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To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/10286632.2019.1621302

Published online: 04 Jun 2019.

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Funder and facilitator: Swedish development aid aimed at cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina 1995–2008

Malin Stengård and Mattias Legnérr

Conservation Unit, Department of Art History, Uppsala University – Campus Gotland, Visby, Sweden

ABSTRACT

The paper investigates the relationship between the Swedish development agency Sida and Cultural Heritage without Borders (CHwB), a facilitating organisation in the field of cultural heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) following the Bosnia War. From 1995 to 2008 CHwB was the only NGO in BiH working to preserve cultural heritage, and was almost exclusively funded by Sida. From having been an organisation focusing on the restoration of historic monuments, CHwB transformed into becoming an NGO facilitating social and economic development. The paper suggests that CHwB gradually changed from having a very particular position of working with the preservation of an ethnically diverse cultural heritage with the aim of promoting reconciliation, to one where it needed to focus on reconstruction and its implications for economic development. By analysing a large number of key documents using Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis this change is interpreted in relation to changes taking place within the landscape of international aid and post-conflict recovery.

ARTICLE HISTORY

Received 27 November 2018
Accepted 16 May 2019

KEYWORDS

Bosnia and Herzegovina; heritage; post-conflict reconstruction; aid; cultural heritage without borders; Sida; Sweden; BiH; CHwB

Aim

Cultural heritage was frequently targeted in the Yugoslavian Wars of the 1990s. (Vos 2015) One reason was that historical sites and buildings such as mosques, churches and old residential houses represented ethnic and religious communities. (Bevan 2006; Coward 2009) Since then heritage sites have been restored or even reconstructed for a number of reasons. There is still today a lack of knowledge on the wider implications of architectural interventions in conflict areas, and with what purpose they have been carried out. (Charlesworth 2006; Viejo-Rose 2013) The reconstruction of cultural heritage is a particular branch of post-conflict reconstruction and has been a stage for international actors such as UNESCO, the EU and major aid funders to display and carry through their agendas. Often it has been thought that reconciliation can be reached by working physically with the conservation or even construction of cultural heritage, but today we know it is not so easy to turn former targets of violence into symbols of peace. (Tunbridge and Ashworth 1996; Kisić 2013; Meskell 2018; Khalaf 2017; Isakhan and Meskell 2019)

Furthermore, recent research has argued that cultural heritage should not be understood firstly as a collection of material objects, but as a celebration of cultural memories and identities. (Kalman 2017)

There is a need to further scrutinize the reasons, choices, and ethics behind international interventions in heritage reconstruction following armed conflicts, in order to better understand the dynamics of the landscape involving aid agencies, organisations carrying out the projects and the receiving communities. In this article, we examine the relationship between a funder, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), and the receiving NGO, Cultural
Heritage without Borders (CHwB), and how this relationship affected why projects were selected and designed in a certain way. By understanding the dynamics of this relationship this paper can contribute with in-depth knowledge on the changing reasons and consequences of post-conflict projects dealing with cultural heritage.

CHwB started with focusing on restoration work but soon changed by turning towards the training of professionals, capacity building and finally economic and social development. Apparently, CHwB adapted to Sida priorities of humanitarian and development aid in order to secure long-term funding for its projects. This paper sets out to analyse the reasons for and consequences of this ‘alliance’ between a non-governmental body and a government aid agency. Sida’s mission was decided by the Swedish government. Changes in the Swedish and EU aid policies towards the Southeast European region affected how CHwB designed its projects in BiH. Together with the economic and political development in the region, aid policies fundamentally influenced the conditions for NGOs conducting work there. In time the relationship between Sida and CHwB deepened, with the consequence that their aims gradually converged. This convergence was of both ethical and practical importance for the projects carried out in the field.

**Cultural Heritage without borders (CHwB)**

As the Yugoslav Wars developed into a conflict involving ethnic cleansing and the deliberate destruction of cultural heritage, there was an international outcry against what was seen as a gross violation of human rights. The destruction of cultural heritage was of great symbolic value and came to be viewed as a crime against humanity and to some extent tried in the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) and other courts prosecuting war crimes. (Vos 2015 p. 307–322) The cultural heritage is of uttermost importance for people’s cultural identity and roots both backwards in history but also to a specific place. In ‘The General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina’, also called the Dayton peace agreement, signed in 1995 by all the warring parties, cultural heritage was given a crucial role in the creation of a new state. Annex 8 in the peace agreement, called ‘Agreement on Commission to Preserve National Monuments’, stated that a commission should be formed and that it ‘shall receive and decide on petitions for the designation of property having cultural, historic, religious or ethnic importance as National Monuments.’ (General Framework Agreement 1995) The elevated status of cultural heritage in the peace agreement made it a target for international aid.

As a result of the war today BiH consists of three entities, The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina with a population dominated by Muslim Bosnians and Catholic Bosnian Croats, Brčko dominated by Muslim Bosnians and orthodox Bosnian Serbs and Republika Srpska in which the population mainly consists of orthodox Bosnians Serbs. (Vos 2015 p. 13) The division between the ethnic groups was very deep after the war and still is today.

In response to the violence during the Yugoslavian war, a number of Swedish institutions involved in preservation organised a conference in Stockholm in 1994 on the topic of cultural property protection in armed conflicts. (Svenska Unescorådet 1994) During the meeting, the participants decided that there should be an initiative to carry out emergency aid to war-damaged heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina. This event led to the creation of the NGO CHwB. Already from the outset, the foundation had the support of the Swedish National Heritage Board, Association of Swedish Architects, Swedish ICOM and ICOMOS.

Resting on the principles of the preamble to the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the aim of CHwB is to protect and preserve cultural heritage in areas that are or have been ravaged by conflict or other sorts of catastrophes. (CHwB 2014, 2018) CHwB was already from the start supported by the Swedish government. The board consisted of representatives of the professions of architectural conservation and museums (ICOM and ICOMOS) and the foremost heritage institutions in the country. The connections between the funders and the government structure in Sweden were crucial when it came to the
funding of CHwB projects from 1996 and forward. The single most important funder of CHwB would be the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), which is a government agency. About 1 per cent of Swedish GDP goes to international aid annually, Sida deciding on about half of it and the government the rest.

The first thirteen (1995–2008) years of work of CHwB in BiH will be examined, focusing on how CHwB approached Sida in order to receive financial support for projects in BiH. The authors wish to understand the development of the relationship between funder and facilitator (NGO) in conjunction with the landscape of international and regional actors involved in post-conflict reconstruction. There is a marked difference between the aims that initiated the CHwB-led intervention and the ones that sustained it.

BiH was the first country CHwB worked in beginning in 1995. From having been quite a small organisation primarily working with the restoration of historic buildings over the years CHwB evolved into a ‘development NGO’ (SA 1 p. 4) under the influence of Sida. In 2008, when projects specific for BiH ceased, CHwB had received in total about 81 million Swedish Kronor from Sida. Sida had no prior experience of funding projects concerning cultural heritage before CHwB began its work. In order to understand the nature of the conflict, it became necessary to consider the symbolic resources representing those victimised groups that had been systematically targeted, and their heritage destroyed, such as mosques, hammams, other buildings from the Ottoman age, museums, archives and libraries. CHwB were praised by UNESCO for being the only organisation in Southeast Europe that had a truly cultural historical motive in relation to other organisations that worked with similar questions but had a religious or ideological motive for it. (SA 6) Consequently, CHwB turned out to be one of few NGOs in the Balkans restoring historic buildings, training craftsmen and architects in how to do it, and supporting museums and archives in different ways in the name of cultural history itself.

The reasons how and why CHwB designed their projects in a certain way and what part Sida had in it are as of yet unexplored. Different isolated aspects of CHwB activities have been studied recently (Wik 2015; Cvjetičanin and Vežić 2017; Gibling and Taylor 2017; Hadžić and Eaton 2017), but an interpretation of the role of CHwB in relation to Sida and the international context of post-conflict aid to cultural heritage is still missing. Legnér (2017, 2018) has studied the relationship between funding bodies and CHwB in Kosovo, observing the risk for conflicts of values between organisations involved and the implications for security that CHwB interventions meant.

Sources and methodology

The methodology for interpreting data from the sources is based on Norman Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis. According to Fairclough an analysis of text is not enough for a discourse analysis because then the interlinking between the text, the societal and cultural context and the structures the text is part of don’t become visible. A wider perspective must be applied, and the textual analysis should be used in combination with social analysis. (Winther Jørgensen and Phillips 2000 p. 72) For this purpose, we have used Fairclough’s three-dimensional framework where analysis of the text, the discourse practice and the sociocultural practice are all mapped onto each other and gives an interdisciplinary view. (Fairclough 1995 p. 98) This method makes it possible to see how the relationship between CHwB and Sida developed and how the two organizations positioned themselves in relation partly to each other, partly to other organisations and processes that affected the relationship between them, such as the acknowledgement of BiH as a candidate for EU membership and a new proposition from the Swedish government regarding Swedish aid.

The sources used for this article are mainly project documents related to ten different projects for which CHwB applied for funding from Sida. Each project documentation includes the application, the decisions made by Sida, agreements, reports and in some cases other types of related documents as well, such as letters, pro memoria, travel reports etcetera, a total of roughly 600 pages of documents from the archive of Sida (SA). Since all records both concerning Sida decisions
on funding CHwB projects and the NGO’s internal documentation is public and freely available for research it is possible to reconstruct the development of the relationship between funder and facilitator. The majority of documents are written in Swedish, and the rest in English. The material does not make it possible to take part of discussions and meetings between the organisations that preceded writing applications, decisions and so on, but by studying proposals and the following decisions we can get a good understanding of how the discourse on the post-conflict reconstruction of cultural heritage changed over the years.

This paper divides the investigated time period into three phases, each of them describing a part of the process of how CHwB transformed from working with the restoration of buildings to engaging in complex global questions like poverty reduction, societal reformation and socio-economic development.

**Phase 1 (1996–98): from restoration to training and professional development**

The pilot project of ChwB was to repair the damaged mosque in the town of Maglaj. In their applications to Sida during the first two years, CHwB focused on restoration and rebuilding of war-damaged and mismanaged architectural heritage. During CHwB’s active period in BiH suggestions regarding suitable buildings came from both local institutions, such as the Institute for Protection of the Cultural-Historical and Natural Heritage of Bosnia-Herzegovina (henceforth called the federal institute), local authorities in affected municipalities and also from local representatives of international institutions (UNESCO and Sida). Suggested projects where discussed and looked at during survey trips CHwB undertook in the country. (for example, SA 16) Sida, then, was to some extent already from the beginning involved in proposing suitable buildings to restore. (SA 2)

To convince Sida to fund the first project, CHwB pressed in their application that as long as war-damaged buildings were visible they would work as constant reminders of the indignities that cultural heritage and the national identity of BiH had been subjected to. CHwB referred to a meeting of the Council of Europe (CoE) in May 1996, which resulted in the ministers stating that the process to restore the cultural heritage in Kosovo and BiH should gain international support. A plan of action was established. In its application, the foundation emphasized that CoE had decided upon a resolution stating the importance of cultural heritage for social and economic development. (SA 2) To strengthen their arguments even more, CHwB pointed out that other aid organisations already saw cultural heritage in BiH as an area of operation. By attributing the restoration of damaged heritage great importance in the reconciliation and peace process, CHwB wished to ascribe it the same importance as healthcare, infrastructure or rebuilding of homes so that Sida would put heritage aid on its agenda. Furthermore, CHwB argued that the project was an emergency action to protect the mosque and the next-door guesthouse in Maglaj from further deterioration. The mosque was damaged by shelling and the guesthouse from long-time neglect. (SA 3)

Sida used arguments similar to the foundation’s in order to motivate its decision to approve the application. The aid agency wrote about the symbolic value the destruction of historic buildings had during the war, and especially how this mainly affected the Muslim Bosnians. Rebuilding and restoring the built heritage would be a way to reinstitute the victims’ cultural identity and the multicultural past of BiH. Sida used the Dayton agreement to motivate that cultural heritage could be part of Swedish aid to BiH. (SA 3 p. 2) Where CHwB viewed restorations in BiH as a way to erase physical reminders of the war to help society initiate a reconciliation process, Sida viewed it as a way of strengthening the victims’ identity and regain some of the countries’ culturally diverse past. From the beginning, the two organisations, then, had somewhat differing views on what the purposes of their actions were.

After two years of work the mosque in Maglaj was finished. CHwB then wished to develop their activities and applied for money to do proper investigations and projections to establish which projects they should design for the coming years. (SA 4) The foundation also aimed to expand into Republika Srpska. During the work with the mosque, it had become ever so clear that the lack of
knowledge was widespread among domestic professionals working with conservation and restoration of cultural heritage. This became manifest on all levels but especially in the production of accurate projections. The deficiency in knowledge among craftsmen became apparent in their use of modern materials instead of traditional ones that were more compatible with the local building traditions. In their second application, CHwB showed that they mostly selected projects depending on themes that would be suitable for training actions, such as workshops and seminars, to be held in connection with the restoration work. The aims were to improve the skills of the participants but also to alleviate cross-cultural understanding. (SA 5)

At the end of the Maglaj project, Sida concluded that it had gained a much greater impact than first expected. The project had become more of a cooperation with the federal institute than initially planned. It also came to be seen as a model of how to work with knowledge development among professionals within the restoration and conservation sector in BiH. (SA 6: 1–3) CHwB saw the lack of knowledge as a threat to the reconstruction, preservation and protection of cultural heritage. To educate professionals was essential in order to preserve the heritage. Sida wished to see proof of how Bosnian society benefitted from capacity building. The main objective for CHwB, however, was preservation and protection, and the training activities necessary to accomplish this.

In time Sida became more involved in the planning process but also the following execution of CHwB projects. In the decision on the second application, Sida wrote that they would follow the project partly by reports, partly by initial meetings in Stockholm. They were unsure about some of the sites CHwB planned to work with and wanted to discuss them when the project still was in a planning phase. (SA 4–1 p. 5) Sida’s early interest in the planning process was motivated by an aim to assist CHwB in producing an application that could be approved.

In general, Sida seemed content with the work of CHwB and saw positively on future collaborations:

The now completed project of restoring the mosque came to be of great importance as an example of how to work with development of Bosnian knowledge in the field of restoration and it also strengthens Sida’s faith that CHwB will continue to work successfully. There are good prospects that the now outlined projects also will give positive side effects and thus add value to Sida’s contributions. (SA 4-2 p. 4)

For Sida, the Maglaj project was a chance for CHwB to show it was a reliable organisation that could carry out projects successfully and within the allocated budget. Their projects did not only restore and preserve buildings but also resulted in other positive effects that could benefit social development, which was highly attractive to Sida.

**Phase 2 (1999–2004): towards a focus on development**

In 1999 CHwB started applying for funding to multiple projects and expanded geographically by planning future projects all around the Federation and in Republika Srpska. The foundation also started to more clearly define goals for the coming years’ projects. In 1999 development of knowledge, capacity building and building networks were important parts. (SA 4–3) Areas that were important to Sida and CHwB could feel pressured to adapt and prioritise areas such as capacity building and socio-economic development, in order to be sure of securing funding.

Meanwhile, Sida involvement in CHwB activities became even more substantial. In 2000 the agency wrote that the projects proposed by the foundation were completely in line with the new policy on cultural cooperation. The following year the NGO started projects in Serbia and in Kosovo that were in line with Swedish and more generally European aspirations to work at a regional level transgressing territorial borders. (SA 7, 8; Legnér 2018) Sida and CHwB collaborated more than before when it came to selecting projects. CHwB also cooperated with other Sida initiatives, for instance, a major returnee project in Jajce. (Wik 2015, p. 289) This cohesion between Sida objectives and CHwB projects were partly a result of the Sida site manager in Bosnia becoming more involved in setting up project proposals for CHwB. (SA 7) With Per Iwansson Sida positioned itself in the very beginning of the
process of selecting feasible projects that CHwB should become involved in (SA 17 p. 5) and suggesting that applications should be approved. (SA 8 p. 6) There was more frequent communication between funder and facilitator before the actual application process even begun. This shows that any opinion Sida had on a certain project was communicated long before the final application was written. There had been extensive negotiations before the project documents were produced.

Sida seemed content with the foundation and praised it for being efficient, serious, keeping a high standard and for having most of the competence needed within the foundation. If CHwB lacked some of that it had resources outside the foundation to pick from. Sida, then, had become more interested in the preservation of cultural heritage and CHwB was praised for working to preserve historic authenticity regarding material and working methods, something Sida saw as a positive thing also from a perspective of environmental sustainability. (SA 7)

After a few years, CHwB deviated from the criteria that buildings they worked with had to be war-damaged and opened up for projects in which the type of damage, and what kind of discussions regarding restoration methods that could be connected to the project, was of greater importance than before. In 1999 CHwB directed its attention to an old merchant house, Despić House, in Sarajevo. Since the project was believed to open for interesting discussions on restoration methodology and would work as an object suitable for training architects and artisans. (SA 4–3, 7–1 p.4)

When CHwB wished to establish itself in the city of Jajce, a town in the western part of Bosnia, the most prominent reason was to establish a standard for restoration and rebuilding of cultural heritage, regaining the city’s historic identity and re-establishing it as a tourist destination. (Wik 2015, p. 289–294) Extensive international relief efforts had been carried out in the medieval city that, according to CHwB, had been damaging the historical environment. CHwB restored some traditional residential buildings in collaboration with Crossroads, a Sida-funded organisation assisting returnees rebuilding their homes. The city was to be a pilot demonstrating how to combine the preservation of historic buildings with humanitarian aid projects. (SA 9) The NGO wished to introduce an attitude towards historic buildings that hopefully would rub off on other aid agencies so they would become more considerate to historic buildings and environments. (SA 8–1) The educational efforts of CHwB had so far been targeting the staff of local institutions and craftsmen. Now the aim was to spread a basically Swedish restoration ideology (Legnér 2018) to other international organisations.

CHwB focus shifted in 2003–2004 as their projects came to emphasise capacity building and strengthening of local institutions. From their initial focus on the federal institute’s staff, the foundation now started to support other preservation institutes as well. The idea was that it was more sustainable and beneficial in the long run to invest in institutions rather than in individuals when aiming to develop a complete country. (Wik 2015 p. 287) To make their work more sustainable CHwB realised that they had to get local communities to understand why and how the cultural heritage would be preserved. The foundation wrote that they could have the function of advisors and facilitators but the will to change, and ultimately to reach reconciliation, had to come from the local communities. CHwB referred to an understanding of cultural heritage as a human right that was gaining ground in the European community. The Faro Convention (CoE 2005) emphasized the importance of cultural heritage to community life and democracy. Similar arguments can be seen in the very first application, in which the facilitator urged the importance of cultural heritage for reconciliation and that a pre-requisite for peace was that visible traces of war should be undone. (SA 9) CHwB, then, listened to an international discourse on cultural heritage and adapted its rhetoric accordingly.

The arguments concerning the relevance of rebuilding cultural heritage could be interpreted as a response to Sida that in their decision for the project period 2003–2004 wrote that the main focus for CHwB should be capacity building and institutional development, rather than restoring built heritage with cultural and historic value. (SA 9–1) Already in the mid-1990s, Sida focused on the development of local institutions, knowledge and capacity building. CHwB had run projects connected to these areas in combination with sole restoration projects. Now Sida used their power as financier to change the foundation’s orientation, not only regarding its work in BiH but in the
whole of the Balkans. The message was clear, CHwB should from now on see cultural heritage as a tool for reaching development goals regarding capacity building and strengthening and reshaping structures in local institutions.

Sida proclaimed that their financial support should go towards helping people to assist themselves. To accomplish this aim Sida demanded that their contributions should be matched by a local actor such as the building’s owner, the municipality or other local institutions. The recipient had to prove that it appreciated the donor’s actions by acknowledging the symbolic value of a shared common heritage in BiH and its importance for the reconciliation process. If local municipalities and institutions wished to continue to receive funding from Sida they should take responsibility for the shared cultural heritage of BiH. Sida’s development ambition contained a demand for responsibility and ownership in order to safeguard their investments. Sida required that a building’s owner had to be able to manage maintenance and operating costs so that the building would not fall apart. (SA 9–1) Sida did not only raise demands for the participation of the owners of the building but also of other stakeholders. The requirements of ownership and responsibility affected CHwB since they presupposed that the local receiver, the owner of the property, became involved early in the project planning and participated actively.

Due to failed expectations on the progress in BiH, Sida proclaimed in April 2003 that if CHwB could not see any development regarding capacity building in local institutions and among other actors the foundation should not continue its programme. (SA 9–1) According to Sida, the collaboration with the federal institute in Sarajevo had not worked well and there were, in general, very little desire to work across ethnic boundaries. (SA 10) The country could still be part of regional projects. The withdrawal from the country was due to the political situation and not because of any dissatisfaction with CHwB work. Sida also wanted CHwB to decrease its activity in Kosovo but without losing impact since the plan was to gradually terminate its aid to the country. (SA 9 p.1) The wish to begin liquidating aid to the individual states and instead work on a more regional level was part of a tendency in international aid directed towards South-East Europe at the time. CoE initiated the Ljubljana Process to stimulate democracy and peace and, not least, the local economy in the region. (Bold & Cherry 2016) Most of the investments made by the international community in restoring cultural heritage in BiH had gone to the town Mostar with the aim of making it into a symbol of multiculturalism, peace and economic development. These efforts culminated in the designation by UNESCO of the reconstructed bridge in Mostar as world cultural heritage in 2004. (Vos 2015)

CHwB worked to finish its projects in an orderly fashion and according to Sida aims. By the end of 2008 the exit plan had to have been carried through. (SA 15) Turning the attention away from single buildings CHwB became more involved in urban planning and the administrative processes of municipalities. This would make it easier to plan for the preservation of whole areas consisting of both historic and more modern buildings. If the NGO chose to work with a single building the choice was often motivated by visibility, either literally in the surrounding area or more figuratively as a paragon for future restorations made by local actors. As an example, CHwB undertook the restoration of the national museum’s façade and entrance interior. The purpose was to make the museum more attractive to visitors and more visible in its surroundings. Thanks to the exposed position of the building in the city it also came to function as a display window of CHwB and Swedish aid. (SA 10–1) In the city of Jajce Omerbegovića Kuca was chosen as a restoration object because it had a strategic position in the city and the restored building should be used as a tourist centre. (SA 9)

These projects made CHwB work closer to the end-users of cultural heritage. When CHwB started working in BiH the target group was mainly professionals working with historic buildings and cultural heritage, whereas users were not given priority. This shift was not only a response to Sida aims but also to a general development that started in the 1990s within the field of heritage protection and conservation, resulting in more emphasis being put on users. For CHwB the main aim was no longer the restoration of buildings and the positive side-effects that would follow. Now the built heritage became a tool for societal development and to boost economic growth in the area by attracting tourists.
**Phase 3 (2005–08): fighting poverty in the region**

A few years into the new millennium CHwB operations in BiH came to be affected by more actors than just Sida. In 2003 BiH was acknowledged as a potential candidate for EU membership. This leap in the relationship to the EU would have a huge impact on the direction of CHwB work in the country. (Sida 2017) The same year the Swedish parliament approved of a proposition called *Collective responsibility: Swedish policy for global development* that had a direct impact on Sida and its demands on partners. (Prop 2002/03:122) The proposition stated that in Swedish collaboration with states in South-East Europe EU integration should be a driving force for development in the region. Interventions should be focused on introducing European common values and structures for collaboration pursuing the targeted countries’ own priorities. (Prop 2002/03:122 p. 70) In the cultural sector, Sweden should work for cultural exchange between Sweden and other countries, but also between developing countries, in order to raise understanding of cultural differences and to protect cultural diversity. The proposition also declared that Swedish cultural politics for a long time had been connected to international cooperation aiming to strengthen democracy and social, economic and cultural development. (Prop 2002/03:122 p.48)

These policy changes affected the organisation and the objectives of CHwB, making the foundation reshape even more during this period:

> With this application we therefore want to work in a slightly new direction. Compared to earlier Sida-financed projects we now foresee a clearer regional approach to be more fruitful. The main goal is reconciliation as a prerequisite for peace and democracy and respect for human rights in the region, as the only way to fight poverty and come closer to the European Union. (SA 11 p. 2)

Preservation and protection of cultural heritage became peripheral and merely a tool to reach other goals such as poverty reduction, EU adaptation, human rights and democracy. These were complex matters located on a global level very far from what the foundation had worked with before. From being what Sida called an activist organisation, CHwB now started to drift away from the particular field of cultural heritage in order to work with questions of global development (SA 11–2):

> We want our partners to come closer to each other by trying to open up avenues for mutual benefits. A true cooperation can never be created on command or in seminars focusing on reconciliation in general. A true reconciliation process has to come from below and from conviction. It has to be a natural outcome of a common process. An initiator, facilitator and moderator is needed. CHwB has the competence to act as such as we are now very familiar with the situation in the region after having long-term experience and close contacts with many of the institutions involved. (SA 11 p.4)

CHwB made ambitious claims that were well in line with Sida’s overall goals: ‘Apart from an overarching goal of poverty reduction the goal of Sida’s cooperation with Europe is to contribute to building democracies, functioning market economies, social welfare and support to the long-term reform work for harmonization with EU.’ (SA 11–1 p. 8) The voice of Sida was increasingly heard in CHwB documents. These goals were based on the government’s proposition that in turn was based on the UN Millennium Development Goals. The overall aim with these was to abolish poverty and hunger. (Prop 2002/03:122 p. 20) CHwB adapted their activities to correspond with Sida’s objectives. It began calling itself a ‘development NGO’ reflecting a wider shift in focus of the organisation. Earlier their projects had been fitted into more general development plans for the affected areas developed by other actors. Now the foundation had more outspoken development goals that were to stimulate economic growth and turn cultural heritage into a money-making factor. (SA 1)

CHwB became more involved in the process of reforming Bosnian society, its institutions and authorities and in getting them to conform with EU laws, policies, guidelines and international demands. The foundation fully adopted the funder’s focus on development and capacity building with the aim to help prepare BiH for a future EU membership. (SA 11) In fact, CHwB was not the only organisation working with reforming heritage institutions in BiH at the time. In 2003 the European Commission and the Council of Europe (CoE 2003) introduced the *Regional Programme*
for Natural and Cultural Heritage in South East Europe. The objectives of the programme were reconciliation and to increase regional cooperation but also to use heritage as a generator for social and economic capital and increase stability in the region. Vos describes it as ‘(...) cultural historical difference was sought to be harmonized under the umbrella of a shared European approach to heritage management that increasingly instrumentalized heritage for a set of “European purposes”.’ (2011 p. 226) CoE worked based on a conviction that deliberate destruction of heritage prevented the people living in the region from fulfilling their potential as European citizens and that identification with Europe had to be stimulated. Powerful stakeholders in the region were however not convinced that their attitude towards the past had to change. (Vos 2015) The regional programme was launched in BiH in 2003. (Vos 2015 p. 719; Council of Europe 2003) Even though CHwB was not involved in this programme in BiH it shows that the Swedish interventions were part of a bigger process transforming the whole region.

Cultural heritage was seen as an important factor in the process of getting BiH economy back on track. Office of the Highest Representative saw strong economic potential in tourism and since the country did not have sandy beaches the attractions had to be nature, adventures and historically interesting sites. Cultural heritage would become the base on which to build a tourism industry. Reinstateing tourism was one of the aims with rebuilding the iconic bridge in Mostar, Stari Most, and the area around it. In Jajce CHwB was involved in finding local partners to restore and develop several strategic areas to attract tourists anew to the city. (SA 11 p.12)

The above-mentioned Swedish government proposition stated that Sweden supported the aim of the UN and the World Bank to make global development cooperation more result-oriented. The donating countries must be able to present clear and measurable results of their activities. (Prop 2002/03:122 p. 73) For this reason, Sida seconded one of their employees, Margareta Husén, to work in the CHwB head office in Stockholm for three years starting in 2005. Her mission was to educate the CHwB staff in methods used by Sida. The agency reckoned CHwB had to improve how the NGO dealt with issues of project objectives, indicators, risk assessment and management. It also had to analyse how activities affected eventual ethnic tension and what risks there were for conflicts flaring up. The agency also did not think the foundation worked enough with equality and gender perspectives in their projects. (SA 11–1) These improvements was an immediate result of a new methodology adopted by Sida for ensuring the outcomes of funded projects. (Logical Framework Approach 2003) CHwB was forced to demonstrate that it had distinct objectives, identified stakeholders and knew how to evaluate their projects from beginning to end. (SA 12)

At this time Sida started to embrace some of the particular values endorsed by CHwB. A clear expression of this fusion was the publication Caring for the Historic Environment (Johansson and Tannerfeldt 2005 p. 13) presenting guidelines in which cultural heritage was seen as a resource for empowering poor people. They emphasized the view promoted by the new Faro convention that all humans have a right to their own heritage. The importance of using traditional material and methods were emphasised, as well as the potential dangers of unplanned urbanisation and mass tourism. (These were views that had been promoted by CHwB for a long time, and they were now integrated into the policymaking of Sida:

Development cooperation should strengthen the partner-country’s capacity to protect and use its heritage resources both by increasing skills and helping to make institutions and regulations work more efficiently. Relief programmes after natural or man-made disasters should be designed in order to protect and maintain the assets of the historic environment and ensure their further development. (…) Ambitions to use and develop society’s cultural heritage should not be seen as a burden for development cooperation. On the contrary, a perspective that views the historic environment as a resource can help in creating a constructive basis for cooperation. (Johansson and Tannerfeldt 2005 p. 5)

The text accentuates the protection of cultural heritage by educating professionals and that it is possible to respect the cultural heritage in different relief programmes. For example, in BiH CHwB’ collaboration with Crossroads in Jajce was an effort to prove that heritage was not a burden in the process of rebuilding homes. The text also wants to show that cultural heritage should be seen as
a resource and tool to reach other aims, something that Sida had promoted. Caring for the Historic Environment can be seen as a fusion of CHwB preservation focus and Sida development focus.

In CHwB’s applications the view of cultural heritage as an asset became increasingly visible:

We look upon the cultural heritage as a driving force for sustainable development based on international conventions and fully in line with the Swedish policy for global development. The right to a cultural heritage is part of the human rights. (...) but cultural heritage can also be an important tool for economic development as even poor countries can be rich of a powerful cultural environment and have a rich heritage – sometimes it’s even one of its best assets. In restoration traditional handicrafts are used and brought into usage again, which form a basis for small entrepreneurs and a cheaper way of building. (SA 11)

Heritage was seen through the lens of economic development, reflecting a much broader trend of making cultural heritage into an instrument of social change in the twenty-first century. This was a trend that was distant from the original, more idealistic objectives of CHwB.

According to Kisić (2013 p. 293) this turn of focus represented a shift away from dealing with more troubling questions of guilt, destruction and reconciliation. The EU had increasingly turned away from an understanding of peace, justice and social cohesion as overarching aims, stressing instead economic growth. It was easier to comprehend and speak of growth within the frames of a liberal market economy instead of stressing the need for understanding and communicating across ethnic identities. In a similar fashion, the importance of working towards reconciliation that had been an important aim for CHwB was gradually downplayed. In their first applications, there was a notable wish to free cultural heritage from the negative connotations of trauma and charge heritage with positive memories emphasising reconciliation and peace. CHwB saw cultural heritage as filled with symbolic meanings and believed it was one of the keys to peace, but soon realised that society in BiH was not quite ready for this. Sida also spoke of reconciliation during the first years. But as shown in the paper cultural heritage soon lost its place as a carrier of symbolic values and became an asset for generating money and job opportunities. The international bodies grew tired of dealing with the problematic questions and chose to focus on growth instead. There was no more lingering in the past – BiH was to become part of a modern European community.

For CHwB the years 2005–2008 meant finishing projects in BiH and securing long-term investments with the implementation of the exit plan. The foundation compiled maintenance plans for all the buildings they had restored, in all nineteen projects in eight cities and villages. (SA 11:9 p. 14) It was crucial to try to secure the restored buildings for the future, because if they once again were neglected and not seen as a ‘common human resource (...) with capacity to reach the public at large in a dialogue’ that development would be an underlying threat to peace in the region’. (SA 11)

CHwB finished its last restoration project in BiH in 2007. From that point on its support to cultural heritage in the country was channelled exclusively through Bosnian participants in the different networks started by the foundation. (SA 13 p. 13) The purpose of these networks was partially to develop competence, but foremost to connect people active within the cultural heritage sector and get them to collaborate across ethnicity and state boundaries. CHwB increasingly saw itself as a facilitator whose mission it was to create conditions for taking the first step towards reconciliation in the region. Even though the Swedish part of CHwB was instructed to leave BiH their local office in Sarajevo continued its work. It continued to administer projects on a regional level, but later it returned to also running domestic projects. Through its local offices, CHwB has continued to be a force within the field of heritage preservation and development in Southeast Europe.

**Conclusion**

CHwB was first created in Sweden in 1995 to preserve cultural heritage in areas where man-made or natural disasters had damaged heritage resources. The following decade was a period of great change in Southeast Europe, where CHwB mostly worked, as well as in international aid contributions aimed for
the recovery of the region. It was not an easy task for a small, non-profit NGO to understand the complex and shapeshifting landscape of Swedish and international organisations assisting in the reconstruction. CHwB, however, made a marked contribution in that it specifically directed attention to the problem of restoring and maintaining the diverse cultural heritage of the region. Many historic buildings had been targeted in the conflict, and others had suffered from long-time neglect or unsuitable adaptation. In a few years, however, CHwB began to veer away from its overall focus on preservation of architectural heritage and museum collections, and instead pay more attention to the training of professionals and to the creation of incentives for economic and social development. This was a huge ideological shift to make for the small organisation that initially had gotten its energy from idealists and preservationists.

The objectives that initiated intervention in the country were quite far from the ones that came to sustain it. In the beginning, both Sida and CHwB saw the re-building and reconstruction of war-damaged cultural heritage as a way to re-establish returning refugees, reinstating the Muslim Bosnians’ cultural identity and remind them of the country’s (ideally) shared heritage. One important point for CHwB was to repair some of the damage caused by the war and to make its visual traces disappear. The cultural memory of World War II and how historical buildings were re-erected in the old city of Warsaw in a reaction against the vast destruction was vivid in the minds of at least a couple of leading persons in CHwB. It was believed that if the same heritage that had been deliberately targeted in the war was reconstructed, this could be the start of a reconciliation process. The most important motive for rebuilding cultural heritage was for the sake of the symbolic values it represented.

Rebuilding a destroyed site is however not the only and may not even be the most important action one can take. Kalman (2017) and Khalaf (2017) have recently suggested that there can be a number of ways to use cultural heritage to mitigate trauma after disasters or conflicts. If we recognize that cultural heritage is not merely a set of material artefacts, we also need to consider the immaterial aspects of it, namely those of memories, identity, customs and associations. CHwB worked from its beginnings with a predominant material definition of cultural heritage borrowed from Swedish heritage institutions. After some years of planning and carrying out restoration work, however, the organisation began to design projects that would focus on the processual character of heritage. (Legnér 2018) Preserving heritage in South-East Europe was no longer ‘just’ about rebuilding or adapting houses but also about understanding the minds of the local population, communicating with it and understanding its cultural traditions. This was the way forward to establish a more sustainable approach to heritage. Two overlooked reasons why the reconstruction of buildings has had such dominance in post-war recovery is that it creates jobs in the building sector of a damaged economy, and that reconstruction leads to tangible and visual results. This is not bad in any way, but organisations working in the field of cultural heritage in disaster and conflict areas should also become better at assessing the emotional and spiritual values of places in the minds of local communities.

If a more complete understanding of the values and memories of a community could be achieved by those who intervene, that understanding could be used to empower the community by making it possible to preserve and celebrate its heritage. There is a number of ways of managing a dissonant past, and cultural heritage has not only important material aspects but also immaterial ones. CHwB performed a lot of restoration and conservation on buildings in the examined period, but today many of them are dilapidating due to lack of sustainable reuse, management and unclear financially and legally responsible bodies. (Hadzic, Arapi Krasniqi, and Bllaci 2016) The case of CHwB and recovery of cultural heritage in BiH after 1995 shows that it is important to acknowledge and manage both the tangible and intangible aspects of cultural heritage.

Notes on contributors

Malin Stengård is MA of Arts in Conservation and BA of Arts in Art History and Conservation. Her research interests are post-conflict reconstruction of cultural heritage.
Mattias Legnér is Professor in Conservation and Reader in History at Conservation, Department of Art History, Uppsala University Campus Gotland, Visby, Sweden. In recent years he has researched worldwide targeting of heritage sites and post-conflict reconstruction of cultural heritage in Kosovo. He is currently working on a book about cultural property protection in Scandinavia during World War II.

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