



contributing to

A Society That Cares

2013 – 2023

“Social welfare is more than simply material progress. Social progress in tune with the natural environment is at least as important. The key to sustainable development lies in the balance between material progress, social improvement and the quality of the local environment”.

Townsend (1979)



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Introduction:

Community development and social issues are highly placed on National and International agenda's in the acknowledgement that these topics are crucial for the development of nations. So too, the leadership of this young Country acknowledges that successful Community Development and Nation Building calls for joint forces between Government, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), private and business sector. Much emphasis must be put on joint NGO/GO/Private integrated and inter-sectorial approaches to social development on St. Maarten.

The role of the NGO field is crucial to the development of Sint Maarten and continuous support must be given to this sector to strengthen the organizations and to finance their endeavors.

The survivability of this sector is sustained through the vision and passion of community minded citizens but ultimately can only realistically be realized through financial contributions of individuals, companies, financing organizations and Government(s).

The constitutional changes to the constellation of the Netherlands Antilles also led to changes in the approach of the Dutch Government financing of development aid to the new countries. As a result thereof, regrettably in 2011, the two main Antillean based funding agencies, known to us as Fund for Social Development and Economic Activities (Reda Sosial) and Antillean Co-Financing Agency (AMFO), partly ceased to exist or started to phase out.

In response to these developments and in anticipation of an undesirable void in the financing options for the NGO field, the Government of St Maarten found it imperative to facilitate and coordinate the establishment of a St. Maarten NGO financing agency: ***“The St. Maarten Development Fund Foundation (SMDF)”***.

The goal of the SMDF is to mediate in the development and financing of projects and programs that will contribute to the Social/Community Development of Sint Maarten. The foundation will pursue its goal via:

- a) Acquisition of funds;
- b) Granting of donations for the execution of projects;
- c) Facilitating the execution of projects within the scope of its goals;
- d) Advising, coordinating and providing project support by planning, executing and monitoring of projects.

The foundation is mandated to do all that is necessary to contribute to the realization of its goals.

As such, the St. Maarten Development Fund Foundation (SMDF) has developed this policy plan which has a span of ten years and is intended to give direction to its efforts in the area of social community development in Sint Maarten. SMDF seeks to build on past experiences and therefore carried out an analysis of the best practices derived from research reports and policy plans prepared in the last ten years for St Maarten. This plan therefore starts with the conclusions drawn from said reports and further expounds on its vision and mission to come to a comprehensive policy which gives guidance to the key areas of concern as well as identifying the primary target groups. Ultimately St. Maarten Development Fund Foundation (SMDF) will be contributing to a ‘Society that Cares’



Building on experience

Charitable and voluntary work has always been part of the culture of our country. Volunteering in churches and in local communities is considered a way of life. Over the years the volume and magnitude of the social needs mushroomed so rapidly that a more structured and professional way of managing and dealing with the various problem areas was required. Many groups of persons started networking and forming organizations to better cater to the growing developing needs in a more regulated manner. Also the increase in the costs related to said problems led to the recognition that the fundraising and business donations no longer sufficed and there was a need for a more structured financing method. Funding through Federal and local Government as well as Dutch development aid became more prominent. The government of Sint Maarten began providing structural annual and incidental funding to local NGOs. The Dutch and Antillean Governments provided yearly funding mainly through Cede Sint Maarten, Reda Sosial, FAJ and other similar funding institutions..

The year 2001 was a turning point in the financing philosophy of the Dutch Government. As part of the new working relation between the Dutch, Aruban and Antillean Government (see nota 'Toekomst in samenwerking') an advice was commissioned by the Dutch Government which led to the report of Kruijt and Bukman, entitled '*NGO's in Perspectief*' and '*Advies NGO subsidie beleid Nederlandse Antilles en Aruba*' (1999). They advised to establish a new funding agency and to move from project financing to program financing as also recommended by commissions Wawoe and Biesheuvel in 1997. The expectation was that this would lead to a more efficient and effective coordination of Dutch development aid.

The year 2013 is again a turning point, as the Dutch development aid will be stopped as a result of the constitutional changes and agreements made between the Kingdom partners. Reda Sosial and AMFO which were the primary facilitators of this financing on the Antillean platform will cease to exist and thus a new era begins.

Many documents/reports were written regarding social development on St Maarten over last 10 years. The lessons learned from these documents form the basis on which the St Maarten Development Fund Foundation has formulated this policy. In doing so this policy plan builds on experience.

In this chapter conclusions from these various policy plans and related research reports will be highlighted in the categories as it pertains to social needs, target groups and organizational structures. Also, insight will be given into past development aid financing.

Conclusions pertaining to social needs:

- With regards to the effectiveness of the programs over the last ten years it can be stated that the situation on Sint Maarten did not change much. Social needs identified in the MISOP1 (2001) as it pertains to social integration, district

community involvement, social empowerment, social economic development, safety and security and capacity building of the NGO field are still applicable.

- To some extent the majority of the abovementioned social needs were addressed by NGOs.
- The social needs which are addressed through activities of the NGOs are clearly visible, though, the quality, the effectiveness and efficiency of the services are not always clear or measurable
- There are social needs that are minimally catered to by NGOs such as safety and security
- There are social needs that are growing and are expected to become a big challenge in the near future, such as aging.

It can be deduced that the approach in addressing the social needs on Sint Maarten can be classified into 4 main categories:

1. Social needs identified and addressed by services from NGOs with financial subsidies, such as afterschool programs;
2. Social needs identified and addressed by services from NGOs that will have a foreseeable growth in the volume and would need increase in funding such as afterschool programs
3. Social needs identified but due to lack of funding have not been addressed sufficiently, such as re-socialization programs
4. Social needs that are growing and will eventually need a substantial amount of financial resources, elderly care and mental health.

In addition it is noted that:

- there is a close relationship between the existence of social needs and crime; crime can cause social needs but social needs can also cause crime. In relation it is recognized that the areas of social care and assistance to tackle social causes of crime and policy development needs to be developed further
- The evaluation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for Sint Maarten reveal that more attention is needed for the goals related to communicable diseases, poverty/hunger and environmental sustainability.

Conclusions as it pertains to target groups

- The majority of the reports show the importance of projects and programs specifically focusing on vulnerable groups in the society
- Thematic programs together with a clear description of the vulnerable target groups give more direction to effective social development.

- Youth are considered the most vulnerable group and much has been invested in programs to address the vast number of issues, however there is ongoing need to invest in programs
- The elderly on Sint Maarten are a growing vulnerable target group and the need for subsidy to ensure some of the most essential services, such as meals, transportation and home adjustments for the needy is increasing

Conclusions as it pertains to organizational structure

- It is important to stimulate NGOs to collaborate and coordinate more to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the programs and the available resources
- NGOs could use direct support in their governance structure.
- NGO execution structures still need to be improved.
- Capacity building is needed in the areas of the monitoring and evaluation of projects based on objectives, output versus input and outcomes
- The SUNFed can play an important role in the communication with the NGO sector and in giving support to NGOs in the execution of projects and programs and in the capacity building of NGOs as stated in The oNGOing process of Social Development of Saint Maarten within freedom and alliance.

Expected financial void

An analysis was made of the financing via development aid partly supported by contributions via the Federal Government (Reda Sosial) and the St Maarten Government (Harbour Buy Back funds). This analysis gives us insight into the void that has been created due to the ending of these financing sources. It also gives us an indication of the average financial input that is needed to service the NGO sector.

SUMMARY PROJECT FUNDED AMOUNTS - ANNUAL AVERAGES:	
AMFO (AM) funded programs 2007 - 2012 Average of NAfls. 3,458,377 per Year	17,291,886.00
REDA SOSIAL (RS) funded Programs 1998 - 2011 Average of NAfls. 1,197,798 per Year	16,769,170.00
USONA poverty alleviation projects - 2006 - 2007	3,266,325.00
USONA - Harbor Buy Back Funds - 2006-2009	23,878,904.00
Average Input Per Year - NAfls. 4,371,878.00 over 14 years (All Projects)	61,206,285.00

SUMMARY FUNDED PROJECTS AMOUNTS PER SOCIAL AREAS:	
Projects related to the area of Education, Culture, Youth & Sports	23,250,929.00
Projects related to the area of VROMI	17,144,117.00
Projects related to the area of Public Health, Social Development & Labor	15,865,504.00
Projects related to the area of Tourism & Economic Affairs	1,915,157.00
Projects related to the area of Justice	3,030,578.00



Contributing to a society that cares

With the premise of the SMDF being to facilitate in the development and financing of projects and programs that will contribute to the Social/Community Development of Sint Maarten, the foundation seeks to provide a strategic policy based on evidence, with coordinated approaches and accountability.

The lessons learned from the history of social and community development on Sint Maarten, demands of us to return to the core of being a people that take care of the most vulnerable amongst us.

It is therefore the policy vision of the SMDF to be a ‘Society That Cares’ and that takes responsibility for the vulnerable groups that cannot take care of themselves and need assistance to ensure their well-being.

In order to realize this caring society, our mission is to contribute to program development and financing, based on three (3) development pillars. These pillars encompass the social needs that are identified as pressing issues for St Maarten, namely:

- **Social empowerment**
- **District / community improvement**
- **Poverty alleviation**

The three (3) pillars

- 1) Social empowerment is the process of making opportunities and resources available in order for marginalized people to make informed personal choices which include developing the skills for self-sufficiency and sustainability. These skills can be of a spiritual, political, social, educational, gender, or economic nature.

Examples of possible social empowerment themes are:

- Healthy lifestyle – HIV / Aids / non-communicable diseases / sports
- Education – 2nd chance education / lifelong learning / mentality change / responsibilities
- Integration
- Combating isolation

- 2) District & community improvement refers to infrastructural enhancement of neighborhoods as well as the development of closer and stronger ties with the people and organizations existing within the neighborhoods. It pertains to

proactive processes of integrating social, cultural, economic and environmental planning to building community commitment and capacity

Examples of possible district & community improvement themes are:

- Safety + security
- Housing
- Healthy neighborhoods
- Environment
- Culture
- Nation building
- Recreation areas

3) Poverty alleviation pertains to the state of having little or no material means of surviving—little or no food, shelter, clothes, healthcare, education, and other physical means of living and improving one's life. Some definitions of poverty, are relative, rather than absolute. According to the document: “Armoede indicatoren voor de Nederlandse Antillen” of the CBS: “Socially, poverty is defined as the inability to take care of the elementary necessities such as food, clothing, education and a place to live and as such a poverty line can be defined based on a minimum income level. The Central Bureau of Statistics, CBS, uses a relative poverty line by defining the poor households as the households with the lowest income levels.”

The implications of poverty related issues are tremendous on a society as culturally diverse and tourism dependent as ours and it must not be underestimated.

Examples of possible poverty alleviation themes are:

- Feeding program
- Clothing program
- Home repair
- Job creation

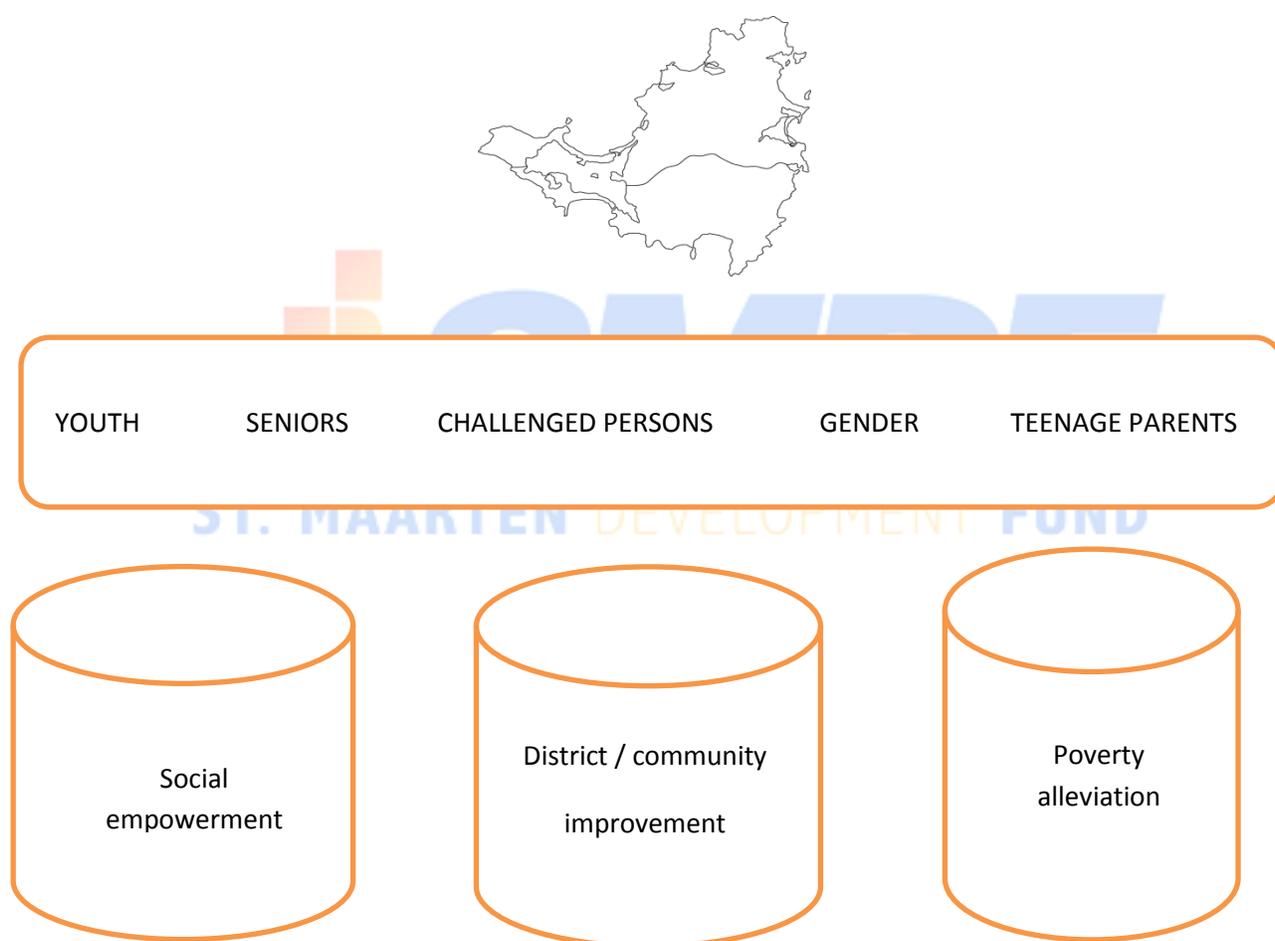
Target groups:

The target groups as recognized by the SMDF consists of marginalized people who are in need of more self-sufficiency. They are often dependent on charity of others or on social welfare. Many lose their self-confidence because they cannot be fully self-supporting and are often deprived of the pride of accomplishment which others, who have those opportunities, can develop for themselves. This in turn can lead to psychological, social and even mental health problems.

We have identified the vulnerable groups to be:

1. Youth from inception to 24 as maintained by UNESCO
2. Seniors, 55 and above
3. Persons with a mental, physical and or social challenge
4. Gender
 - a. women / single mothers
 - b. boys
5. Teenage parenthood

In conclusion, the policy of the SMDF can be visualized as follows:



The way forward

Now that we have established the history of social development and NGO financing over the past years and we have formulated a new policy to embark on for the coming ten (10) years, it behooves us to communicate these intentions with our stakeholders. The hope is that this will lead to shared vision and the joining of efforts to address the needs of our community. Acquisition activities must be carried out by SMDF in order to generate funds for the optimal functioning of the organization and for carrying out the core task of the organization which is financing of programs and projects in accordance with the organizations Policy Plan.

In addition to the communication needed with parties in order to acquire funds for the operation of the organization and for financing of programs and projects in accordance with the organizations Policy Plan, the SMDF acknowledges the importance of the communication with the NGOs and other stakeholders.

The SMDF has developed a communication plan and a plan for the acquisition of funds towards the following groups and entities.

- St. Maarten None Governmental Organizations
- St. Maarten Government
- Dutch Government
- St. Maarten companies and Investors
- European Union
- Funding agencies operational on St. Maarten
- Other international Funding sources



Our funding approach will consist of the following guiding principles:

Positive

The outcomes of the project should be desirable and inspiring to all organizations involved. Only a positive outcome will make organizations, boards, personnel, volunteers take the initiative and cooperate.

Effective

The project should aim at the mission of the social development based on one or more of the pillars. All approaches should be evaluated. Their planned outcomes and indicators should be used to compare the real outcomes with these planned outcomes.

Efficient

Within the project cooperation between sector and/or organizations should be promoted. Also cooperation between NGOs' and GOs' and even with the business community should be stimulated.

Accountable

The project should be very critical of the costs in connection with the quality of the outcomes. The added value of certain outcomes and the sacrifice to realize it should be questioned. This connection should be compared regularly.

Sustainable

The project should not only focus on the realization but also on the maintenance and follow-up.

In conclusion:

You CAN count on US, can we count on YOU?



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