



THE ‘SCALING-UP’ OF NGOS TO THE CHALLENGES OF THE EU

TWO CASE-STUDIES OF DEVELOPMENT NGOS IN GERMANY

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ABSTRACT

The following bachelor thesis stands in the broader context of the cooperation of the EU and civil society organizations. In the last decades civil society has gained momentum in Brussels (Zimmer/ Sittermann, 2005). And several proposals to enhance the cooperation between the EU institutions and non state actors have been published by the European Commission. However, this paper does not examine the attempts of the EU institutions, but the view point of civil society organizations. The focus is put on development NGOs and the sector of advocacy. The main research question in this context is, whether or not development NGOs change their way of working from project implementation to advocate activities, when they try to cooperate with the EU-level. These adaptation processes are referred to as scaling-up.

To gain a deeper insight into the topic and two interviews with German development NGOs have been conducted. The organizations which are presented in detail are the *Kindernothilfe* and *Plan Deutschland*. These empirical findings are compared, contrasted and discussed on the basis of the scientific debate. As result it could be made out that scaling-up processes only take place in order to be able to participate in networks. Scaling-up especially had to take place in regard to the gaining of expert knowledge and the allocation of resources. However, the actual actors on EU-level are not national NGOs, but umbrella organizations, which bundle the interest. Through this national based development NGOs manage to keep the costs of resources as low as possible, without ignoring the EU-level as important partner. Networks of high importance in this context are VENRO (the German NGO platform) and CONCORD the Euro Federation in the sector of development policies. Moreover European wide alliances with other organizations play a crucial role. The networks and umbrella group in Brussels can be seen as one part of the multi-level-governance of the EU, in which NGOs on national level also participate. Furthermore the participation in networks offers the possibility for development NGOs to concentrate on their original work of program implementation. Here also lays their main interest concerning EU-cooperation, which means the implementation of programs. To be able to do so their main focus is put on the gaining of EU grants and not on advocacy work.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years the European Union (EU) has become an important actor within the arena of international relations and established its own competences in several policy areas (Furtak, 2005)¹. Next to the traditional nation state the EU represents an additional level to influence and build up partnerships. “Of course, a small company or an ordinary citizen may consider [...] [the EU-]level as ‘far away’ and as belonging to another world. In objective terms, however, nobody can escape the interventions from the other countries and the EU” (Schendelen van, 2003:30). With the increase of competences in several policy fields the chance to exercise their influence also increases for non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In some fields it is even easier to influence the EU and the policy making on this level than the respective national government (Furtak, 2005). The domestic as well as the EU level create a “‘multi-level polity’ in which institutional power is increasingly distributed over a host of EU, national and even sub-national bodies, commissions and other decision-making agencies” (Marks/ Mc Adam, 1999:97).

Besides important legitimacy and democratization related aspects, the engagement and competences of NGOs and other civil society organizations play an important role in this system. “There is no doubt: In recent years the topics of civil society and the third sector have gained momentum in Brussels.” (Zimmer/ Sittermann, 2005:15). People orientated policies and the input of expert knowledge are crucial factors for the implementation of policies as well as for the decision making process beforehand (Greenwood, 2003a). Next to the studies that relate to the attempts that are taken by the EU - especially by the European Commission (EC) – to enhance the participation of civil society (e.g. White Paper on European Governance, CONECCS database, The Civil and Social Dialogue) there are only a few studies that examine the view point of civil society itself (Frantz/ Martens, 2006).

But as the EU has become a crucial partner for NGOs concerning implementation, financing and lobbying it should also be a matter to evaluate the impact the EU has on the organizational structures and tasks of civil society. Next to other things the supranational character, the relatively small bureaucracy of the EC and the comparatively far-reaching competences in some policy fields make the EU level a part of the “multi-level-governance” (Hooghe/Marks, 2001) that follows its own rules

¹ German references have been translated.

and regimentations (Greenwood, 2003_a); which furthermore demands adaptation processes on the side of the civil society organizations. “In fact, the use of supranational arenas involves typically participation [in specific areas, such as] information-gathering report-writing lobbying resolution-passing [...]” (Della Porta/Kriesi, 1999:20). This means national based NGOs have to get used to the ‘Brussels game’² and make use of different strategies to be able to cooperate.

The following bachelor thesis is going to give a deeper insight into the way civil society organizations cooperate with the EU. With regard to this cooperation with supra- and international organizations changes can occur (Edwards, 2000). This changes of the internal structure of NGOs are often referred to as the processes of *scaling-up*. This concept describes assimilation trends like the building up of partnership-relations between NGOs and the state (instead of assuming a strict oppositeness), the professionalization and bureaucratization of internal structures as well as the shift from implementation to advocacy groups (Frantz/ Martens, 2006). In this paper it is going to be concentrated on the last aspect, with a special focus on development NGOs. The overall research question, which is going to be elaborated in this paper thus, is:

Whether or not scaling-up processes, from project work to advocacy activities can be identified within development NGOs in the context of the European Union?

This includes internal scaling-up processes as well as the changing of the goal of the organization from a project-centered to an advocacy-centered working approach. In the context of this discussion it is also important to figure out how NGOs try to advocate at EU-level and what role can be given to networks and umbrella groups. Furthermore it is of crucial interest what changes NGOs have to face within their organizational structure to be able to advocate and lobby at EU level. Another indicator to figure out what impact the EU has on NGOs is the balance between the advocacy and project work. Hence the sub-questions which arise when advocacy and adaptation processes respectively are present are:

1. How do NGOs try to advocate at EU-level and what role can be given to networks and umbrella groups?
2. What internal changes do NGOs have to face to be able to advocate/lobby?
3. What is the balance between project work and advocacy within NGOs?

² The term ‘Brussels game’ refers to: Greenwood, 2003.

However, to underline the theoretical approach two case studies were conducted. With the examples of the organizations *Plan Deutschland* and *Kindernothilfe Deutschland* scaling-up processes in the area of advocacy activities are shown. After the description of the methodology, the theoretical background and further explanation of the research questions are presented. After that an overview of the empirical results is given, which are compared and contrasted in the discussion paragraph. The final part of the paper then gives answers to the research questions, if and how civil society organization in the field of development politics have changed their way of working and their range of tasks to be able to cooperate with and lobby/advocate at EU level. The conducted study will show how scaling-up has actually taken place within the two studied organizations, which strategies were developed and whether or not these changes can be linked to the occurrence of the EU. Through this, the impact of the EU on development NGOs is described and interpreted.

METHODOLOGY

To answer the above given research questions two case studies were conducted. From a scientific point of view it would have been more satisfying to study more than two cases and to sample them randomly, which would emphasize the representativeness of the study. However, as the statistical population of development NGOs within the Member States of the European Union is not known, this has not been possible. Furthermore the scope of a bachelor thesis does not include this kind of deep and large scale research approach, because the resources have been very limited. To be able to empirically answer the research questions in an appropriate way, case studies, which have been chosen for their validity, thus seemed to be the most reasonable research method.

Case study research “calls for selecting a few examples of the phenomenon to be studied and then intensively investigating the characteristics of those examples” (Hensler et al.,2001:527). They provide a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data and analyzing it (Flyvbjerg, 2006). In this paper the cases have not been selected randomly, instead the selection was based on certain criteria and

information about the organizations, which means information-oriented-sampling (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The interviews offer a deep insight into the work of two organizations, which makes it possible to give statements concerning the inter-linkages of EU cooperation and adaptation processes within the internal structure and the tasks of the organization. The reasons for adaptation processes can be manifold and it is not easy to find causal relationships within the complex arena of a political multi-level-system. However, with the help of the two cases, a more sharp and deepened insight and understanding of why instances happened can be given. This means to understand whether or not and why organizations shift from project to advocacy work, how they do it and how it can be linked to the appearance of the EU-level.

Furthermore the studies can give a deeper insight into the whole topic and can serve as an indicator of what might be important to look at more extensively in future research. There are only relatively limited numbers of studies that have already been conducted in this area; thus it is not clear what can be understood as the 'typical case' of adaptation within the NGO sector. Therefore the case-studies might also serve as an indicator for this. In this way the case studies on the one hand serve as a means to test the given hypothesis of a changing area of responsibilities of development NGOs, and, on the other hand generate new research-questions and hypothesis (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Even though, two cases have been studied, each case is treated as a single case. Each case's conclusions can then be used as information contributing to the entire study.

To narrow the scope the paper will only refer to NGOs in the field of development politics. This policy field was chosen on the basis of several reasons: firstly, the European Commission has own competences to distribute grants³, secondly, development programs can be seen as one of the main working-areas of NGOs around the world, and finally, the public as well as the academic world increasingly associate development work with NGO activities (Furtak, 2005). For example de Mars summarizes: "NGOs are increasing in number and influence in all regions of the world, and across a growing roster of issue-areas. The primary geopolitical focus of their normative agendas is to influence the "Third World" of former European

³ The EC has the competence to distribute a certain amount of the total budget, which obviously is money that originally comes from the Member States. Besides this, the Members States also have their own development policy, which also entails competences to distribute grants on the national level.

colonies, and the “Second World” of former (and remnant) communist states.” (Mars de, 2005:6). In addition development NGOs are very important to implement EU policies (Furtak, 2005), which cannot be implemented by the EU itself. “In a report of the European Parliament (Dok. A3-0029/92) it is pointed out that NGOs are a unique and irreplaceable instrument concerning the fulfillment of respectable, coherent and efficient development policy” (Knodt/ Finke, 2005:202).

As already mentioned the study only refers to the organizational form of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Even though there are various forms in which development groups as part of civil society can organize themselves, NGOs are the most common variant. Even though there is no standardized explanations or definition on the characteristics of this type of organization within the literature (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:22), some ideal characteristics of NGOs⁴ can be made out. These characteristics are also referred to in this paper, which means that the studied organizations had to meet them:

- NGOs are part of the private sphere = ‘non-governmental’
- They are not profit orientated
- They do not carry out any direct representation of clients-policy (like political parties)
- They accept the political system and its rules, which means they are not violent (unlike Mafia organizations)
- They do not have governmental members, but individuals or national organizations
- They are not controlled by governments
- They do not aim to acquire governmental power
- They are in some way organized (staff, headquarters, etc) and no ad hoc coalition

(Geiger, 2005:56)/ Frantz/Martens, 2006:23-29)

Furthermore, one criterion was that the organizations have to have some form of contact point with the European Union. This includes participating in an EU wide network, receiving EU grants to conduct programs, the presence of an office in Brussels or the like. To reduce the potential population of NGOs, only NGOs with

⁴ This paper does not distinguish NGOs between Transnational NGOs (TNGOs).

their headquarters in Germany and members of the German NGO platform VENRO⁵ have been taken into consideration. VENRO has 104 members of development NGOs (www.venro.org), which have been examined concerning the criteria of EU-cooperation. By narrowing the NGO population to VENRO members it was guaranteed that every organization takes part in indirect lobby and advocacy activities on EU level, because VENRO is member of the EU-Federation of development politics CONCORD⁶. After a first look at the member information ten organizations have been contacted to get to know more about their EU-cooperation. After this, seven organizations came in the closer selection of potential interview partners. One organization was not willing to cooperate, with another organization it was not possible to figure out an interview date and two organizations did not respond. From the three remaining NGOs two organizations seemed to be of special interest.

Plan Deutschland was selected as an organization that works within a network of other *Plan* organizations under the umbrella of *Plan International*. They have not received EU grants up to now, but they have just handed in a project proposal. Furthermore they try to build up lobbying and advocacy activities at EU level. The European *Plan* offices also have a collective office in Brussels. The interview took place with the person in charge of Development Political Education and Lobbying/Advocacy. Besides this the *Kindernothilfe* Deutschland also agreed to take part at an interview. Through this two organizations that mainly work with “child sponsorship” are going to be presented in detail. The *Kindernothilfe* gains EU grants since several years⁷ and used to be personally represented in the boards of VENRO and CONCORD. The interview was conducted with the head of the department Project Development, Sector Affairs and Evaluation.

In order to gain a deeper insight into the work of the organization, interviews have been conducted. This interview has been designed to give answers to the above

⁵ “VENRO: Verband Entwicklungspolitik Deutscher Nichtregierungsorganisationen/ The Association of German development non-governmental organisations. VENRO is the umbrella organisation of independent and church related NGOs working in the fields of development cooperation, emergency assistance, development education, and advocacy. Currently, the Association has 104 member organisations. In addition to the member organisations, local initiatives and small NGOs are represented in VENRO through NGO networks on regional level. Thus, as a network of about 2000, middle and small NGOs, VENRO represents a considerable part of German civil society. VENRO strives towards these goals by: (a) working towards a coherent development policy at all political levels and establishing the principles of such a policy in society (b) strengthening the dialogue between private and government actors in the field of development cooperation (c) safeguarding and enlarging the social and political contribution of development NGOs” (www.venro.org).

⁶ More information on CONCORD can be found in the Theoretical Background

⁷ The interviewee was not able to specify this, as she only works with the organization for one year

stated research questions. In order to measure the advocacy and lobby tendencies of the organizations and to figure out what effect the EU level has on the internal structures two main variables have been focused at:

1. The participation of the NGO in European networks and alliances – this can be seen as one strategy to be represented in Brussels without spending too many resources.
2. The resources spend for lobbying and advocacy activities – this can be seen as an indicator for the importance and status of these activities. In this context also the change over time plays an important role to figure out the presence of the EU-level. ‘Resources’ refer to the working-hours, as well as the money, spend in terms of share of the total budget. Furthermore this variable also contains the professionalism of the person responsible, because this can be seen as an indicator of the importance of the working area as well as the complexity of requirements the organization has to meet.

Besides these indicators the organizations were also asked to give own judgments 1) on the importance of coordination, lobbying and advocacy in Brussels within their NGO and 2) on their EU cooperation and their satisfaction. This means the organizations have been asked how important the EU level is for their work, especially in the area of advocacy and lobbying. Through this, the impact of the EU-level on the agenda of the two organizations can be estimated. The complete questionnaire can be found in the appendix. Moreover further information about the organizations was gathered by the studying of the online presentation, and the latest annual report of the year 2006. Through this, a second source of information was added to verify the results of the interviews and to allow a deeper insight into the work of the organization and how it has operated.

All findings are presented below. The presentation of the results is based on the above mentioned variables of participation in networks, resources spend, importance of cooperation and lobbying in Brussels as well as self-judgment of the organization. The findings are then compared and contrasted in the discussion. The criteria, which are used to compare and contrast the findings, stand in connection to the sub-questions mentioned earlier as well as the variables which have been used to present the empirical findings. These are:

Research Question	Criteria I	Criteria II
How do NGOs try to advocate at EU level?	The role of networks and umbrella groups	The role of VENRO and CONCORD
What is the balance of project work and advocacy?	Resources spent for lobbying	Importance of Advocacy for the organization
What internal changes do NGOs have to face to be able to advocate/lobby?	Experiences of the two studied organizations	

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

The main purpose of this paper is to explore adaptation processes within civil society organizations in the context of the European Union. There are several studies on the impact of the EU, mainly in the field of 'Europeanization Studies'. However, these studies refer to the impact of the EU level on domestic policies and domestic institutions and the other way around (Börzel, 1999). Non-governmental actors are not covered by these studies. Furthermore in this thesis I do not want to focus on the EU institutions, but on civil society itself. This means to determine and evaluate adaptation processes within non-state actors. The leading research question is based in the expansive context of the impact of the European Union on civil society organizations. The scientific literature that actually deals with the empirical evaluation of the adaptation trends is very limited up to now (Frantz/ Martens, 2006). Nevertheless, there appears to be agreement on the fact that "[...] whatever the size, structure and concern of these groups [NGOs], there seems to be a great trend (a) towards more, though not necessarily formally defined, collaboration, and (b) towards more specialization and professionalization [...]" (Della Porta/ Kriesi, 1999:19).

The approach which is referred to in this paper is the concept of scaling up, which is often connected to the above described increasing professionalization of NGOs. Meant is the investment in the own organization in a broader sense. "Scaling-up can refer to the amounts of projects, the involved people, the size and the multi-nationality of the organization. In addition scaling-up can describe the process of

transition of the NGO-operating range of projects to the advocacy activity. A third possible category of up scaling NGOs is the cooperation with governments in order to gain synergy effects and to overcome the dichotomy of the NGO on the one side and the state's/government's on the other side" (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:75).

In the context of this bachelor thesis the focus will only be set on the second aspect of scaling-up. This means the advocate activities of the North-NGOs. In its original sense advocacy refers to the representation of the interests of the clients of the NGO, which is effecting the decision making process concerning policy processes and frame-working. In the case of development NGOs this means most of the time the interests of vulnerable groups of the South or the so-called Third World. However, besides this influence on policy formulation, in this paper the term does also refer to the aspect of influence on the project level. Advocacy in this sense also means to effect donors in order to gain more grants, which indirectly also entails the representation of the clients' interests⁸. Because, organizations that cooperate with the EU always have their own interests, too. This means they try to influence the European Union in favor of their concerns, for instance they might focus on the budget decisions to provide NGOs with more co-financing. The main hypothesis connected to the concept of scaling-up is the assumption that the presence of supra- or multinational organizations change the traditional role of NGOs; namely the conduction of projects changed in favor of advocacy activities.

In this context many scientific authors have discussed the question whether or not North NGOs can be seen as legitimate advocates of Third World interests (Donini, 1996/ Edwards, 2000/ Wahl, 1999/ Weizsäcker von, 2001). However, in order to discuss whether or not North-NGOs can be seen as adequate and most importantly as legitimate advocates of their clients' interests it is crucial to find out beforehand what their real impact is and how they try to advocate in the name of vulnerable groups. Furthermore it has to be figured out whether or not these advocacy activities have any impacts on the internal structure of NGOs or if they rather stick to their traditional tasks of program work. Internal structure in this context refers to the organizational structure of an NGO, which means the way an NGO organizes its work; an EU department for example can be seen as an indicator of intense EU

⁸ The term 'advocacy' is hence also used in the sense of 'lobbying'. This paper does therefore not distinguish these terms.

cooperation. Without this empirical basis there is no need for any discussion about the legitimacy of NGOs.

As this paper focuses on the advocacy of development NGOs it is important to be aware of the conditions these NGOs have to face at EU-level. The current basis for the European development politics is the Cotonou agreement (EC, 2007_a). The comparison of this current agreement with the previous one - the Lomé-agreement - already shows changes caused by the lobby activities of NGOs in Brussels (Frantz/ Martens, 2006). "The goal of the long lasting NGO-advocacy in Brussels was to integrate their recognized criteria as a requirement for economical development into the new agreement." (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:114). Successes like this one show, that the EU is opening itself to critical expert knowledge of so called non-state-actors. It also indicates that through out the last decades NGOs gained a privileged role and position within the European decision making process. Especially the Commission initiated several EU-documents and actions⁹ about the importance and cooperation with civil society organizations. The role of the Commission as the main access point for civil society can be explained by the fact that it has the monopoly to initiate legislation by drafting new policy proposals (Marziali, 2006). Therefore the EC acts as a kind of executive in the "heart of Europe" (Höreth, 2001:3) and can be seen as a "macro-agenda setter" (Höreth, 2001:3) or "driving force" (Marziali, 2006).

This also applies in the field of development politics, where the EC is responsible for policy arrangement (Frantz, 2002) and the tendering of project grants through EuropeAid¹⁰. Nevertheless, „[...] since it has to write technical and expertise based proposals, the Commission needs help from external groups and is open to them.“ (Marziali, 2006). "At the same time organized civil society has the ability to provide [this] expert knowledge to the EU institutions and thus serving as a means to avoid policy failures." (Zimmer/ Sittermann, 2005:26). This high dependence on outsider

⁹ For example:

Commission of the European Communities (2000), *The Commission and non-governmental organisations: building a stronger partnership*, COM (2000) 11 final, Brussels, 18.01.2000.

Commission of the European Communities (2001), *European Governance – A White Paper*, COM (2001) 428 final, Brussels, 28.7.2001.

CONECCS database, [URL: http://ec.europa.eu/civil_society/coneccs/index_en.html], (25.10.2006)

Economic and Social Committee (ESC) (2000), *Opinion of the Economic and Social Committee on the Commission discussion paper 'The Commission and non-governmental organisations: building a stronger partnership'* (COM (2000) 11 final), CES 811/2000, 13. July.

¹⁰ Ever since 2001 the EU has been distributing financial support for projects via EuropeAid, the responsible office for development within the Commission. Once a year the Commission publishes a call for different development projects. The call determines the aims of development programs, which have to be met by the NGOs. The NGOs then hand in project proposals, which are examined concerning the efficiency and goal compliance (Knodt/ Finke, 2005).

expertise might seem odd at first sight, because the Commission's bureaucracy is often blamed as overloaded. However, in fact, it is chronically understaffed (Greenwood, 2003). Concerning the policy field of development policies the real contact point for NGOs within the European Commission is the Directorate General 'Development', where the policy formulation takes place. "Here it is of importance to gain attention with project related advocacy in order to gain information on policy development and discussed proposals." (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:115).

In general the Commission's attempts to get civil society organizations involved are based on the twofold idea to 1) get more expertise and 2) to overcome the so-called democratic deficit or in other words the gap between Europe and its societies. In 2000 the European Commission issued the document "Building a stronger partnership", which lists six main reasons for the co-operation between NGOs and the Commission:

- "foster participatory democracy
- the value of NGOs as information relays
- representing the views of specific groups of citizens to the EU institutions
- contributing to policy making
- contributing to project management and policy/program implementation
- contributing to European integration" (EC, 2000:5/6)

The Commission points out that intermediate organizations like NGOs are their linkages to society and their basis of any new policy idea - the so called "livelihood" of the Commission (Greenwood, 2003a:2), their "background and pitch" (Greenwood, 2002:19/20). However, development NGOs rather play a minor role concerning the democratic processes within Europe itself, as they represent the interest of Non-European countries and as their major role is the implementation of EU policy goals in the form of projects in the Third and Second World. This means development NGOs are especially interested in point two, three and five of the Commissions ideas to build a stronger partnership, which are the input of information, interest representation and implemenation. Nevertheless, to be able to use the possibilities the EC offers and to work together with it, the EC demands to come to Brussels and take part on the processes there. This approach might also mean that NGOs have to adapt certain new structures and strategies in order to do so -"Expertise on its own is not enough" (Frantz/Martens, 2006:113).

Next to the EC another player is the European Parliament. It has a development board and therefore it can be seen as a second access point for advocacy and lobbying of NGOs in Brussels. However, the Parliament currently only holds hearing rights in the sector of development policies, so that the actual possibilities of influence are limited (Knodt/ Finke, 2005). An important aspect with regard to the EP is its budget-competence. As NGOs always try to get a bigger share of the budget within the development policy field the EP is a strong partner. The budget directive PVD 210203 (former B7-6000) hence was steadily increased over time. In this respect NGOs “have continually been able to successfully influence [the EU]. They are especially successful with regard to the yearly battle concerning the co-financing.” (Knodt/ Finke, 2005:172).

Besides those outstanding lobby successes the empirical findings in the area of advocacy are ambiguous. Even though - as stated above - by now there are good participation possibilities NGOs cannot be seen as “co-governors” (Knodt/ Finke, 2005:258). “Non profit and advocacy organizations see themselves as fiduciaries of public and societal interests. They do not make policies in the sense of collectively binding decisions, but are merely involved in the preparation of these decisions by giving advice and information-input.” (Knodt/ Finke, 2005:258). In general the empirical data suggests that on the one hand NGOs are often able to influence donors concerning the project level (for example to lobby the EC and EP to get more grants), “but on the other hand their influence on the action level of international organizations and states, where policy processes and frame working are determined and operationalized, are hardly being increased” (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:67-68). Hence this study tries to figure out if scaling-up processes can be identified at all.

Adaptation processes within the organizational structure or concerning the overall goal of an organization, however, do not always take place in the same way. The lobby strategies of the NGOs can include different means. One popular way of NGOs to attempt to overcome the problems mentioned above is the participation in networks, which can have several vantages. First of all everyone who is interested to take part at the “Brussels game” is forced to actively inform themselves, because there is no automatic passing along of information. “Whoever does not have a wide-ranging network to their disposal will miss several processes likely related to their agenda” (Schlotmann, 2006: 198). “However, in the case of same interests of different actors synergy affects can be created in order to influence political decisions

on the spot: If these allies are other NGOs, interest groups, political party representatives and under some circumstances even lobbyists from economic policy fields, even small NGOs can influence discussions in Brussels by lobbying.” (Frantz/Martens 2006:113). In sum the advantages of networking in general are: wider and greater representation, coordination of efforts and privileged access to the EU institutions (Tarrow, 2005, Knodt/Finke, 2005).

Another important type of umbrella organization, especially in the field of development policies are EuroFeds (Euro federations). EuroFeds are “umbrella organizations of nationally bounded associations representing specific concerns [...]. In other words, in order to be eligible for ‘focused consultation’ civil society organizations have to form institutionalized alliances and stable networks in Brussels with other civil society organizations fighting for similar issues but coming from different EU countries.” (Zimmer/ Sittermann, 2005:30). In the scientific world “The model of the EuroFed is widely seen as efficient: at low cost a community of interests with European face is formed. But its effectiveness is frequently criticised by member [...]” (Schendelen van, 2003:116). The basis of the criticism is easy to make out. Even though the Commission favours a single access point, EuroFeds have to bundle multiple different interests and organizations, which can lead to conflicts and leaves out single interests of NGOs. The EuroFed in the area of development politics is CONCORD. CONCORD is the European NGOs Confederation for Relief and Development and has 20 international networks and 22 national associations¹¹ from European Member States as members. In total CONCORD represents more than 1600 NGOs at the European Institutions (CONCORD, n.s.:1). CONCORD is the successor organization of the Liaison Committee, which was founded 1976, when for the first time co-financing grants were distributed. The Liaison Committee was founded on initiative of the EC, because the Commission wanted to embed the development NGOs into their policies and have a central contact point (Knodt/ Finke, 2005). Today CONCORD aims at the cooperation of development activities of NGOs as well as the main actor regarding the up-keeping of development co-operation on the political agenda of the EU (CONCORD, n.s.:1).

Besides the mentioned benefits of EU-wide cooperation and connection there are also negative aspects of working together in networks. For instance “[...] Brussels-

¹¹ A list of all members can be found in the appendix.

level umbrella groups do not always enjoy the support of their member organizations, who are more engaged in national politics and protest” (Tarrow, 2005:173). Moreover most of the time “[o]rganizations that feel they represent the same interests of a social base, or dealing with the same issue, interact, often complete, with each other. [However], [c]ompetition can emerge between different groups belonging to the same organization, especially within an umbrella structure. This can happen even in recently formed organizations.” (Porta della et al., 2006:29). One must also take into consideration that federal organizations are often not flexible enough to quickly adapt to changing circumstances. Because the single national organizations are autonomous and the bodies in charge of coordinating the EU level are depended on dues from the national section and on European subsidies, European umbrella groups often meet to discuss common interests. “However, if there is no single campaign their energies are not focused, meaning that the umbrella groups depend on their relation with a single international institution” (Tarrow, 2005:173). “In general NGO network interactions tend to be informal, non binding, temporary, and highly personalized.” (Mars de, 2005:51).

The evaluation of these trends and the opinions on the changes within the civil society differ within the academic world. The discourse in general, “first and foremost can be seen as sign of normalization (and hence can be judged positively): NGOs are accepted and recognized as established part of the socio-political spectrum and thus have to undergo a critical checking of their activities.” (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:76). Furtak states that NGOs have a European perspective, which means the represented interests and information provided to the EU does not contain open particular interests, but harmonize with the EU aims; they show high representation; they practice positive lobbying, which means they pursue no fundamental-opposition, but afford a decisive and constrictive contribution concerning the formation of political wills and decision making processes on EU level (Furtak, 2005).

On the other hand authors like Dieter Rucht assume a “process of de-radicalization of organizations through professionalism, bureaucratization and commercialization” (Rucht, 1999:218). Other negative impacts can be the one-sided orientation towards international and foreign partners or donors, which results in the neglect of member interests. “In that view, transnationalization uproots civil society organizations from their base in popular participation and separates the professionalized movement elite from the grassroots” (Bruszt et al.; Mendelson/ Glenn, 2002; Bob, 2002, 2005). This

point goes hand in hand with the argument that NGOs lose their independence, because they depend on financial support of governments. However, in the scope of this paper this can only be discussed marginally. The empirical findings, however, are going to be evaluated on the basis of these two oppositional theoretical views presented.

RESULTS

I. Kindernothilfe Deutschland

The first organization that is going to be presented in detail is the *Kindernothilfe*. This organization was established in 1959 on the basis of Christian charity to help children in India. Today the *Kindernothilfe* helps more than 300.000 children in 27 countries in Africa Asia, South America and Eastern Europe (KNH, 2006:3). The predominant form of donation takes places via “sponsoring a child” in the contexts of concrete projects. The aims of the organization are twofold: “The support of projects and programs for girls and boys in close collaboration with local partners in the countries of the south is [...] the first aim [...]. This is amended by the second charter, which is development-political information and education as well as working together in leagues and networks in Germany.” (KNH, 2006:23). In its latest annual report of 2006 the *Kindernothilfe* states, that “besides the work in development-political education the work of advocacy is the second main pillar of our work within Germany. Advocacy means, taking charge of attorneyship for children and to stand up for child rights within the political arena.” (KNH, 2006:23) However, the European level is not mentioned. *Kindernothilfe* worked together with 230 partners worldwide in 2006 and was responsible for 1095 projects. About 80% of the partners are church affiliated or Christian organizations (KNH, 2006:5). The *Kindernothilfe* has been receiving European grants for several years¹²; averagely it gets 500,000-700,000 Euros per year. The last program that was funded by the European Union was an anti Aids-program, which had a scope of 1,255,000 Euros.

The lobby and advocacy activities of the *Kindernothilfe* are going to be explained in the following. The presentation is based on the variables given above in the

¹² The interviewee was not able to specify this, as she only works with the organization for one year

Methodology paragraph. If not indicated the given information are results of the interview that has been conducted. This also refers to the second interview with *Plan Deutschland*.

I. a) Participation in European Networks and Alliances

The *Kindernothilfe* has its headquarters in Duisburg, Germany. Besides this 2005 and 2006 new offices have been opened in Austria and Switzerland. These offices are independent branches, which have the task of convincing the local donation market. They do not work in areas of project or program application, management or coordination. Switzerland and Austria have been selected, because on the one hand both countries speak (at least partly) German, and, on the other hand the *Kindernothilfe* benefits from its relatively high degree of popularity.

The *Kindernothilfe* participates in several national operation networks¹³, which advocate on the domestic level and which work together especially in the area of public awareness. The amount of national networks indicates, what was also confirmed by the interviewee, namely that the *Kindernothilfe* focuses its advocacy tendencies on the domestic level. Besides this the organization is a member of VENRO and through this it is a member of CONCORD. Since 2007 it is also a member of EU CORD¹⁴, which is a network of 15 European Christian development NGOs. EU CORD is a consortium of different organizations with the aim to lobby for its members and fulfill their advocacy function. It is financed by its members and their member contributions respectively. The main advocacy issues of the *Kindernothilfe* are the rights of children. This topic is one of several topics on the agenda of EU CORD, the current emphasis is put on HIV/Aids. EU CORD can be seen as an interest representation network of its members, which meets twice a year as well as a yearly assembly to define the agenda.

Moreover the *Kindernothilfe* participates in different working groups of VENRO, among others they are represented in the “AG Europäische Entwicklungspolitik”

¹³ The networks the *Kindernothilfe* participates in are: VENRO), Diakonischen Werk der Evangelischen Kirche im Rheinland, Aktionsbündnis gegen AIDS, Aktionsbündnis Landminen, Deutsches Forum Kinderarbeit, Arbeitsgruppen Entwicklung und Kinderrechte des Forums Menschenrechte, Deutsche Koordination Kindersoldaten, ECPAT Deutschland e.V. (Arbeitsgemeinschaft zum Schutz der Kinder vor sexueller Ausbeutung), erlassjahr.de, Globale Bildungskampagne (Deutsche Sektion), Klimaallianz, National Coalition für die Umsetzung der UN-Kinderrechtskonvention in Deutschland, TransFair.

¹⁴ More information on EU CORD can be found under: www.eu-cord.org.

(working group European development politics) as well as in the VENRO board. The working group European development politics deals with the political direction of the European development policies. Through VENRO and CONCORD the *Kindernothilfe* tried to lobby against the plan of the EC - in the course of the expansion of the budget - to open the co-financing and the competition of grants to a wider range of actors. This would mean to include so-called non-state actors¹⁵ in the tendering procedure.

I. b) Resources

The total budget of the *Kindernothilfe* in 2006 was 52,509,403,82 Euro. Of this money “the department for press and public relations used 1,8 Mio Euro (2006) for education and advocacy as well as press related work. This amount made up 3,9% of the entire donations (3,3% of the total budget). 81,2% went to our projects abroad, 14,9% were used for advertisement, administration and project monitoring” (KNH, 2006:23). It can be assumed that most of this money spent went into domestic advocacy, as the priority lies there. Each network in which the *Kindernothilfe* participates has one person who is responsible to look after the work of the network and participate at meetings. At the moment approximately two positions of 130 are allocated to domestic advocacy in a direct manner as well as indirectly through networks. EU advocacy and lobbying only takes place through indirect means of networks. About three to four employees, each with approximately three weeks per year, work on this. This means in sum about nine to twelve weeks are spend for the work of European advocacy and lobbying. In the context of VENRO the participants of the working groups meet three times a year for one day.

It should be noted that the *Kindernothilfe* was actively engaged in advocacy on European level until last year. The head of the Department for Project Development, Sector Affairs and Evaluation has been a member of the VENRO as well as the CONCORD board for several years. Through this the *Kindernothilfe* had personal contact to EU officials and a direct impact on the advocacy agenda of the networks. At this time the resources spend for EU advocacy can be estimated around one third of a full-time position (four month per year). After the head of department left the

¹⁵ This would also include private as well as local/municipal organizations and in the view of the *Kindernothilfe* (in the alliance of VENRO) dilute the term “civil society”. However, the lobbying activities in this context only led to a partial success, as local authorities and foundations are still allowed to take part in the competition for grants.

Kindernothilfe the organization wanted to change the orientation of the department and focus on co-financing of program and projects. Therefore the new head of department had to meet the requirements of experiences with EU co-financing as well as development cooperation. The department at the moment consists of 3,5 experts in the area of development cooperation and the demands of institutional donors. The expertise of the staff is refreshed through out the year by seminars, which are offered by the German ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and *bengo*¹⁶ the German information center for private organizations of development cooperation.

I. c) Importance of Cooperation and Advocacy in Brussels

The *Kindernothilfe* sees the cooperation with its partner/recipient countries as very important. This cooperation especially refers to the certain partner organizations in the program countries. Within Europe cooperation is not as important for the organization, whereas they emphasized that advocacy in the area of children rights should be excluded, because it is more important. However, the advocacy activities at the moment are almost entirely concentrated on the domestic level, ever since the personal contact to the EU ended one year ago. The *Kindernothilfe* advocates and lobbies the European level only through indirect means (VENRO – CONCORD). They also see their lobby work on national level as indirect means to lobby the EU, direct advocacy at EU level has currently no priority.

I. d) Self-Judgment of the Organization

The cooperation with the European Union is explicitly desired by the *Kindernothilfe*. The cooperation, however, refers especially to the co-financing of projects and programs. The co-financing of the EU offers the possibility to receive additional capital and to conduct more ambitious and challenging programs, because they can be planned in a bigger scope. Nevertheless the administrative requirements to write assignments are enormous and not covered by the 7% administrative allowance of the EU. Moreover the amount of work per assignment is seen as frustrating work,

¹⁶ *bengo* was founded in 1988 and works for public development organizations. *bengo* was founded on the initiative of NGOs and the German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. The aim of *bengo* is to facilitate the exposure to public grants and to consult NGOs with regard to development cooperation. More information can be found under www.bengo.de

especially in comparison to what the organization gains in the end. During the last years the *Kindernothilfe* had 'enough' own capital, so that they did not have to focus on EU financing. Currently they try to get more EU grants, as the volume of donations decreased. In general the *Kindernothilfe* feels that German NGOs proportionally do not get enough money of the Commission's budget¹⁷. Other problems are the gathering of information in order to know what is going on in Brussels and what is required. In this context especially the fact that requirements change quite quickly make it hard for the NGO to be up to date. The national information center *bengo* was mentioned as a very important and helpful institution, which saves the NGOs a lot of time consuming work. Additionally the call of the Commission leaves out certain areas, because the project goals often aim at capacity building and leave out areas of investment.

The *Kindernothilfe* furthermore states that advocacy and lobbying are also desired on European level. However, up to now it was not necessary to advocate directly in Brussels. The degree of popularity within Europe is not high enough to have a sufficient impact on EU policies. The organizations sees itself rather important on national level, in Brussels it is just one organization in-between many. The resources of the *Kindernothilfe* are not enough to make a difference in Brussels; one person cannot do anything, because the bigger organizations win the race. The personal representation in networks, as it was the case in earlier years is seen as a good and efficient possibility to participate actively on European level. However, currently the *Kindernothilfe* concentrates its work on the domestic level. The resources are too limited to release one person for the area of European advocacy. The *Kindernothilfe* nevertheless wanted to compensate the loss of personal contact and joined the EU network EU-CORD in 2007. The *Kindernothilfe* is satisfied with the work of VENRO and CONCORD, because it feels that they act sufficient in the frame of their possibilities.

¹⁷ The overall budget of the European Union is 126,5 bn € (2007) (EC, 2007). 2005 10,4 bn € were used for foreign aid, 7,5 bn € were distributed through EuropAid (EuropAid). Approximately 90% of this money are used to support programs in developing countries, 10% are used for projects for public education and awareness raising (Knodt/ Finke, 2005)

II. Plan Deutschland

The Second Organization that has been interviewed was *Plan Deutschland*. *Plan Deutschland* belongs to the international children's fund *Plan International* and is an autarkic association, which acts under the charter of the international organization. The special focus of *Plan Deutschland* is the situation of girls with a special focus on female genital mutilation. The mother organization was founded 1937 in Great Britain, the German offices operates since 1952 and has its headquarters in Hamburg. "As of June 30th 2006 *Plan* is responsible for 232.797 direct sponsorships, that 20.170 more than in 2005. The proceeds were 73,2 Million Euros compared to the 64,5 Million Euros in the previous year, these numbers mark a gain of 13,5 per cent. The increase in the financial year 2005 was 28,2 per cent. The portion of costs of *Plan Deutschland* increased slightly from 17,7 to 18,3 per cent." (Plan D., 2006:3).

In 2005 the organization decided to add EU financing as a further pillar, because the donation market remains static and the organization is aware that it will be utilized sometime. Before that *Plan Deutschland* saw itself as a typical "grassroots" organization, which focused on project work mainly financed by individual donation in form of 'child sponsorship'. Up to now *Plan Deutschland* (in cooperation with other *Plan* offices in Europe) handed in one project proposal, which was refused out of formality reasons. At the moment they handed in a proposal for another program.

II. a) Participation in European Networks and Alliances

Besides *Plan Deutschland*, *Plan International* has eleven offices in Europe¹⁸, which are independent. Up to now there was not much cooperation in-between the offices. However, the cooperation begins to start and increases steadily. Just recently the German, Dutch, French and British offices handed in a collective project proposal. Although the European offices tried to coordinate their work before, it often was quite complicated and failed because of different working strategies and approaches respectively. For example they tried to act collectively concerning the presidency of the European Council. However, it was not always easy and the different political systems offered different possibilities of influence. The British office of *Plan* hence found it a lot easier to get direct access to their head of state during their presidency,

¹⁸ The Netherlands, Great Britain, France, Sweden, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Finland, Norway, Switzerland, Germany

than for instance the German office, which was not able to get into direct contact. Nevertheless, the topics of cooperation are coordinated by the offices, as well as by the international coordination office in Great Britain. The coordination of the certain programs takes place in the offices in the partner countries.

Besides this, *Plan* also has an office in Brussels, *Plan Europe*. *Plan Europe* is financed by all European *Plan* offices. Furthermore every office is represented in the board and the Lobby-/Program-Departments meet once a year to elaborate an EU lobby program. This lobbying and advocacy activities aim at the project level (to get more EU grants) and at the policy formulation as such, which means the representation of children's rights in Brussels. The focus here is put on the participation of children as well as children in areas of conflict. They also work together with other European children funds in alliances based on topics. Depending on the topic the office in Brussels also uses the expertise of the offices all over Europe. For example they built up an alliance to bring the situation of children in Nepal, which suffered of the civil war, on the agenda of the EU. In this context *Plan Niederlande* also participated as their focus is put on children in areas of crisis. The office in Brussels started with two employees and increased to five by today. *Plan Europe* is also very active on CONCORD level, where they have the directorate of the working group Development Political Education. The *Plan Europe* office furthermore hands out a Newsletter about their work and news in Brussels and helps the *Plan* offices to write project proposals. Besides this *Plan Deutschland* is a member of VENRO and participates in several working groups (education, co-financing, politics and media). Through this they are also represented in CONCORD.

II. b) Resources

Lobbying is a new area for *Plan Deutschland*. At the moment 0,5% of the budget are spend in this area. "The total earnings in the financial year 2006 amounted to about 542 million US-dollars. The German office contributed 73,2 million Euro to this result" (Plan D., 2006:3). However, campaign costs for the influencing of political framework, policy and public behavior in order to improve the circumstances for underprivileged children are a new area and the comparative figures have been adjusted accordingly (Plan D. 2006). In order to be able to lobby and advocate other positions and working areas respectively had to be reduced. *Plan Deutschland* decided to reduce the

position Development Political Education from a full post to a half and added a half position lobbying to it. The person responsible had to become acquainted with the new working area and was not specialized before. To write project proposal for the EU one proposal takes about three month full-time work and even though *Plan Deutschland* is very glad about the help they get from *bengo* and their offices in Brussels it is a very time consuming and new work. One person now is specialized in writing these proposals, he visited seminars of *bengo* and spend about three month in Brussels to get into his new working field.

II. c) Importance of Cooperation and Advocacy in Brussels

At the moment *Plan Deutschland* wants to wait and see how their cooperation, lobbying and advocacy work out on national as well as on European level. However, it is planed to establish this working area as an inherent part of the organization. *Plan Deutschland* does not have any priority for the European or the national level, both is important as the two levels influence each other in mutual ways. Lobbying and especially the co-financing of projects is seen as a means to make the work of *Plan Deutschland* sustainable. One focus concerning advocacy and lobbying is to continue and increase the cooperation in alliances, as this proved to be the most effective way to gain influence. Nevertheless, lobby activities are still no main emphasis of the work of *Plan Deutschland*.

II. d) Self-Judgment of the Organization

The cooperation with the European level is desired and *Plan Deutschland* tries to establish means to lobby/advocate and receive co-financing. Through this the own work should become more sustainable. The gathering of information is often quite hard, as there is no automatic flow of information. Especially because everything is new for the organization it is often hard to consider all requirements at the first time. *Plan Deutschland* is very thankful for the work of *bengo* (with which they are very satisfied) and their offices in Brussels. Here they have the expertise and the personal contact, which is still seen as very important. Especially the people present in Brussels often know what is going on, long before the EU hands out this information. The cooperation in alliances proved to be the most efficient and successful variant,

however *Plan Deutschland* does not see any need to participate in other European networks outside of *Plan International*.

The cooperation and advocacy through VENRO is seen as quite complicated. VENRO aggregates too many different organizations and interests. *Plan Deutschland* feels that VENRO could be more ambitious within CONCORD to be more successful in the areas of the political direction of the European development politics as well as the representation of the interests of German NGOs in the context of proportional allocation of grants.

DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF THE TWO CASES

The following discussion compares and contrasts the empirical findings of the two cases presented above. Furthermore the findings are discussed and evaluated on the basis of the theoretical background given at the beginning of the paper. The criteria, which are used to compare the findings, are mentioned in the Methodology part of this paper.

a) The Role of Networks and Umbrella Groups in General

In order to be able to advocate and lobby at EU level both organizations that have been studied make use of networks and umbrella groups. The *Kindernothilfe* is a member of the network EU CORD as well as VENRO and CONCORD. *Plan Deutschland* cooperates with other *Plan* offices within the EU as well as their *Plan Europe* office in Brussels. Furthermore they are also members of VENRO and CONCORD. Their relationship to these platforms is going to be evaluated below. In the case of the *Kindernothilfe* networking on EU level does not play a prior role. In fact the membership in EU CORD since 2007 can be seen as a compensation of the loss of personal contact to the EU. The network is seen as a means to keep up the contact to the EU without spending too many resources and still being able to have interest representation on EU level. However, the members of EU CORD are development organizations which work in different areas and thus have different interests that have to be represented. In contrast to that *Plan Deutschland* mainly acts on EU level in cooperation with other *Plan* offices. This guarantees a more

homogenous interest representation than in the case of EU CORD, because all *Plan* organizations have the same principles, even though the special focus can differ.

As it was mentioned in the theoretical part the same interests of organizations can create greater synergy effects, so that even small NGOs can take part in advocacy activities on EU level (Frantz/Martens, 2006). For both organizations presented here it would not make sense to try to advocate and lobby on EU level on their own, because they are too small to have any impact. However, the case of *Plan Europe* shows how to best take advantage of synergy effects. As single NGO it would not make sense for any of the domestic *Plan* offices to be present in Brussels and try to advocate. But as the offices that are spread all over Europe have a shared office in Brussels they can speak with a much greater force. Furthermore the *Plan Europe* office works in alliances with other children funds, so that they gain even more representativeness. The single organization *Plan Deutschland* thus gains a much bigger chance of influence which leads to the conclusion they stated in the interview that "it only makes sense to work in alliances". Hence the case of *Plan Deutschland* shows that they make extensive use of the advantages of networking, which in general are: wider and greater representation, coordination of efforts and privileged access to the EU institutions (Tarrow, 2005, Knodt/Finke, 2005).

Another important aspect of the cooperation in networks is the gathering of information. Both NGOs stated that it is hard to always stay up to date. In the case of the *Kindernothilfe* it was stated, that the gathering of information indeed is still a very time consuming work, even though the EU is already getting better in providing information. The main problem for the *Kindernothilfe* concerning administrative regulations is the fact, that they are changed so quickly. Institutions like the German help centre *bengo* hence are of great importance, in order for the NGOs to have a contact person. The *Plan Deutschland* office made quite similar experience. For them the EU-cooperation is a new working area and they often face difficulties in getting the right and current information. The web-sites of the EU are a possibility, however they are very complex and getting the information needed can be very time-consuming. As they do not have much experiences in working with and advocating at EU level they have to gain all knowledge needed themselves. Furthermore *Plan Deutschland* also makes use of the domestic help centre *bengo*, with which they are very much satisfied. Without the *Plan Europe* office in Brussels it would not be possible for *Plan Deutschland* to get all important information. The interviewee stated

that the personal contact the office has in Brussels is of crucial importance. People on-site often know what is going on before the EU even publishes the information and they also know what is coming up. Through this the national *Plan* offices have enough time to prepare certain topics or hand in documents within a deadline. In contrast the *Kindernothilfe* does not have any personal contact to the EU anymore. They feel that this is not necessary at the moment, because they decided that their advocacy focus should rather be the domestic arena. Thus it was no priority to keep up the personal contact, but rather invest the resources in other working areas. Without this network of information gathering the organization would have to provide much more resources to build up a sector of EU-cooperation.

In sum both examples show that contacts and networking in-between the NGO sector as well as between the NGO and other sectors are a crucial prerequisite to be able to advocate at EU level. However, the studied cases make different uses of networking. The *Kindernothilfe* uses the networking within EU CORD to have an interest representation on EU level without spending many resources, so that they still know what is going on at EU level, even though they have lost the personal contact. Furthermore the employees of the *Kindernothilfe* already have experiences with the EU (especially in the area of co-financing), so that they do not depend on networking in the same way *Plan Deutschland* does. *Plan Deutschland* takes advantage of working together in a homogenous network. Again, the minimization of resources input plays a crucial role, but also the gaining of experiences and influence.

b) The Role of VENRO and CONCORD

As only members of VENRO have been taken into consideration during the selection process both NGOs are automatically represented at CONCORD-level, because VENRO is a member of the federation. Furthermore the *Kindernothilfe* is also represented on CONCORD level through EU CORD and *Plan Deutschland* has a twofold representation, too, because a member of the *Plan Europe* office holds the directorate of a working group. As CONCORD is the first access point for the EC, the EuroFed is an important player for both organizations. Here the potential possibilities to take influence are very high, because the Directorate General 'Development' prefers to have a central contact of bundled expertise knowledge. Moreover between

CONCORD and the Directorate General 'Development' personal contacts are well established (Schendelen van, 2003).

For the *Kindernothilfe* the work within VENRO is of crucial interest, because they get important information about EU policies and are able to participate. They take part in the working group European Development Policies, which shows that they are interested in creating VENRO's agenda concerning EU advocacy. *Plan Deutschland* also participates at VENRO level. The working groups they participate in, however, refer less directly to EU advocacy. For the *Kindernothilfe* the influence via VENRO and CONCORD thus seems to play a more important role, because they do not have a personal contact in Brussels anymore. In contrast *Plan Deutschland's* EU cooperation and advocacy is mainly focused on the work their office in Brussels does. As they have the advantage of working together in a European wide network, they do not depend as much on VENRO/CONCORD. Of course this does not mean that they are not aware of the importance, but that they can rely on the work of *Plan Europe*.

It is interesting to note how the organizations judge the work of CONCORD in the area of advocacy. While the *Kindernothilfe* is pleased with the work of VENRO and CONCORD, *Plan Deutschland* feels that they do not exhaust their possibilities and that they could do more in the areas of project lobbying ("more money for Germany") and action level (direction of the EU-policy). These views on CONCORD mirror the contradictory evaluation of EuroFeds, stated at the beginning of this paper. Whereas the EC and most of the scientific literature see EuroFeds as efficient model of EU cooperation, organizations often feel that their specific interest is not represented sufficiently. This was also stated by the *Plan Deutschland* interviewee, who said the interests that first have to be bundled at VENRO and then are again bundled at CONCORD level are too various and different to gain a sufficient outcome for a single organization. In this context a statement made by the interviewee of the *Kindernothilfe* is interesting to note. The competition felt between national NGOs is hardly noticeable. All members of VENRO have to deal with the same circumstances in Brussels, their chance to influence "who gets the money" or "who is able to set the agenda" is the same for every organization. This changes when having a look at European wide networks. The solidarity between the countries is much less present concerning questions of certain topics it is still easier to find a common basis, but the

“fight for the money” clouds all other cooperation. Hence competition is much more present in the EU-wide networks like EU-CORD or Euro-Federations.

c) Resources spend for Lobbying and Importance of Advocacy Activities for the Organization

As it was presented above, both organizations lobby on EU level through the participation in networks. However, “Links with partners are not simply given; they must be created and sustained through energetic action.”(Mars de, 2005:44). This indicates that the up-keeping of networks demands resource-input of the NGOs. The *Kindernothilfe* has one person responsible for each network. However this mainly refers to networks operating on national level. Until last year one third of a position was dedicated to advocacy/lobby in European Networks (CONCORD/VENRO). After the person left the organization the board of directors used this opportunity to reduce the resources dedicated to EU-advocacy. On the one hand the *Kindernothilfe* felt they had done enough in regard to networking throughout the last years and on the other hand they wanted to focus on the domestic level and EU co-financing. Hence the *Kindernothilfe* can be seen as an example of an organization that after active years is no longer willing to spend its resources on EU advocacy – at least not in the extent they used to, because it consumes too much time of the person involved.

Plan Deutschland just set up their EU cooperation and currently spends 0,5% of the total budget on lobby activities. They reduced the working area of development political education to be able to implement this new area. Furthermore all *Plan* offices in Europe finance the *Plan Europe* office in Brussels and participate at meetings to cooperate and to set the advocacy agenda. Furthermore one person is especially responsible for the writing of project proposals. Therefore in contrast to the *Kindernothilfe*, *Plan Deutschland* is willing to invest more resources in EU advocacy and to reduce other sectors. They start to spend resources, because they see the EU level as an attractive working area to get more financial support as well as represent their interest, through the European *Plan* network they can access. Besides the fact that one can easily identify a process of scaling-up within *Plan Deutschland* the difference concerning the change of resources input into EU level also show that the NGO sector is very dynamic and actors come and go or are less active from time to time.

Already the resources that are spend for advocacy and lobby activities on EU level indicate that in both cases this is not the priority. Therefore it was not surprising that both interviewed organizations stated that EU advocacy is not their main focus, but that their primary working area still is the domestic political system as well as individual donations, in order to be able to conduct development programs. Even though the *Kindernothilfe* explicitly desires EU cooperation in the area of co-financing, the importance of advocacy activities is not high ranked at the moment. The indirect influence through the network EU CORD and the national platform VENRO is seen as efficient interest representation. Furthermore, their lobby activities on national level are seen as indirect lobbying of the EU, too. In contrast *Plan Deutschland* is establishing advocacy activities in Brussels. This means the importance of these activities in the view of the organization has increased. However, there is no priority for the European or national level, as it is the case of the *Kindernothilfe*. *Plan Deutschland* also makes use of personal contacts and a European wide cooperation. In contrast to the *Kindernothilfe* they want to increase and deepen the European wide cooperation, because they feel that the cooperation in alliances benefits their work.

d) Experiences of the Two Cases

In order to deliver own requests on time it is of critical importance to receive information on up-coming frameworks and policy talking points of the EU in due time. This makes it necessary for NGOs working in the field of political development to have employees that are given the special task of writing up project requests according to the set guide lines of the EU and being constantly informed about current EU processes. By doing so they hope to create lasting projects financings for their own organization (Frantz/Martens, 2006). The *Kindernothilfe* had not to face any internal changes of their working structure recently, because they are already experienced in EU cooperation. Moreover they have just reduced resources in this sector. The main change that the organization had to go through was the gaining of expertise knowledge concerning EU co-financing. By now the responsible department consists of four experts in this area. As *Plan Deutschland* just lately decided to start EU cooperation and advocacy activities, changes within the internal structure are more visible. They had to reduce other positions and currently they are

still in the process of gaining expert knowledge. Their office in Brussels as well as seminars offered by *bengo* played a crucial role within this process. This also means that - besides the allocation of resources - first and foremost the gaining of expert knowledge can be seen as the greatest challenge organizations have to face, when cooperating with the EU.

The *Kindernothilfe* stated in this context that especially the work in networks in the area of advocacy, can be seen as balance to the work of writing proposals; because by writing the proposal and answering the calls of the EU the NGOs submit to the game and the guide lines of Brussels, in the advocacy network they try to influence the rules of said game. While *Plan Deutschland* did not express a similar perspective on the balancing issue they do also dedicate resources to lobbying on the one hand and proposal writing on the other hand. The interviewee herself dedicates 50% of her full time position to lobbying and network orientated work; another person, who has three month of work experience in Brussels and has visited several *bengo* workshops, has recently been assigned the task of proposal creation.

e) Evaluation

As it was presented in the theoretical discussion the described changes within the NGO sector can be evaluated in different ways. On the one hand it can be seen as a positive development that makes it possible for NGOs to contribute positive input to the EU decision making process (Furtak, 2005). On the other hand it can be judged as a negative development of adaptation that leads to de-radicalization, commercialization and goal-adjustment (Rucht, 1999).

With regard to the cases studied in this survey the described negative aspects of scaling-up cannot be confirmed. The activities on EU level in both cases are still much lower than the original project and program work. Even though both organizations acknowledge the EU as partner, the domestic arena still plays the most important role. In the case of the *Kindernothilfe* the personal contact that used to be there was compensated by taking part in a European wide network (EU-CORD), which shows that the organization is aware of the EU as additional access point, but that the solution that actually takes up the least necessary resources was selected to keep up the contact to the EU. Also in the case of *Plan Deutschland* the EU cooperation has no priority, even though one can make out a shift in the working area

of the organization. However, the share of lobby activities of the budget is 0,5% and the basic idea of cooperation is based on the plan to make the original program work more sustainable and efficient. A 0,5% share of the budget does not indicate “up-root” tendencies. Therefore a “de-radicalization” or “goal-adjustment” could not be made out.

Instead of that the interests that are represented at EU level in both cases studied are the rights of children. These interests are no individual, but collective interests of the client group (children), which is not able to represent its interests itself. On the one hand the aims of the organizations, however, as it is quoted by Furtak, do not stand in opposition to EU aims. And on the other hand they are also no major concern of EU policies, which makes it necessary for the organizations to bring the interests of their clients back on the agenda over and over again.

A critical aspect mentioned in the literature of the last years, however, is the independence of NGOs. In this context it is discussed to “what extent change towards more professionalization is compatible with the core-characteristic of ‘non-governmental’” (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:26). Especially in the field of development politics and activities NGOs have to face harsh criticism (Frantz/ Martens, 2006). However, complete independence from government grants and financial input within the NGO sector can hardly be found in reality. Exceptions are GREENPEACE, AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL or ÄRZTE OHNE GRENZEN. (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:28). The EU grants offer a possibility to conduct more programs of bigger scope and based on long term financial security. The organizations admit that they try to adapt the standards that are recommended and that they try to formulate the proposals the way it is expected of them. In sum it can be said that both organizations are aware of the EU level as additional action arena and as source of additional funds. The participation in networks is the most important and convenient form of cooperation as it does not cost too many resources and the organizations gain more weight, when working together in alliances. Through this the administrative costs for the NGOs are also held as low as possible.

CONCLUSION – CAN SCALING-UP PROCESSES BE IDENTIFIED?

The main purpose of the study was to figure out adaptation processes within civil society organizations. These processes refer to the concept of scaling-up and especially the change from project to advocacy work and lobby activities. The empirical findings were used to evaluate whether or not NGOs change their way of working in order to be able to follow rules and regimentations on EU level. In this context the focus was put on the shift from program to advocacy work, or to put it another way, whether or not scaling-up processes in the area of advocacy activities can be identified.

With regard to the cases studied it can be said that advocacy activities on EU level take place and are seen as one aspect of the work of development NGOs. However, NGOs also face several problems when they want to advocate at EU level, which means “that they actually have to be able to take advantage of the chances the EC offers” (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:117). In order to be able to take this advantage, in both cases networks and umbrella structures played the crucial role. In fact both organizations do not lobby or advocate themselves, but indirectly through networks and umbrella structures, like CONCORD or *Plan Europe*. This strategy in general offers more advantages than disadvantages and proves to be the cheapest solution for the organizations. Without the possibility to take part in certain European-wide networks it would not make much sense for national organizations to participate in advocacy activities. The most important factor regarding the participation in networks is the reduction of resource input into advocacy and lobby activities. “The chance of real influence of NGOs on the EU level is also dependent on their organizational recourses, because on-site presence as well as time and personal costs have to be considered being high.” (Frantz/ Martens, 2006:117). As the studied NGOs still see their priority working area in project work, they do not want to spend too many resources in advocacy and EU cooperation. Thus also the balance between project and advocacy level – judged on the basis of the share of the budget – in both cases favors the first one. In the case of the *Kindernothilfe* the share is higher, as advocacy is one of the two major working areas stated in the charter. However, these advocacy activities basically refer to domestic lobbying. The general tendencies indicate that the organizations do not shift from project to advocacy work.

Internal changes, which organizations have to face in order to be able to advocate at EU-level, however, can be made out. Especially in the case of *Plan Deutschland* it becomes obvious that organizations have to gain a certain type of knowledge and experience. Furthermore resources have to be released to build up EU cooperation. In the case of *Plan Deutschland* the position of development political education was reduced in order to free up half a position to dedicate to lobbying. Furthermore one person is responsible to gain knowledge in the area of project proposals and requirements of the EU. The responsible people have to get knowledge in their new sector for example by attending seminars. They have to be able to speak English and/or French. At this point the before mentioned facility of the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development and *bengo* should be taken into consideration. The mentioned task of gaining knowledge on project proposals and EU requirements is greatly reduced by *bengo*. Workshops and information gathering are provided by *bengo* and decrease the necessary recourses required working at the EU level. It only seems plausible that additional adaptation processes would be noticeable without this support. Furthermore the homogeneous network with other *Plan* offices in Europe simplifies the adaptation process for *Plan Deutschland*. In the case of the *Kindernothilfe* the organization already went through the process of internal adaptation as they already have been cooperating for several years. Now they already have a certain 'in-house' expertise within the NGOs as well as the allocation of resources. NGOs that are not able to build up this expertise or that lack resources are not able to participate actively at activities on the European level through networks.

However, it clearly has to be stated that scaling-up processes only take place in order to actively participate in networks. They do not occur in order to build direct contact to the EU. The means of advocacy of both organizations can furthermore be seen as examples of multi-level governance and policies (Hooghe/Marks, 2001). This means the interest representation of the NGOs takes place on national level via VENRO, which represents the German NGOs in CONCORD; CONCORD then is the contact point for the EC. This partially also applies to the more homogeneous network of the *Plan* offices. The superordinate office in Brussels functions as a contact point and direct contact in Brussels. In this context it is also important to note that the European Commission is the main contact point in Brussels. The European Parliament was not mentioned as an important actor on EU level. Furthermore the ideas of the EC, to

build a stronger partnership with NGOs (see page 14) have to be put into perspective. The cases that have been studied here indicate that national NGOs, which can be seen as civil society organizations, are not present in Brussels. They represent their interest via umbrella structures and alliances and are not directly represented. Furthermore in the sector of development policies implementation through financial support of the EU plays an additional role.

The interviews have also shown that the EU level in general only plays a subordinated role compared to the original project work. This means the main focus is still the original work of conducting programs. The theoretical assumption that NGOs in the course of scaling-up processes and pressures from the EU level become advocacy organizations seems to be disproportionate in the context of the studied cases. The EU level as such is especially important, because it offers additional opportunities to receive project grants. The reason why the organizations take the EU level into consideration can first and foremost be seen here. In the area of advocacy the EU gains importance because the national as well as the EU mutually influence each other. Hence it is not always sufficient to be present only in the domestic arena. One hypothesis that can be concluded from the presented cases is the question whether or not development NGOs would advocate at EU level if they could not receive financial support in forms of grants. The input at EU level and the necessary resources would probably not be seen as profitable. Furthermore the studied cases evidence that other institutional arrangements reduce the actual scaling-up processes that have to take place within the organizations. Meant are facilities like the German help center *bengo* and workshops offered by the Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. Moreover umbrella structures like VENRO and CONCORD guarantee interest representation on EU level. These facilities offer the possibility to hold the effort and resources on NGO level as low as possible, so that the organizations can focus on the project work. The reproaches of “goal adjustment” or that NGOs become mere lobby activists do therefore not hold. In conclusion the studied cases have shown that scaling-up processes from project to advocacy work can be found concerning the participation in networks. This also means that actual advocacy work and lobby activities do not take place on the level of national NGOs, but the superordinate level of umbrella organizations and networks. National NGOs hence are not the ones involved in EU advocacy, their focus is rather put on the gaining of grants.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire:

General Information	
Name of the Organisation:	
Working Field:	
Founding year:	
Number of staff members (voluntary/full-time):	
Number of projects running – change over time:	
Number of members – change over time:	
Does the organization have any other offices in European Countries?	
If yes – which ones and how many?	
Is the organization represented in Brussels? – Office?	
Network Cooperation	
In what networks is the organization involved (national/transnational):	
What other kind of transnational cooperation takes place:	
How important is transnational cooperation (1-10):	
Why:	
EU Cooperation	
How important is the EU-level for your work (1-10):	
How important is the national-level (1-10)	
Did the Organisation ever receive EU grants:	
If yes: How much, what projects:	
Is the organization satisfied with the EU cooperation:	
What is desired:	
Does the organization feel that they have to adapt new working practices to be able to cooperate with the EU: (pressure)	
Advocacy/Lobbying at EU level	

Does the NGO try to lobby at EU level:	
If yes:	
Since when:	
How:	
Why:	
In what area/project or action:	
By what kind of means:	
How successful is the lobbying:	
How does the NGO try to represent the interests of their clients:	
How important are lobbying activities at Brussels (1-10):	
What is the share of lobbying in the budget: - change over time:	
What is the share of project work in the budget: - change over time:	
If not: why not	
Does the organization lobby at national level:	
Does the organization try to influence the EU-level through national means:	
Internal Changes	
What internal changes did the organization have to make to conduct lobbying:	
EU-department? If yes, since when	
Does the organization have an advocacy/lobby resort/team?	
Personal contact to the EU?:	
Does the organization feel to lack any information about the EU:	

Members of CONCORD

National Platforms	Networks
Austria	ActionAid International
Belgium	Adra
Czech Republic	Aprodev
Denmark	Care
Fimlamd	Caritas
France	CBMI
Germany	Cidse
Greece	EU-CORD
Hungary	Euronaid
Ireland	Eurostep
Italy	Eurodad
Latvia	Forum
Luxembourg	IPPF
Malta	Oxfam International
The Netherlands	<i>Plan</i>
Poland	Save the Children
Portugal	Solidar
Slovakia	Terredes Homes
Slovenia	WIDE
Spein	World Vision
Sweden	
United Kingdom	

Source: CONCORD