



General development principles

September 2015





2.1 Vision and Mission

Based on its beliefs and worldview, Red een Kind has defined its vision as follows:

Inspired by the love of God, Red een Kind desires vulnerable children, youngsters and their families facing extreme poverty and other adverse circumstances, to live their lives in dignity and to the fullest¹.

The vision describes the structural change to be effected in the lives of the selected target group. It is an impact that is based on the Biblical worldview that Jesus came to the world to allow fullness of life for every human being. Red een Kind has a particular duty to also allow vulnerable children to live their lives in dignity and to the fullest. Red een Kind has made it its mission to work alongside God to achieve this vision. The mission has been defined as follows:

Red een Kind is enabling families and communities, challenged by marginalization, discrimination and poverty, to be a good and safe place with love, dignity and opportunity for vulnerable children.

We clearly see an enabling or facilitating role for ourselves in our contribution towards the wellbeing and development of children. Red een Kind would like to see caregivers provide assets or protection for children and reduce risk factors along with increasing the resilience of the children.

This is in line with the empowering development approach that has been adopted over the past years, which sees targeted beneficiaries as the owners of their own process of transformation which, in turn, contributes to their own change and that of others. The vision can be considered the impact which Red een Kind strives to contribute, whereas its mission refers to the (process) outcome it seeks to realize.

2.2 Target Group of Programs

As mentioned in the vision, the ultimate beneficiaries of the programs are foremost vulnerable children from poor and marginalized communities. This means that all program activities and outputs are directly or indirectly focused on the wellbeing of children and youth. All investments in the program have an effect on the lives of the children. However, this does not mean that other community members do not benefit from the program. On the contrary, it is expected that the program will at least have a series of direct and indirect effects on the communities as a whole.

Children & Youth:

Working towards improving the wellbeing of children means working with the children and youth themselves. Through different interventions, children and youth are empowered and are able to participate in the community they live in and have self-esteem.

¹ Vision and mission statement document, 2009 Red een Kind



Parents, family and community:

Because Red een Kind wants to make a lasting impact on the lives of children, a lot of attention is geared towards empowering those who surround the child and have a daily influence on the wellbeing of the children. That is why parents, the child's family, the community and also service providers are targeted through the programs to enhance their capacity to provide for the wellbeing of the children. Both parents (or caregivers) receive special attention as they play a key role in the children's upbringing.

Vulnerable groups²:

The programs focus on the most vulnerable³ children in a particular context and bring about a significant change in their wellbeing. This means that to identify these groups, thorough assessments take place in selected target areas. Programs actively work towards the inclusion and empowerment of vulnerable groups. Special attention is being paid towards the empowerment and inclusion of both girls & boys, as well as vulnerable women & men, disabled children and children impacted or affected by serious diseases such as HIV/AIDS.

People in rural areas:

Global poverty remains a predominantly rural phenomenon: 70% of 1.4 billion extremely poor people live in rural areas. There is an alarming increase in the numbers of extremely poor people in rural areas of Sub-Saharan Africa and persistent rural poverty on the South Asian subcontinent. Rural areas continue to be the areas with the lowest rates of access to services. This is the main reason for Red een Kind to focus on the vulnerable children in rural contexts. However, as more people migrate to urban areas, ReK will also study what role it could play in enhancing the wellbeing of poor and vulnerable children in this context as well.

2.3 Children's Wellbeing

As could be seen in Chapter 1, human beings are created as holistic beings with physical, mentally, social and spiritual abilities and needs. In order for a human being to experience fullness of life, each of its holistic dimensions should function properly and should have the opportunity to grow. Red een Kind has therefore defined the four holistic dimensions in four concrete dimensions or goals it contributes to, to ensure fullness of life for vulnerable children (see figure 2).

Figure 2: Four holistic dimensions of a child's well-being

² See guidelines inclusive programming

³ Vulnerability is defined as the inability to withstand the effects of a hostile environment. Vulnerable children are defined as those who are more exposed to risks than their peers. Orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) are groups of children that experience negative outcomes, such as the loss of their education, morbidity, and malnutrition, at higher rates than do their peers (worldbank.org/e-tools)



Children’s wellbeing and development is best achieved when all four dimensions complement each other. The holistic dimensions are interrelated and interdependent for children’s wellbeing and development. For example, the physical wellbeing influences the ability of a child to be educated and to be ready for life and vice versa.

For each of the identified dimensions, we have defined outcome objectives (see table 3) that allow us to measure the direct effect of our programs on the wellbeing and development of vulnerable children. The defined outcomes per dimension complement each other and show a different aspect that contributes to the dimensions of children’s well-being.⁴

Table 3: Outcome objectives for children’s wellbeing

| Objective (impact) | <i>Children live their lives in dignity and to the fullest in a sustainable manner.</i> | | | |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Dimensions of holistic children’s well-being & development (outcomes) | Healthy and strong (Physically developed) | Educated for Life (Cognitively developed) | With hope and dignity (Spiritually developed) | Socially and emotionally developed |
| Building blocks of outcomes | Sufficient nutritious food and water | Acquired quality basic education | Children have hope and vision for the future | Children are cared for and protected |
| | Healthy life style | Have acquired sustainable livelihood | Children have acquired moral values | Have acquired necessary life |

⁴ The Child Status Index is the M&E tool which practically enables partners to measure child wellbeing.

| | | | | |
|-------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| | | knowledge and skills | | skills |
| | Able to access quality health services | | Child is valued and loved | Children actively participate and are involved in decision making (are able to relate to others) |
| Principles | Family and community-based, inclusion & equity, children's rights with a special focus on child participation and protection | | | |

The UN convention on the Rights of the Child emphasizes ‘wellbeing’ as a key to the realization of the child’s rights. The UN Convention specifies that the realization of the child’s rights is connected with his or her wellbeing and development. This involves the “physical, mental, moral, spiritual and social development in a healthy and normal manner in a context of freedom and dignity”. Red een Kind has committed itself to contributing to uphold the rights of children in the world and bringing a change in the lives of the most vulnerable and marginalized children. At the same time, attention will also be devoted to the responsibilities of each individual. In the following paragraphs, a description is given of the change process Red een Kind has in mind to contribute to children’s wellbeing.

2.4 Community Empowerment

Red een Kind does not just want to make an impact on the lives of children. The organization would like to see ongoing care and support for children and lasting impact, also after ReK’s support ends! Therefore, the focus of our programs is very much on empowerment of groups of children, youth, and adults in the community.

Empowerment is considered jargon in international development and it does not always have much meaning in practice. It is not easily defined and the consequences of empowerment are easier to define than empowerment itself. The three definitions of empowerment below show some of the variety within this concept.

‘The process through which those who are currently disadvantaged achieve equal rights, resources and power’ (Mayoux, 2008).

‘The expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.’ (World Bank Sourcebook on Empowerment, 2002)

‘A multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives’ (Page and Czuba, 1999).⁵

When applying this to the type of work that Red een Kind and partners often support or implement, we distinguish a number of aspects that could be seen as an operationalization

⁵ All as cited in Jupp, D., Ali, S. I., & Barahona, C. (2010). Measuring empowerment? Ask them. Sida Studies in Evaluation.



of the concept of empowerment. Other ways of operationalization are also possible. Here, we call them dimensions.

There are eight proposed dimensions to measure empowerment:

Enabling a safe environment. It implies a safe environment, where children are protected from abuse (physical, emotional or sexual abuse, from child labour and other forms of harm), and where adequate response mechanisms are in place in case of abuse. Instead children are enabled to develop, to learn new skills, go to school and grow into responsible and mature adults.

Resilience. This implies that individuals and households are capable to deal with shocks and changes. If market prices turn out to be lower, or some crops fail or weather conditions are unfavourable, households have ways to cope with these adversities. On a personal level, people can cope with difficult circumstances like violence, sickness and even death of loved ones.

Self-esteem. This means the way people look at themselves. Positive self-esteem means people feel confident and worthy. It means they do not feel disregarded because of their ethnic group, religion, or because they have certain diseases (e.g. living with HIV) or disabilities. Such (groups of) people also feel that they experience human dignity and are proud of whom they are.

Participation. It refers to being able and allowed to be included in decisions and have a say in what is happening. People have the right to be heard. This implies that the community (children and adults) has several groups and structures through which people could let their voice be heard and have influence over decisions that affect their lives. Such groups are respected and functional. Community leaders stimulate participation of members and the voices of all groups of people are acknowledged.

Knowledge, skills & practices. The community has a good level of skills and knowledge available. This also includes sufficient education systems, accessible to young people, including technical and vocational training. The community also has skills and capacities to lobby and advocate for their rights.

Ownership. The community is actively engaged in its own developmental processes. There is no dependency mentality but rather a "we can do this" mentality. Developmental groups in the community experience broad acceptance and are able to mobilize the community as a whole.

Networks and partnerships. The community has several groups that are linked up with wider networks. These include churches, civil society groups, linkages to NGOs, but also linkages with politics and government departments and to business or market actors.

Access to public services. The main public services (including health, water, sanitation, electricity, agricultural extension, markets) are available to most (if not all) people. Maintenance is also taken care of and costs are reasonable. This is provided by the government or arranged in partnerships with corporate players ([see Empowerment score card annexes 13-15](#)).