

Lonely Writers

Assessment of KEPA's Information Officer Co-operation. Case Study of Thailand and Indonesia

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KANSALAI SJÄRJESTÖMÄÄRÄRAHOISTA.

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Acronyms

| | |
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| ADB | Asian Development Bank |
| AEPF | Asia-Europe People's Forum |
| AFTA | ASEAN Free Trade Area |
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| ASEM | Asia-Europe Meeting |
| ICCO | Interchurch Organisations for Development Co-operation |
| FER | Foundation for Ecological Recovery |
| GMG | Global Management Group |
| IMF | International Monetary Fund |
| INSIST | Indonesian Society for Social Transformation (formerly: Institute for Social Transformation) |
| KEPA | Service Centre for Development Co-operation |
| MFA | Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland |
| MO | Member Organisation |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| PER | Project for Ecological Recovery |
| SSNC | Swedish Society for Nature Conservation |
| TERRA | Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance |
| WB | World Bank |
| WTO | World Trade Organisation |

Executive summary

The purpose of the present assessment is to analyse the appropriateness, effectiveness, strengths, weaknesses, challenges and critical success factors of KEPA's "information officer cooperation", i.e. sending KEPA's individual employees to work in Southern partner organisations. KEPA's information officer co-operation with the Project for Ecological Recovery (PER) under the Foundation for Ecological Recovery (FER) in Thailand and the Indonesian Society for Social Transformation (INSIST) in Indonesia are used as cases for the assessment.

Based on the experiences with PER/FER and INSIST, it can be concluded that this mode of work can be a useful tool for co-operating with individual Southern partner organisations. The more clearly and directly the work is integrated into the implementation of specific and shared objectives of KEPA, its member organisations (MOs) and the host organisation, the more effective and efficient it is. On the other hand, the information officer co-operation is likely to be much less effective and efficient if its objectives are not clearly defined and strongly shared by the concerned partners. Having separate responsibilities toward the various partners may easily lead to weakly co-ordinated activities, loss of synergy and even conflicts.

The information officers in Thailand and Indonesia have contributed most effectively to **information and liaison services related to joint policy work** of KEPA, its MOs and the host organisations. This has strengthened KEPA's role as a watchdog on behalf of the Finnish civil society. For example, the information officers were centrally and successfully involved in campaigns to influence state-supported activities of Finnish forestry and energy companies in Southeast Asia in late 1990s and early 2000s. The information officers have significantly increased the availability of information and strengthened the voice of the Southern partners on environment and development issues of their regions in Finland. A substantial part of the information transmitted to Finland was utilised rather effectively in joint advocacy work, particularly in the beginning of the co-operation. Less information has been conveyed from Finland to the South, and the inputs

of the information officers to KEPA's training and advisory services have also been less significant, mainly because of language barriers and the prioritisation of other tasks.

After the first 2-3 years of the co-operation, the commercial interests of Finnish companies decreased in Southeast Asia mainly as a result of the financial crisis in the region. Therefore, the focus of the campaigning shifted from Finnish companies towards international financing institutions and gradually became more obscure. Later, the information officers have made efforts to facilitate collaboration between KEPA and its partners in Thailand and Indonesia in e.g. KEPA's food security and fair trade campaigns, World Social Forum processes, policy analyses and impoverishment studies, but the interaction has not returned to the level it used to be in the beginning.

The placement of information officers has strengthened the atmosphere of partnership between KEPA and the host organisations, compared to a traditional donor-recipient relation only. However, the partners in Thailand and Indonesia have recently been institutionally relatively distant from KEPA and its MOs, and vice versa, although the information officers have produced loads of useful material and facilitated the establishment of a few new partnerships through good quality information and liaison services.

The information officers have certainly strengthened their own capacities in terms of knowledge and understanding of their host countries and partners, which may be valuable for KEPA and its Northern and Southern partners if the information officers continue their activities in/for the "third world movement" after having completed their assignments.

It is not possible to make any clear-cut conclusion whether or not KEPA should use information officer co-operation in the future. The answer depends on other decisions, such as:

- What do KEPA and its MOs want to achieve in co-operation with their Southern partners?
- Which functions and instruments of co-operation are needed to achieve it?
- How much and what kind of resources are needed and made available to achieve it?

It may be a feasible option to invest in information officer co-operation, for example, in the following situations:

- There are clear, shared needs and objectives for co-operation between KEPA and the concerned

Southern partner but the objectives cannot be achieved with less intensive and less costly modes of work (internet discussions, joint seminars, study trips, visits, etc.).

- The co-operation requires a facilitator for strengthening the mutual understanding, communication and/or information exchange between the partners for a specific purpose.
- The co-operation requires a facilitator for collaborative policy analysis and the information officer can be placed exclusively for that purpose for the required period.
- A resource person is needed for a limited period for a specific joint campaign to influence e.g. the activities of Northern governments, private companies or international financing institutions working in the South, even at a short notice.
- A trainer/adviser is needed for providing training or advisory services to the Southern partner(s), and language barriers do not significantly impede such co-operation.
- “Liaison services” are needed for KEPA, its MOs or other Finnish NGOs for identifying new partners for an existing and growing co-operation programme.

Information officer co-operation alone may not be sufficient but a combination of various modes of work may be needed, including e.g. financial support, visits and study trips of staff and activists, meetings, seminars, conferences, open forum debates, internet discussions, etc. An information officer may have an important role in assisting the Southern partner(s) in the administration of the financial support (e.g. planning, monitoring and reporting) and/or in the facilitation of personnel exchange and staff visits, but such support services should not excessively disturb the core activities of the information officer. An information officer may not be appropriate for interventions involving a great number or a whole sector of partner organisations nationally, regionally or globally, unless placed in a strategically selected national/regional/global organisation. The tasks should be clearly prioritised and there should be a reasonable balance between the tasks and the capacity of the employee.

In some cases personnel exchange may be a better option because of reciprocity, or employing a Southern resource person for a co-operation programme/project may be an appropriate and more economical solution.

The institutional weakness has been one of the most significant factors reducing the effectiveness and efficiency of KEPA's information officer co-operation. The main reasons include the frequent organisational changes, vaguely defined responsibilities, unclear lines of communication, rapid staff turnover and “shallowness of ownership”, i.e. scarcity of active participants in the co-operation. In order to minimise the related risks, it would be advisable to use information officers (only) for specific programmes or projects co-ordinated by one of KEPA's teams or networks and supported by clearly identified or formalised network of Northern and Southern partners. The responsibility to co-ordinate and supervise the work of the information officer(s) on behalf of KEPA could then be fully delegated to the concerned team/network coordinator, assisted by the Administration Team in the bureaucracy. This would minimise the burden of KEPA's Programme Director. The sufficient ownership and commitment of all partners should be ensured through joint planning, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation throughout the process. The possibilities for firm contractual arrangements and fair cost-sharing between all partners (in terms of financial and/or in-kind contributions, as appropriate) should also be considered.

In both FER and INSIST, there is a considerable interest to continue and strengthen the policy cooperation and related exchange of information and experiences with KEPA. Possible themes for the future co-operation include the role of the Finnish/Nordic/EU bilateral and regional development co-operation and the activities of the international financing institutions in the Mekong Region (with FER) and the impacts of global/regional/EU trade policies on rural development, livelihoods, food security and natural resource conflicts in Southeast Asia (with INSIST and/or its regional partners). However, a lot of “homework” and dialogue will be needed in order to identify more clearly the common interests and the most appropriate Northern and Southern partners, taking into consideration the needs and possibilities for Nordic and Southeast Asian regional co-operation.

Introduction

The Service Centre for Development Co-operation (KEPA) was established in 1985 by 56 Finnish NGOs. For the first ten years its main function was to be a volunteer sending agency. In 1995, a comprehensive evaluation of KEPA concluded that the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of its volunteer programme was less good than desired. Consequently, the volunteer programme was closed, long-term partnership programmes were developed, and during the last decade KEPA has focused its work on wider global issues and developed as a trustee and umbrella organisation for its over 270 member organisations (MOs).

Since 2004, KEPA's programme has been expressed under the "One Global Programme" in which KEPA's diverse activities and services are structured under common themes, goals and objectives. In operational terms, these objectives are to be achieved through two main functions: i) **quality services** and ii) **policy work**. The quality services include the support that KEPA gives to strengthen the capacity of Finnish and southern NGOs. The policy work includes KEPA's activities to achieve policy changes by drawing on the co-operation with Finnish civil society groups, KEPA's Southern partners and international networks.

KEPA aims to transform the structures that cause and sustain inequality in the world. Currently, the most important concept of KEPA's Programme Policy is "impoverishment" which refers to the structures and practices in the local communities, societies and international system that create and sustain poverty. KEPA aims at identifying, breaking and changing the impoverishing structures and practices in order to guarantee all people genuine possibilities to build their well-being.

In KEPA's quality services and policy work, a variety of instruments are in use, such as training, advice, liaison¹, information, policy analysis, networking, campaigning, advocacy, lobbying, and providing financial support and technical assistance to its Southern partners.

KEPA has been organised into eleven teams in its headquarters (since 2003) and two networks (since 2004), i.e. the Policy Network and

¹ Logistical help to Finnish NGOs working in places where KEPA has staff.

the Quality Network involving both its headquarters and field staff. Most of KEPA's activities in the Southern partner countries are carried out through its four field offices (Mozambique, Nicaragua, Tanzania and Zambia). KEPA has also worked in its Southern partner countries through activist exchange and shared liaison officers in development co-operation projects. In addition, KEPA has sent individual employees, or "information officers", to work in Southern partner organisations. Below, the term "**information officer co-operation**" is used for this kind of co-operation.

Currently, KEPA is again in a process of assessing its past and planning for its future. A new Strategic Plan for 2006-2010 was approved in November 2005. In order to support the operationalisation of the overall strategy, KEPA is preparing sub-strategies for i) the protection of the interests of KEPA and its MOs, ii) training, iii) communications and iv) policy work. In addition, KEPA's personnel strategy is being updated and a plan for programme development for the years 2006-2010 is being prepared. These documents are to guide the preparation of the new Programme Policy for the years 2007-2009, including the personnel plan. In order to enable systematic reconsideration of the presence of KEPA in the South, specific eligibility criteria for partner countries and organisations are formulated. Moreover, KEPA decided to undertake the present assessment of its information officer co-operation.

The objective of this assessment is to contribute to the planning and decision-making concerning KEPA's forms of presence and work in the South. The purpose of the assessment is to analyse experiences of KEPA's information officer co-operation with the Project for Ecological Recovery (PER) under the Foundation for Ecological Recovery (FER) in Thailand and the Indonesian Society for Social Transformation³ (INSIST) in Indonesia. The assessment is a case study aiming at conclusions and recommendations that would be applicable in the planning and decision-making concerning information officer co-operation with any Southern partners of KEPA.

The assessment attempts to provide answers to the following main questions:

² In some documents, other terms such as "programme officer", "liaison officer" and "programme advisor" have been used with the same meaning ("yhteystiedottaja" in Finnish)

³ Since its establishment in 1997 until May 2004, the full name of INSIST was the "Institute for Social Transformation".

- How effective has the information officer co-operation been in the implementation of the strategic goals of KEPA and its Southern partner organisations, in this case PER/FER and INSIST? What has and what has not been achieved through the information officer co-operation?
- What have been the main strengths, weaknesses and challenges in the information officer co-operation?
- Is the information officer co-operation an appropriate form of work for implementing the strategic goals of KEPA and its Southern partners in the future?
- What are the most important factors ensuring successful information officer co-operation? What are the preconditions for effective information officer co-operation? How could its effectiveness be ensured or maximised?

The purpose of this assessment is **not** to evaluate the performance of KEPA's headquarters, information officers or partner organisations in Thailand and Indonesia. Their activities are only discussed here to provide evidence for some general conclusions made on the merits and challenges of the information officer co-operation. The assessment is not to make recommendations specifically for the future of the overall co-operation of KEPA with its partners in Thailand or Indonesia. Views of the concerned parties on the future co-operation are only presented here as examples of needs and opportunities for (the development of) the information officer co-operation if KEPA should decide to use this working practice in the future with them or other Southern partners.

The methods used to collect information for the assessment included document analysis, semi-structured interviews, group discussions, unstructured face-to-face and telephone discussions and e-mail communication. The participants in the interviews and discussions included:

- KEPA's former and present information officers placed in PER/FER and INSIST;
- former and present employees of KEPA's headquarters directly involved in the information officer co-operation with PER/FER and INSIST;
- representatives of Finnish non-governmental organisations that can be considered as direct beneficiaries of KEPA's information officer services produced in Thailand and Indonesia;
- representatives of PER/FER and INSIST directly involved in the information officer co-operation with KEPA;
- representatives of two Canadian organisations that have collaborated with INSIST.

The representatives of the Southern and International partners were interviewed during an assessment mission to Thailand (Bangkok) and Indonesia (Yogyakarta and Jakarta) by the author between the 15th and 21st of May 2006. The Finnish actors were interviewed partly before and partly after the mission. The names of the participants in the interviews and discussions are listed in the **Annex 1**.

The document analysis was based on a sample (not a full set) of KEPA's policy, strategy, planning and evaluation documents as well as co-operation agreements, work plans and reports related to the information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia. The documents referred in the text are listed in the **Annex 2**.

In this report, first the host organisations and the background of the information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia are briefly described. This is followed by a description of the main activities and achievements and finally an analysis and conclusions on the critical success factors of the information officer co-operation identified during the assessment.

The author is grateful for the excellent co-operation of all those who participated in the interviews and discussions during the assessment and made comments to the draft report, and particularly for the overwhelming hospitality and kind assistance of KEPA's partners in Thailand and Indonesia and KEPA's present information officer in Yogyakarta, Henri Myrntinen. Without their assistance and willingness to share their views, the assessment could not have been conducted.

KEPA's information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia

Host organisations

Project for Ecological Recovery (PER)

The Project for Ecological Recovery (PER) was established in 1986 to catalyse and support the emergence and growth of a social movement with a strong environmental agenda in Thailand. With its strong social ethos as a guiding principle, PER has concentrated on advocating the rights of local communities over the forests and land and opposing the forestry management model that favours logging companies on their cost. One of PER's main campaigns carried out jointly with other Thai civil society organisations and communities in mid 90s was the demand for the community forestry legislation. Over the years, PER also campaigned against ecologically and socially unsustainable infrastructure projects, such as large dams, gas pipelines and coal-fired power plants. These campaigns aimed at influencing the policies and projects through advocacy and raising the environmental awareness of the public.

With a holistic approach on water resource issues, PER addressed unsustainable, nontransparent national water resources management policies and practices, developing alternative approaches to river basin management and supported local communities in tackling their river basin management problems. PER's vision of alternative development, opposing the state-promoted industrial development model, put it in a position of a vocal critique of Thai authorities as well as bilateral and multilateral development financing institutions. In co-operation with other concerned groups, PER addressed the policies of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to integrate the Thai economy into the global economic system without proper consideration of environmental and social impacts. It also facilitated Thai groups for increased participation of international movements and networks against the negative elements of globalisation.

PER worked closely with its regional sister organisation TERRA which was established in 1991. The main driving force of TERRA was that the Thai commercial loggers and dam building authorities started co-operating with similar organisations in the neighbouring countries, often with financial support of the WB and/or the ADB. Realising that civil society groups and progressive government officials in the Mekong region could benefit from Thai experiences, TERRA started activities to strengthen the networks of such groups through e.g. organising training, seminars and study tours to Thailand.

In 1994, the Foundation for Ecological Recovery (FER) was established as a registered entity in response to changing Thailand politics opening more space for civil society organisations. PER and TERRA became projects under the umbrella of FER. In addition, for intensifying the regional capacity building and education another project, "SPACE", was established under FER.

In the beginning of 2003, PER, TERRA and SPACE begun a process of merging their work under the umbrella of FER. As PER's activities to develop capacities of Thai grassroots movement led to more active local community groups, NGOs and their networks, it became possible to gradually reduce its involvement in campaigning in Thailand and finally to close it.

Now FER focuses increasingly on raising critical public awareness on the Mekong region situations and supporting the networking, exchange and alliance-building of civil society organisations in the region. The current work is based on its Mekong Regional Programme for 2005-2007 supported financially by KEPA, the Dutch Interchurch Organisation for Development Co-operation (ICCO) and the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC). The Programme comprises three components: i) regional monitoring and campaigning, ii) capacity building and network strengthening of civil society groups in the Mekong region, and iii) publicity and advocacy.

The strategic focus of the Programme is on water/fisheries, land/forest and energy issues, particularly those relating to regional organisations and processes, such as the Asian Development Bank's Greater Mekong Sub-region Economic Co-operation Programme, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Free Trade Area (AFTA) and ASEAN-China free-trade agreement. Besides trade liberalisation, these processes have accelerated the implementation of regional plans for infrastructure development in several

sectors such as energy and water transportation, including the construction of a number of dams on the Salween and Mekong Rivers and clearing of Mekong rapids, with significant impacts on the environment and (ethnic) local communities. In most cases, such controversial projects are supported by bilateral development co-operation and international financing institutions. Reflecting on these recent developments and the constraints faced by the civil society groups in the region, FER has adopted a two-pronged strategy of advocacy/publicity and capacity development

Indonesian Society for Social Transformation (INSIST)

The Institute for Social Transformation (INSIST) was established in 1997 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It is a non-profit and non-governmental organisation which specialises in strengthening the civil society by developing the capacity of non-governmental and other civil society organisations, including socio-religious organisations and community leaders. INSIST provides technical assistance, research, training and information services with a strong perspective in democracy, globalisation, gender, environmental and human rights issues.

Until 2002, INSIST's three main activities were: i) publishing the quarterly journal "Wacana", books, booklets, leaflets and other information materials; ii) supporting young volunteer and activist education through its programme "Involvement", including fieldwork in local NGOs and iii) its educational research programme "Fellowship" which aims at strengthening the theoretical and analytical knowledge and skills of more experienced activists and disseminating the produced "Fellowship papers". In 2002, INSIST started to publish "position papers" as results of small research projects on current issues. In 2004, a project "Sekolah perempuan" (Women's School) was organised with the support of KEPA. In 2006, the policy studies are focused on two issues: food sovereignty and alternative energy sources. The work plan for 2006 also includes an additional component seeking to increase the capacity of young female authors from rural provinces of East Nusa Tenggara and Kalimantan to record and publish their works. Moreover, INSIST facilitates the participation of Indonesian organisations in the 6th Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF) meeting

to be held in Helsinki in September 2006, in co-operation with the Indonesian organising committee.

In addition to the activities listed in its annual work plans, INSIST is occasionally involved in advocacy influencing directly local and national political processes relating to e.g. rural livelihoods, alternative energy and development of local administration. With regard to international political processes, INSIST addresses issues such as poverty reduction strategies and impacts of international trade policies on local producers.

In 2003, the continuous decentralisation of the Involvement programme was started by forming "Involvement Schools" in several regions outside Yogyakarta. In December 2003, INSIST was restructured and renamed as the Indonesian Society for Social Transformation. It became an umbrella of 17 member organisations from several regions across Indonesia. The number of member organisations is growing. The transformation process is to be finalised in 2006, including the new organisational structures and procedures. Thus the future challenges of INSIST include institutionalising the new working procedures, strengthening the capacity of its secretariat to effectively support its member organisations to carry out and document their activities, and developing the communication systems in order to achieve more effective information exchange between INSIST, its member organisations and international partners. Particularly the members in the eastern parts of the country require support and strengthening.

Background and initiation of the co-operation

Co-operation with PER

In the 1990s, several Finnish forestry related companies were active in Thailand and the Mekong Region, and the government of Finland was supporting and subsidising their businesses, particularly by concessional credits and export credit guarantees. Multinational companies and multilateral development agencies also had a visible role in the economies of the Mekong region. As a result of controversial environmental and social impacts of such activities, co-operation was initiated between some Finnish environmental

NGOs and PER to address these issues through joint campaigning. For example some of KEPA's MOs, particularly the Coalition for Environment and Development and the Friends of the Earth Finland, collaborated with PER and its sister organisation TERRA in their joint campaign on the Thai Forestry Master Plan supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland (MFA) through bilateral development co-operation.

In October 1996, PER/TERRA confirmed its interest to intensify collaboration with KEPA, particularly on policy matters of joint interest. Consequently, KEPA's development policy working group assigned Mr. Marko Ulvila to carry out a mission to Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia in November-December 1996 to prepare plans for future co-operation. During the preparations, the general meeting of KEPA approved the 1997 Activity Plan which included a plan to place a liaison officer in a Southeast Asian partner organisation to be identified. One of the recommendations made in the preparation report (Ulvila 1997) was that KEPA would strengthen its activities related to globalisation, particularly monitoring of Finnish forestry sector companies in Southeast Asia by sending an information officer to work in PER. Moreover, it was suggested that KEPA would assess the feasibility of similar co-operation in Indonesia.

According to the preparation report, PER needed international knowledge sharing, linkages and co-operation (financial and political support) for implementing its strategy to "internationalise the local agenda against globalisation". PER had a need to learn from experiences in other countries about successful strategies and alliances to Northern civil societies where the harmful development knowledge and practices were originally developed. PER saw KEPA as a good partner to facilitate co-operation processes, to debate the themes and to organise campaigns in the context of the Finnish and European civil societies. Both PER and KEPA considered important that KEPA and its MOs received relevant information concerning the environment and development policy issues from Thailand and the Mekong Region in order to be able to influence the Finnish bilateral aid, Finnish and multinational companies and international financing institutions. Southeast Asian NGOs were also very active in discussing the effects of globalisation, and it was felt that KEPA and Finnish civil society organisations could benefit from these debates.

Marko Ulvila's report was followed by a period of discussions in KEPA and between KEPA and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1997 and by further preparations in early 1998. After having agreed upon the job description and salary of the information officer with PER, KEPA started the recruitment in March 1998. After having interviewed a number of candidates, KEPA short-listed three of them, sent their CVs to PER, received PER's rejection to all of them and interviewed two more candidates. Finally, Mr. Timo Kuronen was selected by the two partners, and two-year contracts on the assignment were signed between KEPA and PER and between KEPA and Timo. Timo's work started in Finland in the beginning of June 1998 with a one-month orientation and preparatory period until moving to Bangkok on 9 July. In addition to the information officer, KEPA also provided financial support to PER's campaign work since the beginning of the first contract period

Co-operation with INSIST

In parallel, KEPA had also discussions with its MOs and other Finnish NGOs interested in Indonesia about future co-operation with Indonesian NGOs. Based on the results of these discussions, the fact-finding missions of an external expert Ms. Anu Lounela to Indonesia in 1997 and to The Netherlands and England in February 1998, and a follow-up mission by Ms. Päivi Ahonen (KEPA's desk officer) and Anu Lounela to Indonesia in March 1998, KEPA's board decided in May 1998 to start the information officer co-operation with INSIST.

The interest of some of KEPA's MOs in this co-operation was mainly related to the need to monitor the activities and impacts of Finnish forestry companies in Riau (eastern Sumatra) and West Kalimantan. For these campaigns, it was necessary to obtain information about the local situation which was not available in Finland.

According to a specification paper for KEPA's work plan 1998 (undated), KEPA did not intend to participate actively in campaigns or to have a high profile in issues related to Indonesia. INSIST was not seen as an advocacy organisation but considered as a suitable partner for KEPA as it was a "politically neutral" local initiative and a resource base for Indonesian NGOs, like KEPA is for its MOs in Finland.

In September 1998, KEPA sent Anu Lounela to Indonesia to carry out more detailed need assessments and preparations jointly with INSIST. The prolonged preparations were completed in October 1999 and resulted in a report "Development in Indonesia" (Lounela 1999) and a three-year co-operation plan (2000-2002). During the preparatory period, several themes were identified for consolidated co-operation in policy work, such as local impacts of globalisation, debt issues, Nordic welfare model and the promotion of South-South cooperation (Sundman 1999).

During the preparatory period, Anu participated in several activities of INSIST, provided information to Finnish NGOs on the activities of Finnish forest sector companies in Indonesia and organised contacts between Finnish and Indonesian NGOs. KEPA also supported financially INSIST's publication and training activities.

Based on the preparatory work, the co-operation agreement between KEPA and INSIST for the years 2000-2002 was made, including continued financial support to INSIST's publication and training activities, staff exchange and the recruitment of an information officer ("programme advisor") to work in INSIST. The recruitment process included interviews of less than 10 candidates by KEPA and tests by a recruitment consultant in summer 2000. Anu Lounela was selected and sent after a short orientation period to Indonesia in late October 2000 to work in INSIST until the end of 2002.

The co-operation was continued in 2003 along the same lines and a new information officer, Henri Myrntinen, was selected jointly by KEPA and INSIST through an open recruitment process. Henri's work started in March 2003 by participating in the MFA's training course and KEPA's activities in Helsinki. Due to bureaucratic difficulties, such as the immigration procedures and insurance issues, he could not commence working in Yogyakarta before August 2003. Henri's first contract period was to expire in September 2005, but it was later extended until the end of 2006.

Main activities and achievements

Policy work

Co-operation with PER

Originally, the major reason for KEPA to send the information officer to work in Thailand was to support the campaigns of Finnish NGOs with Thai NGOs to monitor and influence the activities of Finnish bilateral development co-operation, international financing institutions and Finnish and multinational companies in Thailand and the Mekong Region. This has been a clearly defined purpose for the co-operation in the agreements and the information officer's job descriptions. Timo was centrally involved in these campaigns concerning Thailand and the Mekong region, targeting for example:

- Finnish investments to Phoenix Pulp and Paper Company in Thailand, supported by Finnish concessional credits (1998);
- the forestry project "FOMACOP" in Laos supported by the World Bank and the MFA with grants and Finnish consulting services (1999);
- the project of the ADB "Poverty Reduction and Environmental Improvements in Remote Watersheds in the Greater Mekong Sub-region" supported by the MFA with grants and Finnish consulting services (1999);
- involvement of a Finnish energy company in the coal-fired power plant in Thailand, planned to be supported by Finnish export credits and guarantees (1999-2000);
- the annual meeting of the ADB in Thailand (2000);
- Finnish-Thai (Advance Agro) pulp factory joint venture in Thailand (2000); environmental improvement project in Chong Kneas harbour managed by the ADB and supported by the MFA with grants and Finnish consulting services (2004);
- Nam Theun 2 dam project in Laos supported by the World Bank (2004).

These controversial issues and events were raised into the public and political debate in Finland through publishing a large amount of information material based on the background information and articles collected and produced by Timo, through

two Mekong Seminars organised by KEPA in Finland and through direct contacts of the representatives of KEPA and its MOs with Finnish authorities and politicians. It is difficult to assess and distinguish the impacts of the activities of the information officer and the other campaign activities. Nevertheless, it can be concluded that Timo's contributions were undoubtedly significant in the campaigns, particularly in the one that resulted in the withdrawal of the Finnish energy company from the Hin Krut power plant project in Thailand in 2000 and the final moratorium of the power plant in 2002. This was clearly the conclusion of the "Internal review of PER and KEPA partnership" (Rönkkö 2002) and the view of the concerned interviewees in the present assessment.

When the Finnish Export Credit Campaign intensified its activities (2001) and Finnwatch was established (2002), Timo started to correspond and co-operate directly with them, following the recommendations of the Internal review. Very few other Finnish civil society groups continued to have a special interest in the region, but some academics and students conducted research on regional issues and a few journalists visited FER in their quest for Mekong-related information. The interests of Finnish companies decreased as an impact of the monetary crisis and the consequent political, social and economic instability in Southeast Asia and therefore the needs of the Export Credit Campaign and Finnwatch in the region also diminished.

Although the Internal review suggested more active role for KEPA as PER's international supporter, the co-operation in policy work was rather limited since then, in spite of several visits of KEPA staff to Thailand and their participation in international conferences organised by PER with the support from KEPA in 2001-2002.

During the visit of Max von Bonsdorff from KEPA to Thailand in February 2003 in connection to the preparation of KEPA's first Programme Policy, a few common policy objectives for KEPA and PER were identified, such as the integration of global, national and local level interests that threatened the rural communities living mainly self-sufficiently. In KEPA's draft Programme Policy, the Mekong region was identified as one of the priority areas for KEPA's policy work. In his report, Max proposed that in order to continue and strengthen the dialogue and co-operation between Finnish and local NGOs in the Mekong region, KEPA would carry out a baseline study on Finnish development co-operation and export interests and potential partners in the Mekong Region jointly with interested Finnish NGOs. There

was apparently no follow-up to this proposal and it did not materialise.

Timo's main contributions to the policy work in 2003-2004 were related to KEPA's food campaign, including a food security study, compilation of a Thai position paper on agriculture and the WTO and participation in the food security workshop during the Finnish Social Forum in 2003. The planned food campaign study trip to Mekong region was cancelled because of KEPA's budget limitations. Another attempt to link PER's activities and KEPA's policy work was Timo's article on dams in Cambodia for KEPA's publication on impoverishment and to prepare an "External Environmental Analysis (EEA) of the Mekong Region in Southeast Asia in 2003. Although rather unplanned, Timo's policy work in 2003 also included participating in the Asian Social Forum in India and in the preparations of PER's participation in the World Social Forum in Mumbai (2004).

Despite these efforts, the policy co-operation between KEPA and PER/FER did not get significantly stronger in 2003-2004. Therefore, the discussions continued during the visit of Maija Seppo to Thailand in September 2004. As a result, it was proposed that KEPA's MOs should be more strongly integrated to the co-operation, for example, through activist exchange which was to be discussed with interested MOs. Common interests between KEPA and PER/FER were again identified, including monitoring of Finnish activities in the Mekong Region and global issues (climate, forest). Possibilities for Nordic co-operation with FER were to be investigated. However, it was also agreed that there was no need for recruiting a successor for Timo after his contract expired in the end of 2004.

Due to an unexpected intervention of the MFA and the external evaluation of KEPA in 2005 the co-operation was discontinued for about a year causing financial problems to FER. Finally a new co-operation agreement was signed for another year (2006). The present Partnership Agreement between KEPA and FER is based on FER's three-year programme for 2005-2007 and the annual work plan for 2006 which include several objectives and elements relating to South-North co-operation, such as:

- campaign work with regional and international NGOs on dam and energy issues;
- co-operation with Northern activists and NGOs who will become more knowledgeable on development and environmental issues

in the Mekong Region and will use this information for monitoring and campaigning towards the governments, business sectors and general public in their respective countries;

- better advocacy towards Nordic governments;
- international, Northern groups interested in Mekong-related issues will have become more active and more effectively engaged in both areas of research and campaign that complement local efforts to address the policy decisions of the governments, international financial institutions and corporations;
- keeping up communications and exchange with regional and international campaign groups through electronic mailing.

According to the present agreement, KEPA and FER again aim at increasing the exchange of information, analysis, experiences and knowledge between Thai and Finnish civil societies and exploring possibilities to find common interests for joint policy work in the future. However, it is not clear how this is to be achieved. Now the relationship between KEPA and FER seems to be one between a donor and a recipient, and the flow of information from Thailand for KEPA's policy work in Finland has practically ended

Co-operation with INSIST

The dynamics of KEPA's policy co-operation with INSIST has been rather similar than with PER/FER. The information officer Anu Lounela contributed significantly to the successful campaign of Finnish environmental NGOs on the export and investment activities of Finnish forest sector corporations in Indonesia during the preparatory phase of the co-operation in 1998-1999. It is reasonable to assume that the campaign was one of the main factors resulting in a Finnish pulp and paper company to withdraw from Riau (and to concentrate its Asian activities to China instead). At least the concerned Finnish activists were satisfied and grateful for the help they received from Indonesia. In 2000-2001, the need for such campaigning gradually decreased due to the reduced activity of Finnish corporations in the region, although the Finnish-Chinese factories started to import raw material from Indonesia. Later, the Finnish Association for Nature Conservation organised a campaign on garden furniture which also received information from Anu.

In 2001, there were some plans to co-operate in KEPA's food security campaign. For example, Anu prepared a research plan on "Food Security and tenurial rights in Sanggau, West Kalimantan, which was to become part of the campaign. Unfortunately, the study had to be cancelled due to the severe conflicts in the region and the consequent security problems. Another effort relating to the food campaign was the visit of one of the founding members of INSIST and an internationally recognised expert of food security issues in Indonesia, Mr. Mansour Fakih, to Finland. However, the campaign failed to utilise his visit effectively due to other commitments of the key actors in KEPA Finland.

There were also other policy activities in which the needs and expectations of KEPA and INSIST did not match perfectly. According to Anu's final report (2002), an example was the assessment of democratisation in Papua and Aceh which was carried out for a request from KEPA. However, the objectives of the assessment were not clear to Anu and the Indonesian partners. The Indonesian activists expected concrete plans from KEPA to take part in the solidarity movement or their struggle, while the assessment served KEPA mainly as basic information for its internal policy analysis. Anu and INSIST did not receive any feed-back on the work.

According to Anu's final report, she felt it would have been important to produce more information on the effects of the WTO, IMF and WB on the policies and situation in Indonesia, but the co-operation in these issues remained sporadic as they were not high in the priorities of INSIST. Instead, Anu supported strongly INSIST in its training and information activities.

According to the "Fact finding report for evaluation" (Avonius 2002), KEPA's staff felt that INSIST remained distant, although the officers produced useful information to KEPA. Therefore, the report recommended intensification of the partnership, giving a better focus for the activities in Indonesia. However, the co-operation agreement for 2003-2005 was not significantly altered; it continued with the same objectives, including monitoring of the activities of Finnish companies and Finland's bilateral development co-operation in Indonesia which practically did not exist.

In June 2003, KEPA nominated Henri, Anu's successor, to be the co-ordinator of the preparations and participation of KEPA, its MOs and Asian partners in the World Social Forum in Mumbai, 2004. These

activities took a considerable share of Henri's working time in 2003 and 2004 and were considered important for the policy work of KEPA and the involved partners. The participation of 46 people from 9 countries was seen as a success by those who attended but it did not result in any sustainable co-operation on the themes discussed, such as land rights.

The connection between KEPA's policy work and the work plan of the information officer remained relatively indistinct until 2004 when the plan was more clearly linked to the objectives defined in KEPA's annual Activity Plan, including policy work as well as liaison and information services. One of the main aims of Henri's work plan for 2004 was to link INSIST's and KEPA's policy studies and strengthen the policy dialogue through e.g. the impoverishment analysis. The INSIST policy papers were to be produced for the wider KEPA network, including its MOs and international partners. In the co-operation planning meeting in December 2004, it was further agreed that the aim was to work in issues which would benefit both parties, e.g. food security, poverty reduction strategies, human rights, WTO and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), and that Henri was to facilitate the utilisation of the policy studies by KEPA's campaigns, information work and the broader KEPA member/partner network.

One of the practical efforts to implement these agreed objectives was to provide background information on the situation of coffee farmers in Timor Leste for KEPA's "Caffe latte" fair trade campaign. However, according to Henri's Annual Report 2004 *"it remained unclear how it was used, if at all"*. Another major effort was the impoverishment study for KEPA's publication series "On the Edge of the World Village" which was commenced in December 2004. During his visit to Southeast Sulawesi in July 2004, Henri also carried out some background research on the participation of a Finnish company in PT Antam nickel mining project and provided the information to interested NGOs in Finland and to the INSIST network. However, no need for further action was identified.

One of the agreed goals for 2005 was to increase the ties between KEPA's and INSIST's member organisations where possible. In Henri's work plan for 2005, it was also planned that Henri would continue supporting KEPA's campaigns on food security and fair trade, create a Finnish Operational Standard for Corporate Responsibility in Indonesia, participate in INSIST policy work on trade issues, such as WTO and ASEAN free trade,

and exchange results of policy work. However, according to his annual report 2005, the policy studies were plagued by various difficulties, such as staff changes in INSIST, and the post-tsunami efforts drew much of the resources.

In Henri's work plan for 2006, there is again a clear attempt to integrate his work in INSIST to KEPA's policy work. The plan includes several related tasks, such as transmitting policy papers produced by the Involvement and Fellowship programmes and the INSIST policy studies (on e.g. land rights, gender, trade, poverty reduction strategies, food sovereignty, alternative energy and rural development). Other planned policy-related activities include the special issue of the Wacana journal on poverty reduction strategies, which is to be published partly in English, and assistance for INSIST and its members in the preparations for the 6th Asia-Europe People's Forum (AEPF) to be held in Finland in September 2006.

Visions for the future

In both FER and INSIST, there is considerable interest to continue and strengthen their policy co-operation with KEPA. Finland is seen by them as a suitable partner country, as it is considered small and neutral, the "Finnish approach" has been appropriate, and it is relatively easy to get information on e.g. international financing institutions from Finnish authorities. Possible themes for the future co-operation could be the role of the Finnish/Nordic/EU bilateral and regional development co-operation and the activities of the international financing institutions in the Mekong Region (with FER) and the impacts of global/regional/EU trade policies on rural development, livelihoods, food security and natural resource conflicts in Southeast Asia (with INSIST and/or its regional partners). However, a lot of "homework" and dialogue will be needed in order to identify more clearly the common interests and the most appropriate Northern and Southern partners, taking into consideration the needs and possibilities for Nordic and Southeast Asian regional co-operation.

Information services

In the first co-operation contract between KEPA and PER and the annexed job description of the information officer (1998), the defined objectives of the co-operation were i) to increase the knowledge of KEPA and its MOs about the environmental issues and problems in Thailand and in Southeast Asia, and ii) to support PER in its international communications. Thus, the main aim was clearly to strengthen the one-way information flow from Thailand and the region to Finland and possibly other Northern countries. The same applied to the preparatory period of the information officer in Indonesia, the aim of which was to “inform Finnish NGOs about the environmental situation in Indonesia and the activities of environmental organisations in the country”.

Later, in the co-operation agreements of KEPA with both PER and INSIST, the definition of the scope of the information work of the information officers was widened to also include the **exchange** of information, analysis, experiences and knowledge between the host countries and Finnish civil societies. However, it has never been clearly defined in any documents what information should have been transferred from Finland to the host organisations and to the civil societies of their countries or regions. An example of information transmitted from Finland to INSIST was an article by Hilikka Pietilä on the Finnish welfare society which was translated and published in the *Wacana* journal. It raised a lot of attention among local and international NGOs in Indonesia. Nevertheless, the information flow from Finland to Indonesia and Thailand has been modest, the language barrier being one of the main hindrances.

As indicated in the previous chapter, in the beginning the bulk of the information produced and sent by the information officers to Finland was aimed at contributing to the campaigns of KEPA and some of its MOs or partners – particularly the Friends of the Earth Finland, Finnwatch and the Finnish Export Credit Campaign – on the activities of the Finnish government and enterprises and international financing institutions in Southeast Asia. It can be concluded that this aim was achieved to a great degree. The information officers in Thailand and Indonesia have all been very productive in terms of providing material for the various KEPA media outlets and other information channels. According to the reviews of the co-operation in Thailand (2001) and

Indonesia (2002), both the publication team of KEPA and the concerned Finnish activists were satisfied and grateful for the information they received from Thailand and Indonesia. Moreover, the MFA and the Finnish embassies in Bangkok and Jakarta have also appreciated the information. Undoubtedly, the work of the information officers has significantly increased the availability of information and strengthened the voice of the Southern partners on Thai/Mekong and Indonesian issues in Finland. A considerable part of the information was effectively utilised in the campaign work, particularly in the beginning of the co-operation.

The changes in the strategies, programmes and organisational structures of KEPA have frequently challenged the information work of the information officers in Thailand and Indonesia. The wishes have been as many as actors in KEPA and its MOs. While there has been an agreement on the need for information, there have also been divergent views on the thematic and geographic priorities and desired depth of the information. For example, the internal reviews of the co-operation indicated wishes among the partners to develop the work towards more analytical information (“journalistic research”) and to define the priority topics more clearly. For example, some of the partners wanted the information to have a more regional focus, particularly on the Mekong Region. PER wanted the work to be directed to a larger audience and networks in Europe, in addition to Finland or other Nordic countries, and to be focused on themes that would have been more important for both PER and KEPA.

The efforts to redirect the work of the information officer in Thailand from journalism type of information towards more analytical research included an article on environmental justice in Thailand for a book of the University of Joensuu (2002-2003), the External Environmental Analysis of the Mekong Region (2003) and the field study on local food security in villages along the Songkhram River (2003-2004). However, news and articles were concurrently written for various KEPA media covering a wide range of issues related to the environment, human rights and development policies.

According to Timo’s final report and the interview, he felt that in order to be able to provide information to wider international audience he should have been a member of TERRA instead of PER. Even so, Timo provided increasingly photographs for TERRA and international media and

wrote a few articles to TERRA's Watershed magazine.

In addition to writing tens of articles to KEPA's media, books of Finnish and Indonesian NGOs and some international magazines, Anu was working in INSIST as a visiting editor and a co-editor-in-chief of its Wacana journal. This took very much of her working time but was considered very important for INSIST's information work. Due to the fact that Wacana has been published practically in Indonesian language only, it has been difficult to utilise its materials in Finland.

Based on some of Anu's reports in 2001-2002, it seems that she was suffering from the scarcity of feed-back from KEPA's headquarters concerning her information work:

"It has been a little difficult to reflect how my work is seen by Kepa/Finland: Are there enough articles? Where would they be better published? What kind of responses are there? Who would need and what kind of information (different teams and working groups)? I have been especially confused when sending articles in English about Indonesian issues. Are they needed or not?"

As mentioned in the previous chapter, special efforts have recently been made to integrate Henri's information work more strongly into KEPA's policy work, particularly through the fair trade campaign, impoverishment studies and policy analyses. A number of articles and photo reports to the media of KEPA and some of its MOs on related issues (e.g. coffee farming, global trade, gender and food security) have clearly contributed to this aim, although it is not possible to assess here the effectiveness of the utilisation of this material. It can also be expected that the planned English articles for the special issue of the Wacana journal on poverty reduction strategies will be useful for KEPA's policy work in the future.

Due to the on-going restructuring of INSIST and the information work related to post-tsunami activities in Aceh, it has not been possible for Henri and INSIST to concentrate on policy-related information work as much as they might have wanted. The disastrous earthquake in Yogyakarta in late May 2006 may have a similar impact on their information work and other activities.

Liaison services

One of the tasks of the information officers in Thailand and Indonesia has been to serve as "liaison officers" between KEPA and the host organisations. This has included various activities, such as participation in the planning, reporting and reviews of the co-operation, and the facilitation of communication, visits of KEPA staff and staff exchange.

Another important liaison service task has been to facilitate the contact building and support the co-operation between other Finnish, Southeast Asian and international NGOs. One of the main achievements in the beginning of the co-operation was the identification of Southern partners for Finnish NGOs for their forestry related campaigns. Later, the liaison work of the information officers continued by identifying partners and facilitating contacts related to the preparation of joint NGO projects proposed to the MFA or the Finnish development cooperation foundations, Siemenpuu and KIOS, for financing. As a result, a few projects have been created. In addition, the work has included facilitation of visits of a number of Finnish and international activists, journalists and researchers to the host countries, and participation in the appraisals of a number of project proposals submitted to Siemenpuu and KIOS by Southeast Asian NGOs.

Despite the available liaison services, the co-operation between Finnish and Southeast Asian NGOs did not increase as expected after the first 2-3 years of the information officer cooperation (Rönkkö 2002; Avonius 2002). This was mainly due to the scarce resources of Finnish NGOs and the decreased needs for joint campaigning on the activities of Finnish government and companies in the region. Some of the interviewed environmental activists would have liked the information officers to provide wider introductions of local environmental groups of Southeast Asian countries, which might have induced identification of new partners for them.

Due to the relatively small number of Finnish NGOs active in Southeast Asia and to their well established contacts, the demand for liaison services (or other "quality services" provided by KEPA) has been generally small. Only the requests for assistance by Siemenpuu and KIOS Foundations have increased continuously. However, the recent establishment of the "Indonesia group" for Siemenpuu, including Indonesian members, is likely to reduce its need for

KEPA's liaison services in Indonesia. While the volume of the liaison services has remained on a relatively low level, the quality has seemingly been good, mainly focusing on the substance instead of providing, for example, travelling or accommodation services only.

It can be concluded that the information officers in Thailand and Indonesia have succeeded rather well in fulfilling the relatively modest needs of the interested Finnish NGOs for liaison services. An evident achievement of the first years of the information officer co-operation was the increased mutual learning and understanding of the different contexts, strategies, tactics and working cultures of Finnish, Thai and Indonesian NGOs. The facilitation of communication has been important for building a few new partnerships, clearing misunderstandings and making the co-operation easier. The placement of information officers has strengthened the atmosphere of partnership between KEPA and the host organisations, compared to a "traditional" donor-recipient relation only.

The main Finnish beneficiaries of the liaison services, in addition to KEPA itself, have included the Friends of the Earth Finland, Friends of Asia, Finnish-Indonesian Society, Finnwatch, Finnish Export Credit Campaign, the Committee of 100 and Siemenpuu and KIOS Foundations. The services have mainly been provided free of charge to the Finnish NGOs, although the Foundations have occasionally contributed to the travel costs associated to specific services of the information officers.

Training, advice and organisational development

KEPA's training and advisory services are targeted to its MOs in Finland and their partners within the reach of KEPA as well as to KEPA's own Southern partners. The services consist of many forms of training from general training courses for wide audiences to specifically tailored training packages for one organisation at a time.

The agreements and contracts concerning the information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia have not included any specific duties relating to the actual training and project advice that KEPA provides directly to its MOs or the Southern partners. Nevertheless, the information officers have contributed to the capacity building of KEPA's MOs and the Southern partners indirectly through

the policy work and other information and liaison services as described above. In addition, the officers have also participated to some extent in training and organisational strengthening of their host organisations.

For example, Timo's tasks included assistance to PER in i) maintaining information systems and database, ii) environmental research programmes, and iii) project identification and assessment. These tasks also involved capacity building elements, but such contributions seem to have remained relatively modest, mainly because other activities were prioritised and perhaps PER's capacity did not require so much strengthening. Today, FER focuses on the strengthening of the civil society networks in the Mekong Region and hopes for support from the Northern partners to this effort.

One of the tasks of Anu Lounela was to participate in the training activities of her Indonesian host organisation. She carried out this task mainly by participating in the planning and recruitment of students for INSIST's "Involvement" programme in which young activists are trained. She also participated in discussions outside the classes. Mainly because of the language barrier, Anu did not work as a trainer in the classes, apart from a couple of occasional presentations in a few training events. Another capacity building effort of Anu was to be a member of the academic committee of INSIST's Fellowship programme and to participate in the supervising and coaching of one of the activist writers.

Henri has also made a few presentations in INSIST's training events. One of the challenges has been to find the right "level" in terms of concepts and terminology, taking into account the background and knowledge of the participants. In addition, Henri has actively participated in the planning of the capacity building of INSIST's new member organisations through visits, needs assessments and the preparation of training courses. Moreover, he has assisted INSIST's members and partners to prepare project proposals to be submitted to international donors, such as the EU, MFA and the Finnish development co-operation foundations. INSIST is hoping for continued support from its Northern partners to its secretariat to be able to strengthen the network of its member organisations and communicate with them more effectively. For this purpose, INSIST would like to place an international information officer in East Indonesia which will be its geographical focus for the future.

One of the agreed goals for 2005 was to utilise one of the staff members of INSIST, Saleh Abdullah, in KEPA's training programmes while residing in Finland. Henri had a facilitating role in this process. After a lengthy planning period with KEPA's training and advice team, Saleh's involvement was finally included in the programme of the training course on "Good North-South Co-operation". Unfortunately, the course was cancelled due to the lack of registered participants.

In all of their activities, the information officers have significantly strengthened their own capacities in terms of knowledge and understanding of the civil societies and environment and development issues in their host countries. In his final report Timo gave the following statement on this aspect: *"Maybe the most important achievement of my work was my own increased general knowledge and understanding of the Thai and Mekong societies"*. This can also be a valuable result for KEPA and its Northern and Southern partners, particularly if the information officers are committed to continue their activities in/for the "third world movement" after their services as information officers have been completed. So far this seems to have been achieved at least to some extent, although there is always considerable uncertainty concerning the future activities of the former information officers.

Planning and reporting

Another important responsibility of the information officers has been to participate in the administration and management of the overall co-operation between KEPA and the host organisations. The main activities have included the participation in the planning of the co-operation (i.e. the preparation of multi-year co-operation plans, periodic work plans and budgets and proposals for KEPA's future activities in Asia), accounting and periodic financial and progress reporting.

The information officers in Thailand and Indonesia have carried out their planning and reporting activities in accordance with KEPA's quantitative and qualitative requirements which have evolved considerably during the period of their services. In addition to their own work planning and reporting, the information officers have participated in the work planning and reporting of their host organisations, particularly with regard to the activities supported financially by KEPA. Therefore, in the opinion

of the interviewed administrative personnel of the host organisations, the overall impact of the information officers on the hosts' administrative work has been clearly positive.

The planning and reporting procedures of Timo's work was not evaluated in the 2001 review of the co-operation between KEPA and PER. It cannot be done in the present assessment either because of the insufficient material. Nevertheless, the observations made during the assessment seem to be compatible with the results of the 2002 review of the KEPA-INSIST co-operation in regard to planning and reporting. One of the conclusions was that the objectives set for the co-operation, including those of the information officer, were so general that it was difficult to monitor and evaluate their achievement. Another consequence may have been the slight confusion about the goals and priorities of the work as expressed, for example, by Henri in his Annual Report 2005: *"There still needs to be a more focused idea of what KEPA wants to do, especially in Asia as a region. This needs to be clarified in order to be able to give the person - or persons - working in the region in the future a clearer goal and make it easier to prioritise tasks."*

The periodic progress reports of the information officers have included rather comprehensive descriptions of their activities but hardly any analysis of the effectiveness and impacts of those activities. A few interviewees expressed doubts about the sufficiency of the dissemination and utilisation of the reports. These aspects may explain the difficulties of some concerned actors within and outside of KEPA to become convinced about the importance and justifications of KEPA's presence in Southeast Asia. Anu addressed this issue in her final report (2002) as follows:

"Once, after I had worked two years in Indonesia, a member of Keba's staff asked me what Insist did and why Indonesia was so important. Didn't I produce enough information or did nobody read it?"

Critical success factors

Compatibility of objectives, partners and instruments

Based on the experiences of the information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia, it can be concluded that this mode of work has generally been a useful tool for implementing KEPA's Declaration of Principles (1997), Strategic Plan 2000-2005, Development Policy Programme (2000) and Programme Policy 2004-2006, involving to some extent KEPA's all main functions: policy work, training/advice and information and liaison services. Obviously, the information officer co-operation faces similar challenges and difficulties as other modes of work in operationalising KEPA's policies and strategies.

In Thailand and Indonesia, the information officers have contributed most systematically and effectively to KEPA's policy work and associated information and liaison services and thus strengthened KEPA's role as a watchdog on behalf of the Finnish civil society. The inputs to the training and advisory services have been less significant. The more clearly and directly the work of an information officer has been integrated into the shared and specific objectives of KEPA, its MOs and the host organisations – particularly joint campaigns – the more effective and efficient it seems to have been. Not surprisingly, in such situations the objectives are clearest and the commitment and ownership of each partner are strongest.

Apparently, the appropriateness and effectiveness of the information officer co-operation depends very much on e.g. the following considerations:

- What do KEPA and its MOs want to achieve in co-operation with their Southern partners?
- Which functions and instruments of co-operation are needed to achieve it?
- How much and what kind of resources are needed and available to achieve it?

KEPA's Strategic Plan 2006-2010 includes general criteria for KEPA's presence in the South. It is expected that the new sub-strategies will provide more detailed guidance on the above issues and that related decisions will be made in the forthcoming Programme Policy for 2007-2009. However, the specific goals, instruments, volume and

resources for the cooperation must be defined collaboratively with the concerned partners for each individual co-operation programme. After having agreed upon these issues, decisions can be made on the allocation of human resources for information officer co-operation and/or other modes of work in the partnership programme. The following considerations seem relevant to such decision-making:

- Policy co-operation may be possible without KEPA's presence in the South. In such cases, for example, the campaign staff or policy analysts in Finland would directly and actively correspond with the Southern partners and incorporate their inputs into the work in the North and share the Northern expertise and information with the partners. This might work well between partners that already have a long and strong partnership and consequently very good mutual understanding and easy communication. If that is not the case, it is likely that the relationship needs strengthening by physically closer and more intensive dialogue through e.g. personnel exchange or placing a Finnish employee in the partner organisation for a joint programme.
- High quality policy analysis is in the core of KEPA's policy work. Placing a Finnish employee in a Southern partner organisation for policy analysis may be effective and appropriate if it clearly serves specified policy objectives of the partners and the employee is allowed to concentrate sufficiently on that work for a sufficient time. However, academic research co-operation should not be a priority for KEPA.
- In advocacy work and campaigning, the time-span is often shorter than in policy analysis. As noticed during the first years of KEPA's co-operation with PER and INSIST, a Finnish employee can have an important role in joint campaigns to influence e.g. the activities of Northern governments and private companies in the South. A need for such a campaign may arise at a short notice. Therefore, it would be useful if KEPA was prepared to respond to such needs at a short notice by sending Finnish activists to work with Southern partners in specifically targeted campaigns for limited periods of time.
- Information officer co-operation is likely to be more appropriate for co-operating with individual partner organisations than for interventions involving a great number or a whole sector of

partner organisations nationally, regionally or globally, unless the officer is placed in a strategically selected national/regional/global organisation.

- The placement of a Finnish employee in a Southern partner organisation can be an effective way to provide training and advisory services to Southern partners, if there is a clear need for such co-operation. Then, naturally, the qualifications of the employee in terms of training, capacity building and language skills must be emphasised in the recruitment process. Utilising trainers from Southern partner organisations in KEPA's courses also seems a good idea.
- According to KEPA's draft communications strategy (15.5.2006), the purpose of communication is to help KEPA achieve its political objectives defined in the strategy and programme, and the objectives of communication must be based on the objectives of other functions. Thus, information officers should not be used as media correspondents for producing general information. Instead, information officer co-operation would be much more effective for producing specific information for specified needs of a co-operation programme.
- Placing an information officer in a Southern partner organisation may be an appropriate way to provide liaison services for KEPA's MOs or other Northern partners (only) if there is a considerable demand. In some partner countries KEPA may have a clear mission to provide practical assistance (e.g. travel agency and hostel services) to Finnish NGOs, but this has not been the case in Thailand or Indonesia. When there is a substantial demand for liaison services, it is recommended that the relationship between KEPA and the beneficiaries would be put on a firm contractual basis rather than the ad hoc basis on which it currently rests, for example, with Siemenuu and KIOS Foundations working actively with Southeast Asian partners. KEPA already has such a contract with Abilis Foundation concerning the utilisation of the services of KEPA's field offices.
- In many cases, the information officer co-operation would not be sufficient alone but a combination of various modes of work may be needed, including e.g. financial support, personnel exchange, shorter visits and study trips of staff and activists, policy network

meetings, joint seminars, conferences, open forum debates, internet discussions, etc. An information officer may have an important role in assisting the Southern partner(s) in the administration of the financial support (e.g. planning, monitoring and reporting) and/or in the facilitation of personnel exchange and staff visits. This has clearly been the case in KEPA's co-operation with PER and INSIST. However, such support tasks should not cause excessive disturbance to the core activities of the information officer.

- In principle, utilising Finnish employees just for filling a human resource gap in a Southern partner organisation is not likely to be a sustainable or economically sound solution. Instead, possibilities to provide financial support for employing a Southern person should be considered in such cases.
- There should always be a clear distinction between the functions of KEPA's information officer co-operation and the Finnish Volunteer Programme (Etvo).

The information officer co-operation is not likely to be effective and efficient if its objectives are not clearly defined and strongly shared by the concerned partners. Having separate responsibilities toward the various partners may easily lead to weakly co-ordinated activities, loss of synergy and even conflicts.

Strong and clear institutional structure

The institutional weakness of the co-operation has been one of the most significant factors reducing the effectiveness and efficiency of KEPA's information officer co-operation with PER and INSIST. The co-operation has seemingly suffered from the institutional instability in both KEPA and the host organisations.

After the major evaluation in 1994, KEPA was re-structured into a line management organisation with a director and four units. Its internal structure was again reviewed in 2001 and subsequently changed into a matrix organisation consisting of a number of teams in the headquarters and field offices in the South. The responsibilities for the co-ordination of KEPA's country programmes were divided among a few programme officers in the "South Team". They were the primary contact persons for the information officers

in KEPA's headquarters until the South Team was dissolved in 2003.

It seems that the communication between the programme officers of the South Team and information officers mainly worked efficiently. In Anu's words: *"communication with the Indonesia desk was fluent... it was crucial to have somebody who knew what KEPA's programme in Indonesia was"*. Unfortunately, the division of power and responsibility and the lines of communication between the teams have not always been clear enough. At times, the information officers and the partners have had difficulties to identify the right body in KEPA responsible for co-ordinating a specific issue. As the various KEPA teams, MOs and the host organisations have had different interests and priorities concerning the services of the information officers, the work planning and prioritisation of the tasks has been very challenging to the information officers.

When the South team was dissolved, the country offices and the information officers were organisationally located directly under the supervision of the Programme Director. However, their functional and administrative location has varied between the Advocacy Team and the Training and Advisory Team. Recently, Henri has more clearly worked under the Advocacy Team and been a recognised member of KEPA's Policy Network. Although the network structure has considerably strengthened the institutionalisation of the information officer co-operation, it seems that the challenge identified in the last evaluation of KEPA (INTRAC 2005) still exists and also applies to the information officer co-operation: *"There is no easy-to-identify location that holds the information, learning or accountability for the work... The Programme Director has the overall responsibility for all the programme work both in Finland and the South but it is not possible for one person to be the focus of accountability for all this."* Thus, there would be a need to delegate clearly the responsibility for the supervision and co-ordination of the information officer co-operation to a lower level of the organisation.

Although Henri is organisationally in a similar position as KEPA's country offices, he does not participate in the activities of KEPA's Global Management Group (GMG) consisting of the three members of the Management Team and the four field office executives. This has resulted in weaker communication between the GMG and the actors in Asia compared to those in Africa and Latin

America and may also have implications to the planning of KEPA's future presence and co-operation in the South.

Besides the frequent organisational changes, the rapid staff turnover in KEPA's headquarters has affected negatively the effectiveness and efficiency of information officer co-operation. The significance of this issue can be clearly seen in reports of each information officer, and it was also strongly addressed in the evaluation by INTRAC (2005) and by several interviewees in the present assessment. For example, Henri calculated that eleven persons have been responsible for his activities in KEPA's headquarters during his three-year working period in INSIST. Obviously, the staff turnover has caused a considerable loss of commitment, skills, institutional memory and follow-up of agreed decisions. According to Henri's annual report 2004, for example: *"Work in Indonesia has been at times complicated by the fact that both KEPA and INSIST have been going through profound structural and personnel changes... It has been difficult to give and get necessary information related to my work here as it has been unclear who my counterpart in Helsinki is"*. According to an interviewed representative of FER, since the programme officers (Päivi Ahonen and Aija Taskinen) left it was difficult to find a counterpart for dialogue.

Another significant institutional issue, identified already in the internal reviews of KEPA's co-operation with PER and INSIST, was the *"shallowness of ownership"*: Only a few people were involved in the co-operation, mainly outside of KEPA. The Finnish activists were involved most actively in the seminars and visits of Southern activists but not so much beyond that. The interests of the environmental activists who were instrumental in starting the co-operation turned to other activities and very few new activists appeared. The enthusiastic pressure group in KEPA board vanished. Timo addressed this issue in his final report as follows: *"The group of activists interested in Mekong issues was small. I felt that the Mekong co-operation of Finnish NGOs was fully delegated to the institutionalised information officer and the Finnish activists turned to other issues."* Obviously, the sustainability of the co-operation is easily at risk if it rests on the shoulders of one information officer only.

One way to maximise the institutional backing and efficiency and to minimise the above risks, is to contract an information officer for a specific co-operation programme, or a *"project"*,

implemented clearly under the co-ordination of one of the teams or networks of KEPA, with clearly identified or formalised network of Finnish/Nordic/Northern and Southern partners. The responsible team/network co-ordinator would then act as the superior of the concerned information officer(s) in KEPA and co-ordinate the work with other possible teams, assisted by the Administration Team in the bureaucracy. This would reduce the burden of the Programme Director. The sufficient ownership and commitment of the partners should be ensured through joint planning, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation throughout the process. The possibilities for firm contractual arrangements and fair cost-sharing (in the form of financial and/or in-kind contributions, as appropriate) between all partners should also be considered.

It is to be hoped that the implementation of the new personnel strategy of KEPA will resolve or reduce problems relating to the rapid staff turnover.

Balance of tasks and resources

As already indicated above, the information officer co-operation is most effective and efficient when the tasks are clearly defined and strongly linked to the shared strategic objectives of the concerned Northern and Southern partners. Having too many, unclear or separate responsibilities toward the various partners is likely to result in distress. Anu addressed the issues in one of her reports (September-November 2001) as follows: *“Are there too many issues to handle at the same time? One has to still consider the balance between the tasks from KEPA and the tasks from INSIST, so that the work load will not become too big. I myself find it easier, if I will have more specified tasks in INSIST, too.”* It is also easy to agree with Henri’s statement in his Annual Report 2005: *“Lack of focus leads to a lack of time resources”*.

At one stage, PER proposed KEPA to send two officers to Thailand, one for PER and one for TERRA, as one officer was not considered sufficient for both local and regional issues. According to Timo’s final report, a reason for the delayed food security study was that he had to respond continuously to “unplanned” requests from KEPA, Finnish actors and Thai and international activists for comments, information plans, photos and meetings, which led to lack of time for concentrated reading of research books and long time

field work. Another problem was that *“the work done for PER/TERRA was not included in the KEPA Activity Plan”*.

A possibility to pursue more clear and balanced job descriptions and improved accountability is the one proposed in the recent evaluation (INTRAC 2005): “annual service agreements” between the field personnel and KEPA’s teams in Finland. Such an agreement would spell out what contributions are needed from the employee(s) in the South in order to ensure that the teams can fulfil their objectives, and vice versa.

It does not seem likely that one person can successfully fulfil the needs of several teams and MOs of KEPA at the same time in a large partnership programme, even if the requests were carefully co-ordinated. In such a situation, placement of more than one individual information officer and/or establishment of a regional office might be reasonable, as suggested by Henri for KEPA’s future co-operation with Asian partners (Myrntinen 2006).

Appropriate role

The experiences of the information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia suggest that it is important to discuss and define the role and working methods of a foreign employee very carefully with all concerned partners, paying special attention to the differences in the working cultures of NGOs in Finland and the partner country. For example, KEPA and PER had partly different expectations and views about Timo’s role. KEPA wanted Timo to be a negotiator between NGOs and Finnish government/companies, which was not acceptable to PER. Another lesson learned in the beginning of the co-operation was that the Finnish partners must be very careful in order to avoid giving an impression of representing Southern civil societies in any discussions or presentations.

An additional example of the delicate role of the information officer mentioned in one of Anu’s reports (September-November 2001) was that she could not participate in the Indonesian advocacy process on land and natural resources legislation, as it would have attracted too much attention, and foreign activists were “under observation”. Therefore a strategy of working in the background and sensitising the Finnish audiences was considered more appropriate. This is

also in line with KEPA's draft sub-strategy for the policy work.

Each Finnish information officer in PER/FER and INSIST has had a dual role: they have been staff members of both KEPA and the host organisations. The situation has been somewhat confusing when these two roles have not fully coincided.

At some stage, the information officers' role in relation to the Finnish state has also been discussed. For example, in the review of KEPA-INSIST co-operation (Avonius 2002) the role of the information officer as a consultant for the Embassy of Finland raised questions.

As indicated before, the language may also considerably restrict the role of a foreign employee working in the South, which just needs to be taken into account in the job descriptions.

Careful recruitment

Although the successfulness of the information officer co-operation depends very much on the institutional arrangements and all the involved partners, it ultimately stands or falls with the information officer him/herself. Therefore, successful recruitment is crucial. The interviewees of the present assessment shared the view that this has been achieved in the cooperation of KEPA with PER and INSIST. Also the internal reviews in 2001 and 2002 made the same conclusion. For example, Rönkkö (2002) stated that: *"Because of the demanding context, unique working terms and conflicting interests and expectations both in Thailand and Finland the post has been demanding a flexible, culturally sensitive and independent personality, which KEPA has luckily found"*.

All partners seemed to be satisfied with the recruitment processes. However, it was stated by some representatives of both FER and INSIST that next time they would also like to involve their representatives in the interviews of the candidates, particularly if they did not know them beforehand.

The required qualifications of the information officers defined in the announcements were rather general, as were their job descriptions. If an information officer is recruited for more specific objectives and purpose, which is preferable because of higher efficiency, the qualifications also need to be specified accordingly. When the objectives and purpose of the cooperation change, the employee may also need to be changed, as it may

be difficult for the employee to change her/his approach. This may have been a problem during the last 18 months of the information officer co-operation with PER and one of the reasons for not extending it after 2004.

The representatives of FER indicated that for possible future co-operation FER would welcome an experienced research-oriented activist with whom the concerned partners would be fully confident, who would have a strong institutional backing in the North, would know well the partners and their contexts, and would be committed to continue as a resource person for the joint policy work also after the assignment. FER sees plenty of opportunities for the involvement of such an employee supporting joint monitoring and campaigning relating to the environmental, social, and indigenous peoples' issues in the Mekong Region, Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), etc. However, the agenda should be broader than influencing Finnish actors only.

In the group discussion with Henri and staff members of INSIST during the present assessment, the following general qualifications of an information officer were considered important:

- flexibility and adaptability;
- experience in North-South civil society co-operation;
- experience in policy work (activism), capacity building and knowledge sharing;
- good writing and communication skills;
- knowledge of information and communication technologies;
- willingness and ability to live and work in hard conditions;
- knowledge and understanding of the local circumstances (culture, language, etc.);
- familiarity with the involved partners (an asset).

It became evident in several discussions during the present assessment that the personality of the employee is at least as important as her/his professional qualifications.

Training and tutoring

KEPA has had no standard training or orientation programme available for the information officers. Timo and Henri participated in parts of the two-week training course (VALKU) organised by the MFA, KEPA's internal pre-departure orientation in Finland and in-country language

training. Anu only participated in KEPA's internal orientation.

Obviously, the needs for training should be minimised through careful selection of the information officer. However, there may always be needs for general or specific cultural orientation, language studies and prior familiarisation with all concerned partners. Early training in the administrative requirements and procedures of each partner is also likely to reduce difficulties arising later.

In any case, a lot of learning by doing will be needed, in which the role of the co-workers and counterparts in the host organisation is crucial. For example in PER and INSIST the working relations have been very supportive to such practical learning.

In order to alleviate problems related to staff changes, KEPA has a normal procedure for parallel employment of the old and new employee. The importance of such a practice cannot be overemphasised in the information officer co-operation in which the institutional memory and contacts rest so much on one person only.

Appropriate working conditions and terms

The information officers are KEPA's employees and therefore the Finnish working norms are applied to them. In practice, the employee is also a member of the staff of the host organisation and needs to adapt to the local working systems. This may require negotiations on e.g. the appropriate timing of vacations. In KEPA's co-operation with PER and INSIST this has worked seemingly well.

As the information officers in Thailand and Indonesia have not been officially employed by the host organisation but working as "volunteers", work permits have not been necessary. In both countries, it would be very complicated to get a work permit. In case of Timo and Henri, the frequent extension of 1-3 months' visas has caused some nuisance. Anu avoided this as she got married to an Indonesian citizen. In the future, the possibilities for obtaining longer visas should be investigated, with the assistance of the concerned Finnish Embassies, if needed. Besides the occasional complications in visa extensions, the official procedures have not caused any major difficulties to the information officers in Thailand and Indonesia.

Both PER/FER and INSIST were used to host foreign employees, which made it easy for them to start working with KEPA's information officers. The salary level was an issue for discussions within KEPA and between KEPA and PER before approving the arrangement for Timo. It was resolved by paying his salary partly through PER's budget and partly through KEPA directly, without any significant negative consequences. Today, KEPA has standard rules for the employment for all of its workers.

No serious security issues relating to the working environment were reported by Timo from Thailand. At times, the security situation has been much more difficult in various parts of Indonesia, particularly in Aceh and East-Indonesia, due to severe conflicts. The risks related to security issues require consideration in the recruitment of information officers but are difficult to predict or manage, further than providing good insurances to the employees.

Particularly in Indonesia, the communication between the partners has been constrained by inadequate communication technology. For example, the internet connections have been too slow for using KEPA's intranet system. With regard to telecommunication, the differences in the working cultures also require attention. An assumption that all partners read their electronic mail every day, or every week, may not be realistic.

Appropriate management procedures

The main challenge in the management of the information officer co-operation is to clarify the responsibilities and the institutional lines of decision-making and communication in KEPA, as already indicated above. This is also one of the general goals of KEPA's new personnel strategy.

Another important challenge is to meet the administrative needs and requirements of each partner without causing unnecessary burden, particularly to the Southern partners.

In KEPA, the main administrative stress occurs in the beginning of the process, i.e. in the contracting phase. For Henri, who does not belong to the Finnish social security system, KEPA had to tailor the social security and insurance arrangements individually. With Timo and Anu these issues were handled routinely. Timo's dual compensation system was administratively more complicated than that of Anu and Henri

who got their whole salary directly from KEPA. If there were a great number of information officers requiring individual arrangements, the administrative burden would easily become too heavy. So far this seems not to have been the case.

PER/FER and INSIST find KEPA's planning and reporting requirements somewhat heavier than those of their other Northern partners but have been able to meet them without major difficulties. FER prefers to have a basket funding arrangement and to share the same work plans and reports with all of its donor partners, which seems an efficient solution. INSIST might wish to consider the same possibility in the future with its donors.

As already mentioned above, the work planning and reporting systems have changed in accordance with KEPA's evolving management systems. If KEPA's annual planning process takes four months and the timing of the various strategic and operative planning processes do not coincide, as indicated by some of the interviewees during the present study, there seems to be room for streamlining the processes.

As the reporting of the information officer co-operation still seems challenging, it might be appropriate to repeat here the valid statement made in the internal review report (Avonius 2002): *"Reports are not, unlike some think, nasty tasks through which bosses check upon the staff, but they can be an excellent channel for communication and an opportunity to see one's own work from perspective"*. It is important to make the work plans and reports still more informative in terms of the materialised impacts and effectiveness of the co-operation and the lessons learned. Moreover, the practices to disseminate, discuss and provide feedback on the reports should be made more systematic. The information officers in Thailand and Indonesia have clearly suffered from the lack of feed-back from KEPA's headquarters. The feed-back mechanisms of the host organisations in e.g. daily communication, regular meetings and development seminars seem to have worked better.

KEPA's personnel management system is expected to contribute to the personal development, well-being at work and maintenance of the working capacity of its employees. With regard to the information officers in Thailand and Indonesia, KEPA seem not to have been very active in these issues. It is to be hoped that the implementation of the new personnel strategy will improve the situation, but it may turn out

to be challenging and therefore requiring special attention if KEPA should decide to continue the information officer co-operation with some of its Southern partners in the future.

The evaluations, or internal reviews, of the information officer co-operation in Thailand and Indonesia were of good quality, although they could have assessed the demand and justifications for the information co-operation more thoroughly and critically. As Timo suggested in one of his reports (May 2004), it is important that in internal evaluations *"the continuation of the co-operation and its form needs to be continuously reflected with the present KEPA programme policies and strategies"*. It seems that the results of the reviews were used in the subsequent work planning, but the follow-up was lacking, perhaps due to the rapid changes in KEPA's staff and vaguely defined responsibilities.

In order to make the various reports of the information officers still more effective as learning tools for KEPA and its constituencies and to improve KEPA's institutional memory, there seems to be a need for improving the knowledge management system of KEPA, particularly its electronic archives. Now the system seems very vulnerable to staff changes in the headquarters and the field. Another important element of institutional learning is the exchange of experiences between the colleagues in the organisation. Since such exchange works best between friends, it is important to systematically create such friendships among the information officers and the relevant field office staff.

Annex 1. Participants in the interviews and discussions

Former and present KEPA's information officers in Thailand and Indonesia:

Mr. Timo Kuronen (interview in Helsinki)
Ms. Anu Lounela (interview in Helsinki)
Mr. Henri Myrntinen (interview and group discussion in Yogyakarta)

Former and present KEPA's staff members:

Ms. Päivi Ahonen (short telephone conversation and e-mail exchange)
Ms. Sisko Leino (short telephone conversation)
Ms. Anne Romar (short telephone conversation)
Ms. Maija Seppo (discussion on the Terms of Reference of the present assessment)
Mr. Janne Sivonen (interview in Helsinki)
Ms. Aija Taskinen (interview In Helsinki)
Mr. Antti Turakka (interview in Helsinki)

Representatives of FER:

Ms. Premrudee Daoroung (interview in Bangkok)
Mr. Srisuwan Kuankachorn (interview in Bangkok)
Mr. Witoon Permpongsacharoen (interview in Bangkok)

Representatives of INSIST:

Mr. Saleh Abdullah (group discussion in Yogyakarta)
Ms. Fitri Andyaswuri (group discussion in Yogyakarta)
Mr. Don Marut (short telephone conversation)
Mr. Roem Topatimasang (group discussion in Yogyakarta)
Ms. Octalya Puspa Wardany (group discussion in Yogyakarta)

Finnish activists:

Ms. Hanna Matinpuro (telephone conversation)
Mr. Otto Miettinen (short discussion)
Ms. Tove Selin (short discussion)
Mr. Marko Ulvila (short telephone conversation)

Others:

Mr. Courtenay Ellingson, CUSO, Canada (interview in Jakarta)
Ms. Mariam Mesli, Alternatives, Quebec, Canada (group discussion in Yogyakarta)

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