- Training of financial staff and project staff so that they understand this model (and its benefits, especially with regard to management accounting);
- The design of additional supporting policies and procedures such as the development of pricing and budgeting policies that support FCR, fundraising, and cross-organisational budgeting;
- Design of an appropriate and timely cash-flow provision practice; and
- Final implementation of an FCR model.

At this time, we would expect that the intervention would include the following two *in-situ* interventions by the external expert(s): (1) a review of the current practice/systems and proposed actions in concert with the staff; and (2) working with the staff to put the systems in place. Thereafter, the expert(s) should be available for a short period of *ex-situ* consultation support.

IMPLEMENTATION MODALITY — LOTS

Selected applicants in consultation with the Board and staff of Sustainable Caucasus, will conduct the following activities:

LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

- Identify and draft a detailed methodology for the participatory elaboration of the Vision and Strategy of Sustainable Caucasus;
- Prepare and organise a workshop or retreat where the Vision and Strategy will be defined. In doing so, strategic directions, key sub-topics and priorities, and the timeline for the Strategy will also be determined, agreed upon, and elaborated;
- Support the drafting of the Vision and Strategy by relevant staff and Board members as agreed during a workshop or retreat; and
- Backstop/facilitate a process through which the staff and Board members agree on documents at the workshop or retreat, and support the definition of, among other aspects, the roles and responsibilities in its implementation, the means of performance, and monitoring schemes.

LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

- Revise the Communication Strategy after the finalisation of the Vision and Strategy and provide recommendations for improvement in line with the Vision and Strategy approved by the Board and upon an evaluation of the Strategy's implementation practice, and identify a new set of tools and modalities applicable to Sustainable Caucasus; and
- Identify a new set of tools and modalities applicable to Sustainable Caucasus in terms of external communication methods improvement, especially outside the Caucasus region.

LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS

- Assess the current practices of fundraising;
- Based on identified existing fundraising practices, Sustainable Caucasus strategies, the list of potential donors/income sources identified, and the existing portfolio of projects and capacities of staff, elaborate a clear process/methodology for the formulation of a fundraising policy; and
- Support drafting of the fundraising policy, including outlining responsibilities among existing staff and the Board, and its approval by the Board.

LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL

- Assess the current practices/system and how it/these could be amended towards an FCR model;
- Train financial staff and project staff;
- Support the design of additional policies and procedures such as the development of pricing and budgeting policies that support FCR, fundraising, and cross-organisational budgeting; and
- Support the introduction/improvement of appropriate and timely cash-flow provision practice as well as deployment of an FCR model.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be considered for this call, the applicant must be representative/s of a non-profit/private organisation or an independent expert/team of experts fulfilling the following criteria:

- Extensive experience in organisational design, organisational development, change management, and diagnostic skills for non-profits (especially multi-country networks);
- Capability to see the bigger picture, to understand the context in which organisations function and specialised knowledge on how organisations function;
- In-depth knowledge and experience of specific intervention methodologies (i.e. strategic planning, communication and outreach, fundraising and financial management);
- Significant expertise in group and human dynamics;

- Excellent consensus-building skills;
- Ability to facilitate group and inter-personal work;
- Being non-judgmental and able to create learning opportunities for the group;
- Familiarity with the Caucasus region context would be an asset;
- Familiarity with sustainable development, especially of mountain regions, would be an asset; and
- Experience and ability to develop high-quality pieces in the English language (oral and written).

EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE

LOT 1. VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

Deliverable	Timeframe
A detailed methodology for the participatory elaboration of the Vision and Strategy	Within two weeks after the signing of the contract
A detailed report on workshop(s)/retreat(s) where the Vision, strategic directions, key sub-topics and priorities, and the timeline for the Strategy will be defined for final drafting	With one-to-two months after the signing of the contract
The final Vision and Strategy (approved)	Within three months after the signing of the contract
<i>Final Implementation Report</i>	<i>At the end of the assignment</i>

LOT 2. REVISION AND ALIGNMENT OF COMMUNICATION STRATEGY WITH THE VISION AND STRATEGY OF SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS

Deliverable	Timeframe
Revised Communication Strategy	One month after approval of the Vision and Strategy
<i>Final Implementation Report</i>	<i>At the end of the assignment</i>

LOT 3. SUPPORTING SYSTEMATISATION OF FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FORMULATION OF A GUIDING DOCUMENT TO INCREASE EFFECTIVENESS

Deliverable	Timeframe
Assessment of current fundraising practices	Two weeks after the signing of the contract
The methodology for fundraising policy elaboration	One month after the signing of the contract
The fundraising policy	One month after the approval of the Vision and Strategy by the Board
<i>Final Implementation Report</i>	<i>At the end of the assignment</i>

LOT 4. SUPPORTING THE INTRODUCTION OF A FULL COST RECOVERY (FCR) MODEL

Deliverable	Timeframe
Assessment of current financial management practices and recommendations pursuant to an FCR model	One month after the signing of the contract
Training of the financial staff and project staff	One month after finalisation of the assessment of current financial management practices and recommendations pursuant to an FCR model
Additional policies and procedures	One month after finalisation of the training
<i>Final Implementation Report</i>	<i>At the end of the assignment</i>

VALUE AND ELIGIBLE COSTS

The eligible costs of the assignment are as follows:

- Fees;
- Travel;
- Workshop/retreat facilities; and
- Involvement of key participants in the workshop(s)/retreat(s) (including travel and transportation considerations).

The budget for each LOT should be clearly defined, where necessary consulted with Sustainable Caucasus and presented separately.

DEADLINE AND IMPORTANT DATES

Opening of the competition	27 August 2021
Closing of the competition	2 October 2021
Results notified from	1 November 2021
The signing of the agreements by	13 November 2021

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit all the required documents electronically to the following address: grants@sd-caucasus.com.

Please indicate "Support to Organisational Development" in the email subject line and identify/enlist the LOT/s you are applying for in the email text. Applicants may express their interest and thus apply for a single, several, or all the LOTs available under the call.

All the submitted documents must be in the English language and sent no later than 2 October 2021 (18:00 UTC/GMT + 4).

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Following documents (in English language) must be provided by the applicant(s):

- 1) Expressions of interest, including proposals and a methodology for each step (for all LOT/s applied for);
- 2) Financial offer, including the estimated number of consultancy days, daily rates plus estimated travel costs and other anticipated expenses covering the organisation of workshops/retreats/trainings (can be consulted with the beneficiary organisation) (for all LOT/s applied for);
- 3) CV(s) of project team member(s) highlighting relevant experience for this specific assignment;
- 4) Proven experience of completing similar work processes (i.e. a portfolio of similar assignments implemented);
- 5) Letter(s) of recommendation (e.g. donors, partners, contractors, etc.);
- 6) Any other documents which are related to the idea of the assignment.

SELECTION PROCESS

Decisions on awarding submitted proposals will be made by the commission composed of external panel reviewers and Sustainable Caucasus representatives. The final decision will be made no later than one month after the deadline of the application submission.

Successful applications will be notified by e-mail within one week after the decision has been made. Applicants whose proposals fail to meet the requirements of the call will not be contacted.

REPORTING

Applicants selected and contracted will be required to submit narrative and financial reports — interim as well as final in line with requirements and procedures set in advance of the agreement.

Any delays, restraints and challenges hindering the assignment implementation process in a timely manner must be declared immediately as known.

CONTACT

Please address your questions to — Tamar Ioseliani (tioseliani@sd-caucasus.com)

ANNEXES AND ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS:

ANNEX 1: Organizational Self-Assessment Report

ANNEX 2: The Organisation Development Options

All other additional materials and/or consultations for the preparation of a bid can be provided upon request.

OUTLOOK REPORT: Organisational Self-Assessment Report for Sustainable Caucasus¹



September 2019

¹ Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions – Sustainable Caucasus

კავკასიის მთიანი რეგიონების მდგრად განვითარების ქსელ - მდგრადი კავკასია

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
ASSESSMENT OUTCOMES.....	4
PRIORITISATION OF ISSUES	15
DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS.....	17



Peter Senge *'Organisations work the way they do because of how we work, how we think and interact; the changes required ahead are not only in our organisations but in ourselves as well.'*

Introduction

Sustainable Caucasus (SC) has been operating for around five years now. It originally started from the enthusiasm of a few individuals to found an organisation that finds ways to support the fragile mountain regions of the Caucasus region. Now that the organisation has run several projects, has its own office, and a number of part-time staff, the board and management of Sustainable Caucasus decided, in the frame of the support the organisation has received from the Swiss Development Co-operation (SDC), to conduct an organisational assessment of the NGO. Dr Robert Atkinson, a board member of SC and an organisational development consultant, was asked by his fellow board members, at the March 2019 Board Meeting, to propose an approach to conduct this assessment.

Following Rick James (*Demystifying Organisation Development* (1998)):

'It is difficult to overstate the importance of diagnosis in the change process in determining the priority issues; the type of intervention needed; whether there is sufficient internal commitment to change. ... This diagnosis should be a process of self-appraisal by the client (often facilitated), not expert, external appraisal where the consultant does the diagnosis.'

He proposed that to help determine where the organisation currently is, organisationally, and to decide together where SC might prioritise its development options, that the entire staff and board follow an organisational self-assessment process. The reasons for self-assessment is to ensure that any diagnosis of the organisation's development needs allows for the organisation's staff and stakeholders to define their own development agenda. The recommended approach had to rely on individual-organisational self-assessments, thereby utilising a specific assessment tool.

Dr Atkinson recommended that SC carry out its self-assessment by using the Organizational Mapping Tool (OMT) that was a result of work done by the Ford Foundation.² This tool was created to help the staff of civil society organisations to reflect on their strengths and, by building organization-wide consensus, identify areas for institutional strengthening. The assessment survey provides the opportunity for an organisation to consider itself as a whole, asking what works well and what could be improved; it then helps to collectively identify priority areas for improvement and steps for addressing them.

² <https://www.fordfoundation.org/work/our-grants/building-institutions-and-networks/organizational-mapping-tool/>



The Organizational Mapping Tool was designed to be relevant for organizations of different sizes and levels of capacity – from small or recently founded to mature and complex organisations. It is meant to be filled out by all staff – programmes and administration – and, as appropriate, relevant members of the principal governing body (the board), since different perspectives are valuable in understanding organisational strengths and areas for growth. Although the process is usually best done with one person leading as a facilitator who is not an employee or board member, Dr Atkinson took this facilitator role as he is familiar with the process and to save funding (he also prepared this report).

The participants filled out the survey individually before the organisational assessment session held in Tbilisi on the 15th of July 2019. Then, as a group, discussed each point to assign a common score for the group and to make notes on each area. Following this the group looked to identify the collective priorities of the organisation for institutional strengthening. This work is presented in this outlook report.

These findings will be now discussed by the board and management of SC at its next board meeting to formulate the best ways to realise the prioritised changes (interventions required) and serve as input for defining expected outcomes, strategies, timeline and people responsible for SC's organizational strengthening work. Some proposed ideas are presented herein for this discussion, although it is recommended that a long-term development plan be developed from these ideas that helps to define required resources.

Karl Albrecht: 'prescription without diagnosis is malpractice whether in medicine or management.'

Assessment Outcomes

The assessment comprises a review of factors (elements) under fifteen organisational areas. Each element is rated from Minimal to Strong, with Minimal being 1, Basic 2, Moderate 3 and Strong 4. Comments and an overall score (average) are given in summary for each of the fifteen areas. While these averages are useful to note weaker areas, it is also important to note any low outliers that are in an area with an average score, as these might be quite critical to be attended to.

Mission and Strategy

Element	Score	Description
Mission and Vision	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Mission and vision are written but vague; many within the organisation cannot articulate them/Clear expression of organisation's mission and vision; while they could be more specific, many staff are familiar with and express commitment to them.
Goals and Outcomes	1.5	Minimal/Basic: No articulated goals and outcomes for organisation's programmatic work/A long-term goal is stated, but is not concrete or realizable and there are no shorter-term outcomes. A few staff and board members can explain these.
Strategic Plan	1	Minimal: No written strategic plan and the work of the organisation can be unfocused with little synergy among projects.
OVERALL	1.7	COMMENTS: 1. Written mission, no written vision, more precise vision needs to be elaborated. 2. No clear goals and outcomes, rather goals and outcomes of individual projects. 3. Need to improve co-operation with other stakeholders interested in sustainable mountain development, besides the scientists. Serve as a bridge between different stakeholders. 4. Second part of the first comment in parenthesis. 5. We need a working document, not long but relevant - strategic plan.

		6. Strategic framework - tool to communicate within the organization. Develop an action plan / work plan rather than the action plan
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Programming

Element	Score	Description
Mission/Programme Alignment	2	Basic: Most projects can be linked to mission and goals but it is difficult for the organisation to define what does and does not fall within its mission; projects operate independently from one another.
Programme Planning	1.5	Minimal/Basic: Programme planning rarely occurs and does not involve opportunity or needs assessments/Programme planning occurs but does not involve formal opportunity or needs assessments.
Inclusion of Historically Excluded Voices	1.5	Minimal/Basic: Voices of historically excluded groups within the communities with which the organisation works are not reflected in programme decision-making/Voices of historically excluded groups are occasionally reflected in programme decision-making.
OVERALL	1.7	COMMENTS: 1. Need to know if a certain call is aligned with our mission. 2. Very few projects. 3. Doing programmes without having a programme. 4. Not well declared, but the organisation has programmatic directions. No need to have projects in each of the programmes. 5. Not formal or documented programme planning. 6. Staff can be more involved in programme planning, no responsibility of the board. Board's role is commenting and overlook. 7. The name of the organisation is too broad, difficult to know what it stands for. Who are the people the organisation wants to help? No defined target groups.

Learning and Evaluation

Element	Score	Description
Programme Evaluation	2	Basic: Evaluation of programmes is inconsistent and not linked to organisation's priorities, theory of change or learning objectives; this information



		does not guide strategic decision-making or organizational learning.
Data Collection and Analysis	1	Minimal: No formal system exists for data collection and analysis.
Influence of Evaluation on Organisation	3.5	Moderate/Strong: While there is interest in reflection and learning, few resources are available to ensure they occur regularly; improvements in strategy and practice based on evidence occur, but inconsistently/A culture of reflection and learning exists and resources are available and used to ensure that learning from evidence and experience occurs. What is learned leads to improvements in strategy and practice and these lessons are shared internally and externally.
OVERALL	2.2.	COMMENTS: 1. Learning that occurs is for a project and does not necessarily apply to the organisation. 2. Use project activities to benefit the organisational development (for example national dialogs) 3. Data collected for a specific project. Need to integrate the data from all different projects into one data system - might become an issue in the future. 4. Number of people visit the organization, hits on Facebook, e-mails, partner requests, etc. - are not monitored/collected.

Advocacy

Element	Score	Description
Advocacy Strategy	2	Basic: Influencing policy-makers or holding target groups accountable is relevant to the organisation's work but not done in a systematic way.
Political Engagement	3.5	Moderate/Strong: Political developments are followed consistently, but there is little "inside" information/Political developments are closely followed, and staff have "inside" information that allows it to respond quickly and strategically to new developments.
Access to Power	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Some readiness and skills to participate in policy/accountability discussions but organisation does not have the contacts to influence them (or <i>vice versa</i>)/ Readiness and skills and some contacts to influence



		policy/accountability discussions but they need strengthening.
Policy Recommendations	1	Minimal: No clear or pragmatic policy recommendations.
Research	2	Basic: Some awareness of relevant research, but not effectively incorporated into advocacy work. Little to no research conducted by the organisation itself.
OVERALL	2.2	COMMENTS: 1. Advocacy is a priority. Need to find a niche 2. Advocacy with other organizations and stakeholders. A component in SCAC project. 3. Context sensitive and evidence-based advocacy 4. Small readiness for co-operation in Georgia. 5. Expertise in some areas, need to increase expertise in others.

Field Engagement

Element	Score	Description
Collaboration	3	Moderate: Awareness of key players in the field and a number of productive collaborations with them.
Network Participation	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Occasional participant in networks and other coalitions/Often active participant in networks and other coalitions but not in a leadership role.
Role in Movement	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Organisation sees itself as part of a movement but does not actively contribute/Organisation is active within the movement but without a fully strategic approach.
Reputation in Field	DNS	
OVERALL	2.7	COMMENTS: 1. Key players are identified. In certain field the collaboration with key players (scientific organisations) is established. With other partners (NGOs) it is a little limited. 2. Need to define the field for collaboration. 3. Promote the network ourselves and make ourselves relevant (both inside and outside the region). 4. Starting to initiate the movement ourselves. 5. Not all stakeholders have been reached and know about us.

		6. SC is open and ready to co-operate with all constructive stakeholders.
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Network Leadership

Element	Score	Description
Network Strategy	1	Minimal: Network has no articulated strategy or direction that is distinct from its member organisations.
Consistency	1	Minimal: Network is inconsistent in its communications and advocacy, leading to a relatively inactive network.
Managing Conflict	DNS	
OVERALL	1	COMMENTS: 1. The strategy is in development. 2. We need to define what networks mean for us especially in the context of serving as a secretariat of another network (SNC-mt).

External Communications

Element	Score	Description
Communications Strategy	2	Basic: No formal communications strategy exists but organisation does occasional general outreach when opportunities arise.
Goal and Message Alignment	3	Moderate: Key messages consistently support organisational goals.
Response to Attacks on the Organisation's Work	DNS	
Dissemination	1.5	Minimal/Basic: Organisation does not disseminate information to key audiences/Organisation disseminates information, but does not adjust messages for different target audiences.
Communication Tools	DNS	
OVERALL	2.2	COMMENTS: 1. A communication plan/strategy/approach needs to be defined.

Governance

Element	Score	Description
Principal Governing Body Composition	3	Moderate: Members of the principal governing body are drawn from a number of appropriate fields and include representation from historically excluded groups; most have some relevant experience.



Principal Governing Body Policies	3	Moderate: Principal governing body policies exist and are followed around such issues as, for example, term limits, conflict of interest, and orientation.
Principal Governing Body Meetings	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Meetings occur regularly but are not always well attended or documented; they often to lead to non-transparent decisions; tensions occur infrequently/Most meetings function smoothly, are well attended and well documented; decision-making is transparent. Meetings do not always provide sufficient opportunity for strategic discussions.
Principal Governing Body/Staff Relationship	3	Moderate: Principal governing body and staff communicate relatively well with one another, but occasional miscommunications occur.
Responsibilities	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Principal governing body members are not always clear about their roles and provide limited guidance and input/Principal governing body members are clear about their roles and regularly provide useful and appropriate guidance to the organisation.
Contributions	3	Moderate: Most principal governing body members make contributions to resources and/or to obtaining resources.
Annual General Meeting/Assembly of Members (if applicable)	DNS	
OVERALL	2.7	COMMENTS: 1. Missing person from the economic/financial field 2. Introduction of an advisory body, instead of increasing the number of board members. 3. policies are in place and followed, not regarding the term limits. 4. Opportunistic meeting schedule. 5. Frequency of communication and trust. 6. AGM need to keep in mind and discuss further. 7. No need to agree on everything, even the exchange will be important. Maybe NIG meetings will turn in AGMs.

Financial Management

Element	Score	Description
Financial and Systems Control	3.5	Moderate/Strong: Formal systems and controls govern financial operations, including recordkeeping and transparent procedures.



		Systems meet most needs for stakeholders but gaps remain/Robust and appropriate systems and controls in place governing all financial operations, including comprehensive recordkeeping and transparent procedures.
Staff Financial Skills	3	Moderate: Most staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage the most necessary financial aspects of their jobs; most have been trained on the organisation's financial systems, following policies most of the time.
Budget Management	3	Moderate: Budgeting and planning occurs regularly, but budget- to-actual comparison occurs inconsistently. Organisation runs occasional brief deficits.
Financial Reporting	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Financial reports— including a balance sheet, income statement, and a report of expenses by activity— are produced irregularly and are incomplete or difficult to understand/Monthly financial reports—including a balance sheet, income statement, and a report of expenses by activity—are produced but not always complete; management sometimes acts on inconsistencies.
Finance/Programmes Alignment	1	Minimal: Rudimentary budgets are created for the organisation, but are not separated out by program; budget allocations and tracking are not consistent with organizational priorities.
Audits	3.5	Moderate/Strong: Independent audits are conducted annually but findings are not consistently addressed or disseminated to appropriate audiences/Independent annual audits and findings are addressed and disseminated to appropriate audiences.
OVERALL	2.8	COMMENTS: 1. No structured planning for future - need to improve. 2. No budget for the organization, rather particular projects. 3. Monthly reports are for taxation purposes, not used as a management tool. 4. No cost recovery system in place.

Fundraising and Donor Relations

Element	Score	Description
Funding Diversification	1	Minimal: One or two donors provide short-term support. No clear strategy for raising future



		revenue and no attempt to find potential new institutional and/or individual donors.
Sufficient Funding	2	Basic: Raised funds almost cover administrative and programmatic needs but funds are tight and many human resources needs are not met.
Funding Organisational Priorities	1.5	Minimal/Basic: Organisation's work is determined mostly by funder interest in specific projects, making organisational cohesion difficult/Organisation receives some core support for its strategic plan, but also takes on funder-driven projects to help cover costs.
Fundraising Staff	2	Basic: Overburdened staff without fundraising experience are responsible for fundraising; a few principal governing body members may help as well.
Donor Relations	3	Moderate: Good relations with donors but communications are not always as timely as donors would wish; donors occasionally have to ask for greater clarification.
OVERALL	1.9	COMMENTS: 1. Our case: one medium to long term donor. 2. We have convinced the funder that our organisational goals are in line with theirs. 3. Link a fundraising plan to the organisational strategy and stakeholder needs.

Administration

Element	Score	Description
Legal Obligations	4	Strong: Organization is legally registered and fully compliant with relevant laws.
Organisational Structure	3	Moderate: Well-designed structure in place for most work, but there is still some lack of clarity in responsibilities and roles.
Administrative Procedures	3.5	Moderate/Strong: Well-documented administrative procedures are mostly followed but gaps remain; systems are periodically reviewed but could use updating/Administrative procedures are clearly documented, followed throughout the organization, regularly reviewed, and updated.
Technology and Information Systems	1	Minimal: Technology and information systems do not meet basic needs of the organization.
OVERALL	2.9	COMMENTS: 1. There is no investment plan.

Human Resources



Element	Score	Description
Human Resources Policies	3	Moderate: Human resources policies exist but do not reflect best practice; policies are typically followed and most staff are familiar with relevant pieces.
Human Resources Plan	1	Minimal: No human resources plan exists and there are no staff qualified to oversee it.
Job Descriptions and Appraisals	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Job descriptions exist but are outdated and no longer accurate; staff express confusion as to their roles and responsibilities. Appraisals happen infrequently/Job descriptions are occasionally updated. Staff receive regular appraisals but wish for greater clarity on roles and responsibilities.
Compensation	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Salaries, benefits, and raises are on the low end for the field, leading to challenges in attracting and retaining staff/Salaries, benefits and raises are competitive with similar organisations, helping to attract and retain staff.
Staff Development	1	Minimal: Staff development opportunities do not exist.
Staff Turnover	DNS	:
Staff Diversity	DNS	
OVERALL	2	COMMENTS: 1). Two very low scores here, needs reviewing by management. 2). Regular check of salary levels. 3). Staff are all part-time.

Safety and Security

Element	Score	Description
Security Plan and Training	1	Minimal: No security plan is in place; staff are not trained on risk management for personal and organisational security, including digital security.
Assessments and Revision	1.5	Minimal/Basic: Risk is not considered when planning new and continuing work, including travel. Emergency/contact information on staff are not kept/No formal procedure for risk assessment but staff discuss risk informally before assessing new and continuing work, including travel. Partial necessary data are kept on staff but are not updated.
Impact of Risk on Others	1.5	Minimal/Basic: Risk implications for others (including volunteers, members, communities, and the larger field) are not considered/Risk



		implications for others (including volunteers, members, communities, and the larger field) are considered informally.
Management Commitment to Security	2	Basic: Management sees security as a low priority and does not dedicate resources to it.
Security Resources	1	Minimal: No designated resources for security or emergency funds exist.
Documentation and Improvement	1	Minimal: No documentation of security incidents occurs and most staff are unaware of any challenges to the organisation.
OVERALL	1.3	COMMENTS: 1. Basic accident/liability insurance should be considered for staff and participants of workshops/events.

Organisational Culture

Element	Score	Description
Internal Communications	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Internal communications systems are weak and misunderstandings occur with some regularity. Information often does not flow adequately/Internal communications systems exist and information generally flows well, but breakdowns still occur.
Decision-making	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Decision-making processes are often unclear, leading to inefficiencies and confusion/Decision-making processes are in place but periodic confusion occurs as to who has decision-making authority.
Staff Input	2	Basic: Staff offer input occasionally but it has little effect on decision-making.
Staff Commitment	DNS	
Teamwork	3.5	Moderate/Strong: Staff tend to work within departments to solve problems but there is inconsistent cross-organisation collaboration/Staff regularly use teamwork across the organisation to solve problems and achieve goals.
Staff Conflicts	DNS	
Staff Well-Being	2	Basic: Staff's physical and emotional well-being is affected by unsustainable workloads and/or trauma; the organisation recognizes this but does not adequately address it.
OVERALL	2.5	COMMENTS: 1. Regular communication, staff meetings, briefed on the results of the board meeting.

		<p>2. Define what kind of decisions need to be taken to the board and what decisions can be made between the staff.</p> <p>3. The staff meeting to be also called before the board meeting to communicate the staff ideas to the board.</p>
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Executive Leadership

Element	Score	Description
Management Style	2.4	Basic/Moderate: Executive director has clear strengths, but also a few key weaknesses that hamper internal effectiveness and may affect the organisation's external reputation/Largely effective executive director who seeks input before decision-making; a few key shortcomings require improvement, but director is largely respected internally and externally.
Financial Judgement	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Executive director has some financial oversight, but does little planning; attention is largely devoted to immediate issues/Executive director has sound financial judgement and oversight with some focus on planning.
Interpersonal Skills	2.7	Moderate: Executive director's communications and management skills are mostly appreciated by staff. Mentoring occurs when time allows.
Second-Tier Leadership	N/A	Not Relevant: Although two did score this it was clear that this was not applicable to Sustainable Caucasus.
External Reputation	1.75	Basic: Executive director is not well known; has some strong allies, but is not fully respected among key audiences.
Succession	2.5	Basic/Moderate: Organisation is highly dependent on the present executive director and its future would be uncertain without that leader/If the executive director left, the organisation would have challenges; but the organisation would be likely to sustain itself.
OVERALL	2.4	³

³ Under this heading the six questions were answered anonymously by the staff and board members present. The scores were aggregated to give a common score. As such there were no comments collected. However, these findings were used within the Performance Appraisal of the Executive Director.

Chris Argyris ... 'organizational learning is a competence that all organizations should develop. The reasoning underlying this premise is that the better organizations are at learning the more likely they are able to detect and correct errors.'

Prioritisation of Issues

Following the discussions and scoring on each of the organisational areas covered the participants decided on those areas that were their first second and third priorities:

	First	Second	Third	Totals	Weighted Tally
Mission and Strategy	1	1	1	3	6
Programming	0	0	1	1	1
Learning and Evaluation	0	1	1	2	3
Advocacy	0	1	0	1	2
Field Engagement	0	1	0	1	2
Network Leadership	0	1	1	2	3
External Communications	0	1	2	3	4
Governance	0	0	0	0	0
Financial Management	0	0	0	0	0
Fundraising and Donor Relations	5	1	0	6	17
Administration	0	0	0	0	0
Human Resources	0	0	1	1	1
Safety and Security	0	0	0	0	0
Organizational Culture	0	0	0	0	0

Please note here if a specific aspect of capacity was highlighted as a priority (for example: Staff Financial Skills within Financial Management or Research within Advocacy):

This approach gave the following prioritisation:

Rank	Organisational Area	Weighted Tally
1	Fundraising and Donor Relations	17
2	Mission and Strategy	6
3	External Communications	4
4	Learning and Evaluation	3
-	Network Leadership	3
5	Advocacy	2
-	Field Engagement	2
6	Programming	1
-	Human Resources	1
7	All other remaining areas	0

#2	1	Mission + strategy	1.7
	2	Programming	1.7
	3	Learning + evaluation	2.2
	4	Advocacy	2.2
	5	Field engagement	2.7
#4	6	Network leadership	1
#3	7	External cons	2.2
	8	Governance	2.7
	9	Financial mgmt	2.7
#1	10	Fundraising + development	1.7
	11	Administration	2.9
	12	HR	2
	13	Safety - Security	1.3
	14	Org. culture	2.1

The top three were then taken into a discussion about potential ways forward.

Development Options



During the session the board and staff worked on the three priority areas. Expected outcomes were fleshed out for each and a number of actions that are needed to be developed:

1). Fundraising and Donor Relations

Comments:

1. Our case: one medium to long term donor.
2. We have convinced the funder that our organisational goals are in line with theirs.
3. Link a fundraising plan to the organisational strategy and stakeholder needs.

Expected Outcomes (goals):

- Diversification (+ co-funding, +1 SCAC project).
- Fundraising process/framework/strategy.
- Cost Recovery Orientation of SC.

Actions Needed:

- Subscribe to funding info service.
- Develop list of donors, plus donor features.
- Develop project concept briefs.
- Strengthen organisational profile through external communications.
- Cultivate and develop donor relations.
- Network development (event participation, network/coalition membership).
- Budgeting/costing standards (cost recovery) - pension participation(?)

2). Mission & Strategy

Comments:



1. Written mission, no written vision, more precise vision needs to be elaborated.
2. No clear goals and outcomes, rather goals and outcomes of individual projects.
3. Need to improve co-operation with other stakeholders interested in sustainable mountain development, besides the scientists. Serve as a bridge between different stakeholders.
4. Second part of the first comment in parenthesis.
5. We need a working document, not long but relevant - strategic plan.

Expected Outcomes (goals):

- Functioning, clear, specific, compelling, value-inclusive, recognised and widely embraced mission & strategy.

Actions Needed:

- Layout our strategic framework (Vision, Mission/Purpose/Values, Strategic Directions) - the main things we do and why.
- Define (time bound) goals and outcomes.
- Identify core services (SC/network/SCAC) we can provide and for whom.
- Carry out a five-year review of stakeholders. Feedback collection (national dialogues).

3). External Communications

Comments:

1. A communication plan/strategy/approach needs to be defined.

Expected Outcomes (goals):

- Locally, nationally, regionally, internationally recognised and valued role and operations (frame).

Actions Needed:

- Define slogan.
- Clearly outlined communications strategy.
- Audience analysis.
- Solicit info on activities from partners.
- Define tools and sources of info to share proactively.
- Merchandising.
- Flyer.
- Network development.

The staff need to work up these ideas into dedicated action plans. Various project fiches are available for this and options should be investigated and discussed with the board.

The other areas should also not be forgotten. The author of this report noted the following areas/elements are below 2 as a score. These should be considered by the SC management for further assessment and present ideas for future development.



Programming:

- Programme Planning (1.5)
- Inclusion of Historically Excluded Voices (1.5)

Learning and Evaluation:

- Data Collection and Analysis (1)

Advocacy:

- Policy Recommendations (1)

Network Leadership (1):

- Network Strategy (1)
- Consistency (1)

Financial Management:

- Finance/Programmes Alignment (1)

Administration:

- Technology and Information Systems (1)

Human Resources:

- Human Resources Plan (1)
- Staff Development (1)

Safety and Security (1.3):

- Security Plan and Training (1)
- Assessments and Revision (1.5)
- Impact of Risk on Others (1.5)
- Security Resources (1)
- Documentation and Improvement (1)

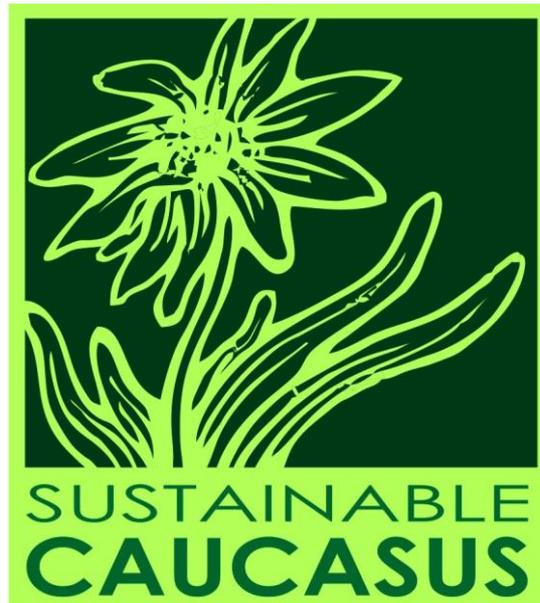
Executive Leadership:

- External Reputation (1.75)

All these elements should be put together into an overall organisational development plan and presented to the Board for discussion.



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS



2020-2022

Approved by the Board
8th fo July, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
SUSTAINABLE CAUCASUS: MISSION AND GOALS	5
PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT	6
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	6
1. Fundraising and Donor Relations	7
2. Mission, Vision and Strategy	8
3. External Communication	10
4. Financial Management	11
OVERALL INDICATIVE TIMEFRAME	14
RISKS AND LIMITATIONS	15
THE WAY FORWARD	15
ANNEX 1: OUTLOOK REPORT: Organisational Self-Assessment Report for Sustainable Caucasus	

Executive Summary

The Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions (Sustainable Caucasus or SC) is a mission-led, non-profit organisation, founded in August 2014 and is based in Tbilisi, Georgia. The mission of Sustainable Caucasus is to facilitate co-operation and provide co-ordination for the sustainable development of the Caucasus mountain region.

The organisation comprises a small team of people based in Baku (Azerbaijan), Tbilisi (Georgia), and Yerevan (Armenia), which is guided by a five-member Board. Since its foundation, Sustainable Caucasus has hosted the Secretariat of the Scientific Network for the Caucasus Mountain Region (SNC-mt).

Five years after its inception, Sustainable Caucasus's management decided to address the capacity needs of the organisation, with a view to defining ways of meeting emerging challenges related to the implementation of its mission and building-up its organisational sustainability. Therefore, in June 2019, SC undertook an organisational self-assessment process, which revealed four organisational development priorities to be tackled in the coming years:

- 1) To ensure the interlinkage and consistency of the key strategic texts (mission, vision and strategy), thereby contributing to the organisation's institutional and programming development;
- 2) To increase fundraising effectiveness and co-operation with donors;
- 3) To boost visibility and enhance the efficiency of external communication; and
- 4) To improve financial management to ensure the sustainability of the organisation.

The objectives set to address these priorities are as follows:

- (A) To diversify and increase income sources of the organisation by elaborating an effective and flexible fundraising strategy and set-up applicable to the regional and international donors market within the next 6-9 months.
- (B) Have a functioning, clear, specific, compelling, value-inclusive, recognised and widely-embraced mission and strategy, followed by the Board members and Secretariat staff that will define the added value of the organisation, as well as its niche and strategic directions for the next years. Moreover, it will delineate services which the organisation can provide to stakeholders.
- (C) To have a comprehensive communication strategy tailored to the needs, challenges and requirements of the organisation, which will support its promotion and visibility at both regional and sub-regional/international levels.
- (D) To strengthen the financial management of SC in the next six months, by building the organisation's budgeting and accounting practices by implementing a full cost recovery (FCR) model.

That among other implies development of human capacities of the organisation through: (i) improvement of knowledge and skills of existing staff through on-the-job training for new PR staff in dealing with the international and sub-regional contexts in which the organisation operates, and proposal-writing training for relevant new staff; and (ii) increasing staff numbers through the launching of new projects.

Though some of the priorities (see the Overall Indicative Timeframe below) can be implemented independently from one another (for example, staff trainings), others such as the elaboration of a communication strategy or overhead calculation are dependent on a vision and strategy pursuant to both the organisational and strategic development priorities.

Certain risks such as the high workload of staff and Board members might prevent Sustainable Caucasus from full-scale implementation of its planned actions. However, targeted financial support from donors and the commitment of the organisation are factors that are expected to guarantee the proper capacity-building of the organisation.

Sustainable Caucasus: Mission and Goals

The Caucasus Network for Sustainable Development of Mountain Regions (Sustainable Caucasus or SC) is a mission-led, non-profit organisation based in Tbilisi, Georgia. It was founded in 2014. Sustainable Caucasus relies on a small team of committed staff, operating across the South Caucasus region (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia), headquartered in Tbilisi. With partners in other countries of the Caucasus Ecoregion and further afield and a diverse Board, Sustainable Caucasus draws from the expertise of many skilled individuals in the design and implementation of its activities.

The mission of Sustainable Caucasus is to *facilitate co-operation and provide co-ordination for the sustainable development of the Caucasus mountain region*. This is facilitated through projects or initiatives that are built around the following two key strategic objectives:

1. To foster sustainable development in the Caucasus mountain region; and
2. To elaborate regional approaches that help to solve transboundary problems at national and local levels.

With this in mind, *Sustainable Caucasus* strives to co-operate with a broad range of stakeholders. These include: local and central authorities; scientific institutions; businesses; international organisations; local communities/populations; and other parties concerned with sustainable development in the Caucasus mountain region.

To achieve these objectives, Sustainable Caucasus endeavours to develop a variety of supporting activities that can promote sustainable development in the Caucasus mountain region. These supporting activities include: facilitating capacity-building and transferring/disseminating knowledge among regional stakeholders; developing, analysing and monitoring relevant policies; supporting training and education, and conducting research pursuant to development; raising awareness among regional actors, enhancing stakeholder co-operation and experience-sharing; promoting and introducing recognised best practices; and implementing other actions as appropriate.

Since its foundation, Sustainable Caucasus has realised the following key projects and activities:

- Strengthening the Climate Adaptation Capacities in the South Caucasus, with financial support from the Swiss Co-operation Office-South Caucasus (2019-2022);
- Mainstreaming biodiversity and ecosystem services in Eastern Europe and Caucasus, co-operating with the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) Regional Office for Europe and GRID-Geneva (2017);
- Organising the First Caucasus Mountain Forum: Bridging Science and Practice for Sustainability, in the course of the SCOPES project: Supporting Sustainable Mountain Development in the Caucasus (2016);
- Climate Forum East II, an EU-funded project with the objective of strengthening the capacities of six existing national CSO climate change adaptation networks in the Eastern Neighbourhood Region (2016);
- Supporting Sustainable Mountain Development in the Caucasus, work which brought together researchers from scientific institutions in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran, the Russian Federation, and Turkey (2015-2016); and
- Climate Change Action in Developing Countries with Fragile Mountain Ecosystems from a Sub-Regional Perspective – Caucasus Component, a project led by UNEP (2015).

Purpose of the Document

Sustainable Caucasus is a relatively young organisation that, at this stage of its development, seeks to assess and improve its effectiveness and productivity. Its management aims to ensure that the organisation works effectively in serving its sustainable development mission and fulfils the needs of the mountain communities of the Caucasus region.

Now, having delivered on its mission for five years, the organisation's governing body (Board) and implementing unit (Secretariat) decided to evaluate Sustainable Caucasus's organisational strengths and weaknesses. By doing so, the aim was to build on its identified strengths and to address any identified weaknesses. The desired outcome was to have in place a plan for its future organisational development goals and directions. This document has been elaborated as part of this process and is largely based on an organisational self-assessment that was conducted in July 2019 by the staff and Board members of Sustainable Caucasus (see Annex 1 – Organisational Self-Assessment Report).

Originally, the intention for this document was to present a complete organisational development plan (ODP) to be elaborated for the next two years (2020-2021), which would address the three main strategic priorities identified during the self-assessment (see below), as well as the additional priority of financial management procedures suggested subsequently by one member of the Board. It was expected to outline the objectives to be achieved over this period, to identify concrete tasks and resources required to achieve these objectives, and provide detail with respect to the corresponding activities to implement them. However, whilst working on this document, it became evident that the staff of Sustainable Caucasus requires additional support to develop a concrete set of development activities. Thus, the purpose of this document has been modified, and now mainly seeks to highlight the key needs of Sustainable Caucasus for its further organisational development and capacity-building support, which may then be used to identify potential organisational development support experts and glean their inputs (leading to the establishment of terms of reference accordingly).

Strategic Priorities

As covered above, Sustainable Caucasus conducted an organisational self-assessment in July 2019 using a technique called the Organisational Mapping Tool (OMT) created by the Ford Foundation. The tool was deemed appropriate for Sustainable Caucasus as it was specifically created to help the staff of civil society organisations (CSOs) to reflect on their organisational performance and, by building organisation-wide consensus, to identify areas in which institutional strengthening could be achieved. The OMT exercise was led by a member of the Board of Sustainable Caucasus who specialises in organisational development. Moreover, all staff and the majority of Board members participated. An organisational self-assessment report (Annex 1 – Organisational Self-Assessment Report) was developed as a result of this process.

This organisational self-assessment has helped the Sustainable Caucasus team to come together to assess the working processes of the organisation and to identify capacity gaps therein. This has in turn enabled the organisation to determine priority development areas and potential ways forward. The top three priority development areas revealed during the exercise were the following:

- 1) Fundraising and donor relations;
- 2) Mission and strategy; and
- 3) External communication.

All three of these issues are tightly interlinked and are important with regard to the sustainability of the organisation and ensuring its effectiveness. It should be noted that each and every priority development area cannot be significantly improved without the others also being improved.

The assessment showed that it is necessary to review organisational performance in line with the organisation's mission, to see where Sustainable Caucasus stands in this regard, as well as to elaborate a suitable vision and strategy for the organisation going forward. It also revealed how crucial it is for the organisation to have the right tools to communicate to a wider audience the essence of Sustainable Caucasus and what it brings to the sustainable development of the region. Finally, a clear and efficient fundraising strategy is also required to provide financial sustainability for the organisation. Such a strategy should be supported by relevant financial management tools.

Notably, it was suggested by the member of the Board who led the organisational self-assessment that the area of financial management be included in the list of priority development areas. As, although the current financial processes were evaluated positively by the team, he felt that a review of the processes and the instigation of a *full cost recovery* model and associated budgeting/pricing procedures would be beneficial in the long-run. Therefore, a fourth strategic priority was added: 4) Financial management.

Since the self-assessment, Sustainable Caucasus has experienced significant changes in the composition of its staff and Board. Despite much transition in this regard, the priorities persist and are perhaps even more vital than before for the future development of the organisation.

During the organisational self-assessment exercise, Board members and Sustainable Caucasus staff identified specific objectives that needed to be achieved for each of the priority development areas, as well as a list outlining preliminary actions to be implemented (the specific objectives and tasks are provided below). Below, each of these areas are covered in turn, with corresponding descriptions of the development objective(s) and a plan of action also presented.

1. Fundraising and Donor Relations

The top priority identified by the Sustainable Caucasus team during the self-assessment was the improvement of fundraising and donor relations, and the subsequent diversification of the income sources of the organisation. This development area received an average score of 1.9, thus falling into the "Basic" category (see Annex 1 – Organisational Self-Assessment Report).

The self-assessment confirmed that successful fundraising is closely linked to, and dependent on, the other three prioritised areas of organisational development. Namely, the availability of a clearly written vision and strategy followed by both the staff and the Board, an effective communication strategy and set-up (including a reliable network of potential partners within and beyond the region) and effective financial management arrangements. However, fundraising effectiveness also depends on the availability of qualified staff and their ability to meet both organisational and donor priorities. Though recent organisational changes have led to improvements in some of these aspects, most of the challenges identified during the self-assessment, such as the need for diversification in terms of donor funding and the need to increase the revenue of the organisation, persist. The views of self-assessment participants are summarised below.

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

1. The organisation needs at least one medium- and/or long-term donor.
2. The staff believe that, in many cases, the organisational goals can be tailored to the requirements of grant-issuing organisations in a way that organisational priorities will not be disregarded.
3. There is a need to link a fundraising plan to the organisational strategy and stakeholders' needs.

If in the next few years the identified challenges are not tackled, the organisation will struggle to:

- 1) Achieve financial sustainability, which among other elements, should be grounded on appropriate financial management schemes (see priority 4), diversification of funding, and an increase in income; and

- 2) Fulfil its mission and objectives, thereby failing to continue providing services to its scientific network (SNC-mt) and to support regional co-operation within both the 'smaller' and 'bigger' Caucasus region.

With the above concerns in mind, the objective for this area is as follows:

To diversify and increase income sources of the organisation by elaborating an effective and flexible fundraising strategy and set-up applicable to the regional and international donors market within the next 6-9 months.

To do so, under this priority, the organisation has identified the following needs:

- Defining income structures and identifying potential sources for each 'structure,' especially non-grant structures;
- Mapping of potential donors and defining tactics for approaching them, especially bilateral donors based in the Caucasus countries, which may issue grants/contracts without tendering;
- Elaborating a portfolio of projects for donors, based on the vision and strategy of the organisation (see priority 2);
- Keeping up-to-date with the priorities and interests of donor organisations;
- Defining a set-up to reinforce its three offices (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) with respect to fundraising and through resources-sharing for both regional and national projects (to be included in the overhead calculations – also see priority 4);
- Assessment/mapping of potential partners both in and beyond the region which are interested in working in the Caucasus and elaborating lines of communication with them and promoting Sustainable Caucasus and its work among them (also see priority 3);
- Defining and delineating responsibilities among relevant staff with regard to fundraising in both the main office and the country offices; and
- Integrating the abovementioned approaches into one common/shared fundraising policy.

Technically, the activities to address these needs include assessments (carried out by both staff and external experts), organisational retreats/workshops, and the drafting of relevant documents. To that end, it will be necessary to elaborate 'terms of reference' for the expert(s) and staff to define a clear process through which to develop the fundraising policy and its components, as well as to facilitate discussion and elaboration of the policy. Meanwhile, costs here would be confined to fees, travel and accommodation, and any material/assessment expenditures.

At the same time, Sustainable Caucasus, using its own resources, will continue its donor-mapping exercise entailing the identification of partners and building co-operation with them, as well as the elaboration of projects outlines (portfolio of projects). Indeed, some of the components related to the elaboration of fundraising policy, especially those which require discussion with members of the Board and staff from Armenia and Azerbaijan, will be covered during the workshop(s)/retreat(s) concerning the elaboration of the vision and strategy (see priority 2), as well as during the communication strategy development process (see priority 3). Furthermore, some of the tasks may be performed in the course of the activities related to financial management (see priority 4).

2. Mission, Vision and Strategy

The effectiveness and availability of the organisation's mission, vision and strategy scored lower than the other two initial priorities (communication and fundraising), with an average score of 1.7.

Sustainable Caucasus has a written mission and objectives (see above), which are reflected in the organisational charter and are published on the organisation's web-site. The self-assessment demonstrated that, as the mission is rather broad, this creates both advantages and disadvantages when it comes to designing organisational activities.

Sustainable Caucasus's mission declares how it aims to foster co-operation and collaboration among different stakeholders working on sustainable mountain development. However, currently, the organisation is mainly focusing on academia and regional scientific co-operation. Despite academia being among the core stakeholders, the needs of other stakeholders, like local mountain communities and governmental entities, cannot be satisfied only through scientific cooperation or the development of the higher education sector. The organisational vision and accompanying strategy should support the identification of the ways and methods as well as the areas in which the organisation will address all stakeholders' needs. During the self-assessment process, the participants provided the following feedback on the state of development and implementation of the mission, vision and strategy:

PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

1. Although it does have a written mission, the organisation has no written vision; therefore, a more precise and accessible vision needs to be elaborated.
2. While the goals and outcomes of individual projects have been identified, no organisational goals and outcomes have been set.
3. There is a need to improve co-operation with all stakeholders interested in sustainable mountain development, not only scientists. The organisation should serve as a bridge between different stakeholders.
4. The strategic framework (thematic strategy) should be a concise working document.
5. The strategic framework (thematic strategy) should be a tool that communicates the organisation's vision, mission, values and development approaches among staff of the organisation and beyond. It should be used to elaborate action/work plans accordingly.

Further development of the organisational strategy and vision, and their subsequent dissemination among stakeholders, might support:

- 1) *Programming*: A priority clearly linked with the vision and strategy and supposed to be built on these two documents (vision and thematic strategy).
- 2) *Fundraising*: clarifying fundraising directions, generating project ideas, and defining the roles of Sustainable Caucasus taking into consideration its limited fundraising staff.
- 3) *Communication*: An improved vision and strategy will have a positive impact on the communication strategy and its corresponding directions.
- 4) *Networking*: Sustainable Caucasus by definition is a network; however, apart from a brief chapter in its charter, no clear vision has been defined as to what purpose this network serves, or how membership can be ensured, or what actions are to be taken to make this network fully effective. The strategy should clarify relevant aspects of the network's establishment and functioning.
- 5) *Financial management*: On the one hand, the vision and strategy impacts upon financial management and budgeting, and on the other it should define financial mechanisms which support the implementation of the mission, vision and strategy. Therefore, it is important to ensure complementarity and consistent management of both mentioned priority areas.

With all of the abovementioned in mind, the objective for this priority area is as follows:

Have a functioning, clear, specific, compelling, value-inclusive, recognised and widely-embraced mission and strategy, followed by the Board members and Secretariat staff that will define the added value of the organisation, as well as its niche and strategic directions for the next years. Moreover, it will delineate services which the organisation can provide to stakeholders.

This objective is to be reached through the following steps and activities:

- Identification and review of relevant policy and guiding documents in the countries of the region and those outside (to be carried out by staff and the Board);
- Assessment/research of the needs of local populations, as well as the impacts of state policies, development projects and scientific research of mountain development;
- Preparation and organisation of a workshop and/or retreat where the vision will be defined. In doing so, strategic directions, key sub-topics and priorities, and the timeline for the strategy can be elaborated and agreed;

- Drafting of the vision and strategy by relevant staff and possibly Board members as agreed during a workshop and/or retreat ¹; and
- Staff and Board members agreeing on the document at the workshop and/or retreat and defining, among other aspects, the roles and responsibilities in its implementation, the means of implementation, and monitoring schemes.

To facilitate the elaboration of the vision and strategy, an external expert or experts shall be hired after which ‘terms of reference’ shall be drafted. Costs here would be limited to fees, travel and accommodation and any materials, as well as assessment/research expenditure.

The staff and the Board should identify a set of relevant documents to be shared and reviewed before the workshop and/or retreat, such as the Caucasus Regional Research Agenda and national sectoral strategies. This may also imply the elaboration of a list or list(s) of potential partners and target groups, both within and beyond the region, as well as analysis and discussion of the set-up of similar organisations and other relevant background documents.

Later, after the elaboration of the vision and strategy, the results would feed into the communication strategy (see priority 3). The Board should take on the role of monitoring the implementation of the vision, strategy and agreed actions by the staff.

3. External Communication

External communication was evaluated during the self-assessment, and received an average score of 2.2, thereby being categorised slightly above “Basic.”

Sustainable Caucasus does not currently have a communication strategy and for some time has not had specific staff working on these issues. External communication, as mentioned above, also cannot be considered a stand-alone activity. Indeed, in Sustainable Caucasus’s case, it is seen as having a double focus:

- 1) Communication within the region (at national level in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia) where Sustainable Caucasus has offices; and
- 2) Communication outside the region (at sub-regional and international levels) where Sustainable Caucasus does not have any offices/staff.

The main feedback regarding external communication gleaned from the self-assessment participants is presented below.

PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK

1. A communication plan/strategy/approach needs to be defined.

External communication needs to be enhanced to make the following advances within the organisation:

- 1) Improve the prominence of the organisation among the donor community inside and outside the region in the fields of expertise outlined in the mission of the organisation to diversify funding sources and thus fulfil the mission more comprehensively.
- 2) Build its reputation as a reliable partner and increase its visibility among CSOs, community-based organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), governmental agencies, international organisations, media, and academia in the region and beyond in the fields of expertise outlined in the mission of the organisation.
- 3) Better communicate the achievements and success stories of the organisation and its programmes to a wider audience to ensure broad knowledge, information and experience exchange.

¹ Note: it would be worthwhile to draft the document’s main parts during a workshop and/or retreat and perhaps consider the organisation’s Theory of Change.

- 4) Establish a reliable and operational network both within and beyond the region to ensure Sustainable Caucasus's mission is implemented properly, and to ensure the general promotion of sustainable mountain development.

Taking these issues into consideration, the objective for this priority area is as follows:

To have a comprehensive communication strategy tailored to the needs, challenges and requirements of the organisation, which will support its promotion and visibility at both regional and sub-regional/international levels.

This objective could be reached through taking the following steps and conducting the following activities identified by Sustainable Caucasus:

- Developing a common framework for all communication activities to apply to all projects that help the organisation to define where it stands, how it wishes to interact with its target audience, and the best ways to get its messages across;
- Devising a slogan for the organisation to accompany its logo and increase brand awareness globally, helping the organisation to become more recognisable;
- Conducting analysis of existing donors, and defining major platforms through which a regular exchange of information will be initiated (see priorities 1 and 2);
- Elaborating tools for better communication and for sharing information and best practices among peers and general audiences as appropriate;
- Specifying and using appropriate communication channels, dissemination methods and media to effectively communicate key messages to specific stakeholders;
- Combining the results of the above-mentioned activities into a common communication strategy, which will reinforce other priority areas of the organisation's development; and
- Organising trainings/exchanges of Sustainable Caucasus's relevant staff with other similar organisations to support better implementation of the communication strategy.

The steps that the staff should take here will revolve around the development of 'terms of reference' for an expert to assist the designated public outreach person of Sustainable Caucasus in the design of the organisation's communication strategy. He/she should provide the necessary training and advice on the utilisation of appropriate tools, especially those related to promoting Sustainable Caucasus at sub-regional/international levels.

At this time, we would expect that the communication strategy's elaboration and deployment process would align with the timetable of the other priority areas, especially the elaboration of the vision and strategy. Such synchronisation would ensure better sharing of resources and greater consistency with respect to organisational needs. The relevant staff's involvement will ensure the elaboration of the strategy within a six-month period. Finally, costs here would be limited to fees, travel and accommodation, and any material expenditure.

4. Financial Management

Financial management scored the highest of the four priority areas during the OSA process, with an average of 2.8, and thus close to falling into the category of "Moderate." Overall, this demonstrated how the accounting of the organisation was considered by the participants to be functioning well and in accordance with national accounting standards and tax requirements.

Indeed, the assessment demonstrated that robust and appropriate systems and controls are in place governing all financial operations, including comprehensive record-keeping and transparent procedures. Moreover, staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to manage the most necessary financial aspects of their jobs (most have been trained on the organisation's financial systems, and usually follow the appropriate policies). As such, this area was not initially prioritised for development.

Nevertheless, some parts of the assessment did identify areas in which improvements could be made. Notably, it was found that the alignment between finance and programmes required specific

attention (with a score of 1 — “Minimal” thereby dragging the score for the entire financial management area below 3). Indeed, the assessment revealed how simple project budgets are created for the organisation, but these do not yet correlate with overall organisational budgeting and expenditure. Thus, while budgeting and planning do occur regularly, budget-to-actual comparison is less consistently applied. Furthermore, budget allocations and tracking are not consistent with a *full cost recovery*² accounting practice. The self-assessment participants’ feedback on this area is summarised below.

PARTICIPANTS’ FEEDBACK

1. There is no structured planning for the future, and this requires attention and improvement.
2. There is no budget for the organisation as a whole, but there are budgets for particular projects.
3. Monthly reports are for taxation purposes, and are not used as a management tool.
4. There is no full cost recovery system in place.

The downsides of these findings are two-fold:

- 1) An effective and accurate cash-flow has not been available to the management or the Board. While this has not been problematic so far as the organisation has been largely funded by one project, in the future it is important that this be rectified for the proper management of cash-flow and effective organisational budgeting. Indeed, this also means it is difficult to reflect on and budget for the costs of the organisation’s operations outside the main office (e.g. in Armenia and Azerbaijan); and
- 2) Without a full cost recovery approach, the organisation will find it difficult to calculate its overheads (often required by donors) and revenue targets. This is ordinarily done to ensure that the funding provided covers running costs as well as direct project costs.

Taking into account these issues, the objective for this priority area is as follows:

To strengthen the financial management of SC in the next six months, by building the organisation’s budgeting and accounting practices by implementing a full cost recovery (FCR) model.

To achieve this objective, the following several steps will be required:

- An assessment of the current practice/system and how it could be amended towards an FCR model;
- Training of the financial staff and project staff so that they understand this model (and its benefits, especially for management accounting);
- The design of additional supporting policies and procedures such as the development of pricing and budgeting policies that support FCR, fundraising, and cross-organisational budgeting;
- Design of an appropriate and timely cash-flow provision practice; and
- Final implementation of an FCR model.

The steps that the staff should follow in this regard will revolve around the development of ‘terms of reference’ for an expert or experts to help design and establish this model. In addition, they should provide necessary training and advice on appropriate systems (for an organisation of SC’s size).

At this time, we would expect that the intervention would include the following two *in-situ* interventions by the external expert(s): (1) to conduct a review of the current practice/system and proposed actions in concert with the staff; and (2) to work with the staff to put the systems in place. Then they should be available for a short period of *ex-situ* consultation support. If the expert (or experts) is (or are) suitably competent, this could be done fairly rapidly (within a month). Costs here would be limited to fees, travel and accommodation and any material expenditure.

² ‘Full Cost Recovery means securing funding for, or ‘recovering’, all your costs, including the direct costs of projects and all your overheads. Every organisation, whether voluntary, public or private, needs to recover all its costs, and ideally generate a surplus, or it cannot pay its employees, rent office space, offer its products and services, or plan for the future and the continued development and delivery of its services.’ <https://www.wcva.org.uk/media/2017262/full-cost-recovery-a-guide-and-toolkit.pdf>

Overall Indicative Timeframe

Priorities/month(s)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Fundraising and Donor Relations																		
1.1. Defining income structures and identification of potential sources for each 'structure,' especially non-grant structures	x																	
1.2. Mapping of potential donors and defining tactics for approaching them	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
1.3. Based on the vision and strategy of the organisation (see priority 2) elaborate a portfolio of projects for donors	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
1.4. Keep up-to-date with the priorities and interests of donor organisations	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
1.5. Defining a set-up to reinforce the three offices (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) in fundraising and through resources-sharing for both regional and national projects	x	x	x	x	x													
1.6. Assessment/mapping of potential partners both in and beyond the region which are interested in working in the Caucasus and elaborating lines of communication with them (also see priority 3; 3.3 & 3.4.)	x	x	x	x	x	x												
1.7. Defining and delineating responsibilities among relevant staff in fundraising in all offices			x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
1.8. Integration of abovementioned approaches into one common/shared fundraising policy document										x	x	x	x	x				
2. Mission, Vision and Strategy																		
2.1. Identification and review of relevant policy and guiding documents in the countries of the region and beyond	x	x																
2.2. Assessment/research of the needs of local populations, as well as impacts of state policies, development projects and scientific research on mountain development ³	x	x	x															
2.2. Preparation and organisation of a workshop/retreat where the vision will be further defined and agreed		x	x															
2.3. Drafting of the vision and strategy by relevant staff and possibly Board members				x	x	x	x											
2.4. Approval of the document by staff and the Board								x	x	x								
3. External Communication																		
3.1. Development of a common framework for all communication activities	x	x	x	x	x	x												
3.2. Develop a slogan for the organisation to accompany the logo			x															
3.3. Conduct analysis of existing donors, and define major platforms through which regular exchange of information can materialise	x	x	x	x	x	x												
3.4. Elaborate tools for better communication and sharing information and best practices among peers and general audience	x	x	x	x	x	x												
3.5. Specify and use appropriate communication channels, dissemination methods and media	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
3.6. Combining the results of the above-mentioned activities into a common communication strategy						x	x	x										
3.7. Organisation of trainings/exchanges of Sustainable Caucasus's relevant staff with other similar organisations							x	x										
4. Financial Management																		
4.1. An assessment of the current practice and how it could be amended to embrace the establishment of an FCR model	x	x																
4.2. Training of financial staff and project staff			x	x														
4.3. Design of additional supporting policies and procedures	x	x	x	x	x	x												
4.4. Design of an appropriate and timely cash-flow provision practice/system	x																	
4.5. Final implementation of an FCR model							x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

³ The activity will take between 3 and 8 months; therefore it should start as early as possible to ensure the assessment is finalized before the retreat.

Risks and Limitations

As the organisation has limited resources (both human and financial), we know that there are risks associated with the development of a full-scale organisational development plan and/or strategy. Therefore, it is necessary to involve the staff based in Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as the Board members, during the currently ongoing transitional period at least. However, doing so may be hindered by the following limitations:

- Lack of time for staff to devote substantial and sufficient efforts to elaborate all of the necessary documents whilst implementing the ongoing SCAC project;
- The staff do not have the requisite knowledge and tools to cover all of the strategic priorities and potential options in full;
- Limited financial resources to arrange the required trainings, retreats, workshops, etc.; and
- Board members are unable to provide the continuous (ongoing) support required due to geographical distance and their work commitments.

The Way Forward

The Swiss Agency for Development and Co-operation (SDC), the main donor supporting Sustainable Caucasus's work, has proposed that additional funding for organisational development might be made available. Together with ongoing funding from the Oak Foundation, allocated for organisational support and development, Sustainable Caucasus should now take the priority actions highlighted in this paper, whether these be in the form of interventions or tenders. The next steps for SC entail the design of priority topics for organisational development, and the elaboration of precise project proposals for the SDC and other donors to consider and hopefully support.