

Anima International's Reporting of Leadership, Strategy, and Culture (2020)

This document contains responses written by the charity. ACE has made no content changes other than the removal of confidential information.

Workplace Culture

How would you describe your organization's culture?

Anima International is a coalition of grassroots organizations in which we work in many campaign teams, task groups, and local volunteer teams. Volunteers constitute the majority of our organization. By creating an organizational culture, we create it on many levels, from local volunteer groups in the countries that we operate in to employee teams on international level.

The most important parts of our organizational culture are:

- Shared values, such as compassion
- Freedom and ownership
- Creating a psychologically safe organization
- Transparency
- Self-development

Psychological safety

Psychological safety means being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences of self-image, status or career. This term is defined as the basis of well performing teams. We try to create teams in the organization based on building psychological safety. We conduct training sessions on building psychological safety within the organization (also for local group leaders), as well as for other organizations. We provide and create materials for building psychological safety in our internal knowledge base.

We believe that creating psychological safety is key to effective team performance. It influences, among others aspects, the evaluation of activities, submitting ideas, asking questions, speaking up about the problems, as well as creating an atmosphere of support in the team. All these factors allow us to draw conclusions from our successes and failures, as well as to set the bar high and provide high quality tasks on time. Because in Anima International we work in many teams (on local, national and international level) effective team building is an important part of our organizational culture.

Transparency

We try to be transparent on many levels of our organization. Both in relation to people who support Anima International and those acting in our organization. We believe that radical transparency is a very important part of our activities. Transparency is manifested in our organization by such things as:

Transparent salaries

Ability to see the OKRs for all members of staff at any time, including management
Access to Toggl Plan for all members of staff, including management, so everyone can see what others are working on
Openness on decision making and changes in strategy

Cultural differences

While we as an organisation share many of our most important values e.g. compassion, effectiveness, data-driven, it should be noted that the culture also varies according to country, taking into account the age of the organisation and the country history in which it operates. Team maturity, the age of the animal rights movement within the operating country and the local culture all have effects on what it feels like to work in our country organisations.

Further information

For more information on Anima International's culture, please see section "Anima International's Culture Code" on page 30 of the AI employee Handbook. It should also be noted that we are investing a lot of time this year and in the coming months to re-evaluate and establish this culture further.

Do you regularly conduct surveys to learn about staff morale and work climate?

We regularly interview staff and conduct surveys about morale within the organisation. We don't, however, limit ourselves to just staff. In fact when Otwarte Klatki was established it was a 100% volunteering based organisation. Right from the beginning, we cared a lot about creating a culture of trust, safety, and activist wellbeing in our local groups. This group wellbeing is crucial for volunteers to become long-term activists and stay with us for longer periods of time as well as to encourage them to take on more responsibility.

In each of our Polish local groups, the volunteer coordinator conducts training about psychological safety for all group leaders and others who work with volunteers. Local coordinators are also responsible for measuring the mood in their group and solving potential problems within the group.

Once we started to hire people, we wanted to spread this culture from local groups to employees. Anima International countries which have more than three people hired and their own infrastructure (Poland, Denmark, Lithuania, Estonia, Ukraine) do interviews or surveys about employee wellbeing in their teams and constantly work to improve the system to be even more

regular and effective. In addition, each employee is assigned a supervisor with whom they have regular weekly calls about their work and wellbeing.

For all AI countries we created an additional survey on the international level. This allows us to gauge staff morale and react to any problems we identify. As Anima International is a recently established organisation we have conducted the survey twice (once per year) and would definitely like to repeat such research in the future as we found it very valuable, both for leadership and employees. The survey we use contains questions about, amongst other subjects:

- Job satisfaction
- Information availability
- Working atmosphere
- Interactions between colleagues from all the AI countries
- Feeling of being valued by the leadership and co-workers
- Feeling that the organization cares about employee wellbeing
- Feeling comfortable to give other people feedback and creating a workspace which respects diversity and different opinions
- Clarity of the structure of the organization in every country
- Availability of opportunities to learn new skills and tactics
- Decision making
- Being encouraged to learn and gain new skills
- Being fairly paid for work
- Having the tools and resources necessary to do work properly
- Feeling able to utilize our time-off policy and take the time off that is needed
- Receiving adequate feedback on performance
- Burn out - do employees know how to ask for help

The full questionnaire is available in the link below:

<https://otwarte-klatki.typeform.com/to/fZu1Ko>

In June we also conducted a completely anonymous survey about communication in Anima International for all our employees. The goal of the survey was to identify the problems and issues people in Anima International experience while communicating with each other. Based on the information gathered we are now looking for ways to make international communication easier and more pleasant for everyone involved and will soon publish the "communication best practice policy" which we are now working on.

The questions were divided into a few sections including:

- Questions about Slack
- Projects not directly related with work
- Resources in Anima International
- Decision making

- Communication with colleagues
- Giving feedback
- Final questions

Most of the questions were on the Likert Scale with one open question at the end of each section ("Anything else you would like to add regarding this topic?"). The "final questions" section consisted of 3 open questions ("Anything else you would like to say about communication in AI?"; "Anything you would like to say about communication in the organization in your country?"; "Anything else you would like to say in general?")

To make sure the survey was completely anonymously, we made a clear disclaimer that the answers to open questions would not be shared with anyone in full to avoid the possibility that one can be recognized for their style of writing.

Finally, after Kirsty Henderson was made Acting CEO following the removal of Dobrosława Gogłozka from the position and from the organisation, she decided to set up 1-2-1 calls with every employee, and potentially further down the line, key volunteers, in the organisation. So far she has spoken with 11 staff members from 9 different countries and the calls were usually around 1 hour long. This was designed as an opportunity for staff to share their thoughts about Anima International, about leadership, about communication, their hopes and fears for the future and how they think the organisation can be improved. This project is ongoing.

(How) do you integrate and encourage diversity practices within your recruitment and hiring process?

Our answer to this hasn't changed significantly since last year, so we will repeat it and include details about further ways we have incorporated diversity practices when hiring.

As an organization and part of a social movement which aspires to make the world a better place, diversity and equity are crucial for us. We consider it important for ethical reasons (fairness) and organizational reasons (increasing performance). We also acknowledge that diversity is instrumental in creating a respectful and inclusive workplace, although it is not the end in itself. Therefore we have to make sure that underrepresented groups are not only welcomed but also feel respected, have equal opportunities and are full team members.

Currently, we consider the implementation of transparent, unbiased procedures as one of the most important factors in avoiding discrimination against people of different backgrounds or cognitive styles.

We certainly struggle with different operational capacities in some regions, and there are cultural and organizational differences between some countries that Anima International works in. This means our recruitment processes are not standardized. Furthermore, we always use an approach that is best for the current situation, sometimes we have to decrease resources allocated to

recruitment and, therefore, sacrifice our emphasis on diversity to some extent. We elaborate more on this in the response to the question “Is there anything else you'd like us to know about your organization's human resources policies?”.

During our recruitment processes we aim to integrate the best practices advised by research. As an example, these are the practices we integrated into three of our most recent recruitments:

- We preannounced recruitment a few weeks before the actual recruitment
- When announcing our recruitment we focused on a narrow list of required traits
- During the pre-recruitment stage we gathered and shared special material with tips on what information would be good to know for those considering applying. The materials covered most of the required skills needed for the role with the aim of helping people who come from under-represented backgrounds or those who lack specific skills feel more prepared and encouraged to apply.
- We actively headhunted individuals after getting feedback from our networks on people with relevant skills and who we then asked to apply. This is because we are aware that some particularly promising individuals may not feel confident enough to apply
- We organised a series of webinars addressing the most important topics and experience of recruiting, with the aim of making the emotional toll smaller and ensuring that people are more confident in themselves (for example by talking about our experience when we went through the process)
- We performed recruitment by hiring in rounds, and not on a rolling basis
- During evaluations we randomized, anonymized and depersonalized answers and test results for evaluators
- When we announced recruitment we tried to use messaging that makes it easier for less confident people to apply
- Evaluators rated answers independently before a joint meeting
- We tried to generate general guidelines for what are expected answers (although we also identified problems with this approach)
- We stated salary in recruitment offers
- We made the process transparent, clearly stated estimated an timeline and communicated at every step with candidates
- We collected and provided feedback after recruitment
- We minimized human errors and bias by automating parts of the process using custom software
- In our largest organisations (Denmark and Poland) we organise pre-recruitment meeting events where interested parties can learn about the role and meet the team before even applying for the job

It's worth noting that when our national organizations are heavily based on volunteer work and grassroots outreach, like in Poland, for example, we try to implement most of the mentioned solutions at the stage of volunteer recruitment. Some work very well, but we also underperform in some, like outreach to people living outside of bigger cities, where our main groups are based.

We also aim to work on solutions that will allow underrepresented ethnic groups to volunteer for us, like older people and immigrants from Belarus and Ukraine. We measure diversity in our organization yearly, form conclusions and publish results openly on our website -

<https://www.otwarteklatki.pl/blog/kto-tworzy-otwarte-klatki>

Apart from improving recruitment and hiring processes, we are also investing in the creation of a supportive workplace and an environment focused on personal. Our current solutions include:

- Data collection on employee work satisfaction
- The improvement of procedures that allow people to report problems
- Flexible hours and remote work
- Data collection on work-life balance within the workplace
- Measuring diversity
- Transparent salaries based on algorithms to avoid favouritism and other related biases, we also make them public on our website in a commitment to transparency - <https://www.otwarteklatki.pl/transparentne-pensje-w-otwartych-klatkach/>
- Investment of management time to research and acknowledge cultural differences with the goal of creating a workplace that doesn't exclude people based on their cultural background and resulting interpersonal communication styles

We consciously decided not to run more common practices, like debias or diversity training, as we believe that evidence doesn't support it as being effective.

While we strive for a comfortable workplace we are also aware that choosing certain solutions (like remote work) may make it harder for certain personalities or minorities to work well within our framework. Additionally, the societies we operate in are less ethnically diverse. Thus, as we move to more diverse societies we need to remind ourselves to continuously learn and test new solutions.

Admittedly, it's very hard to navigate through data on how to create an inclusive organization, but from the very start, we were committed to doing so. We encountered certain bottlenecks that constrained our ability to be more diverse, like lack of sufficient operational power, lack of resources to invest into proper diversity solutions, and fast growth that made us increase the speed of scaling up. Yet, we are confident we properly identified these problems. While this may seem far from perfect, we are always learning and innovating, and as the emphasis and data on equity solutions are growing worldwide we are certain we will implement (and drop) a lot more ideas that will allow us to be a better organization.

What areas of your organizational culture have room for improvement?

We see several areas of our culture where we would like to make improvements. These are big subjects that will take years to tackle but we are confident that focused hard work in these areas will help us improve.

Re-evaluating and formalising our values

After the change in CEO we decided to use this moment in our organisation's history to go back to the drawing board on several different important subjects and really get to the foundation of why we exist. We are in the process of redrafting the values that Anima International wants to live by. These values are already very present in the organisation in many ways but we want to make sure that everyone agrees and knows what they are more formally.

Psychological safety

We feel that having psychologically safe environments at work is one of the most important things to ensure staff happiness and effectiveness. Being psychologically safe means that employees and volunteers are not scared of speaking up. They aren't worried about saying something wrong and they don't feel scared about making a mistake. They don't refrain from questioning others or methods for fear of punishment for example. After the removal of our former CEO, we think that the psychological safety within some of our teams has taken a hit. While we are already working to rebuild this we know it will take time and lots of meaningful work.

Diversity and inclusion

We already have several systems in place to encourage diversity within the organisation - please see question "(How) do you integrate and encourage diversity practices within your recruitment and hiring process?" for more details as to what we currently do.

Nonetheless we are always aiming to improve further. There are several areas that we would like to work on here, such as improving our recruitment processes further, increasing the diversity of applicant pools and specifically searching for applicants or volunteers from various backgrounds which would bring our staff-base more in line with societies in which we work. For example, in Poland, a large majority of society is Catholic and yet very few of our activists or volunteers reflect this.

Feedback collection

While identifying areas for improvement earlier in the year we acknowledged that feedback collection could be even better. We already run several surveys, some of which are anonymous, but we want to invest more time into thinking how best to collect honest feedback from employees and volunteers. More information on what we currently do is provided in the answer to the question "Do you regularly conduct surveys to learn about staff morale and work climate?" We believe we can be even better.

Cultural understanding

We believe that we still have a long way to go to ensure cultural understanding of our teams working in different countries. When working in ten different countries, each with their own customs, mannerisms, ways of speaking and working it is vital to ensure that those involved understand that there are differences across borders, but the difficulties this highlights cannot be understated. For example, our colleagues in the UK or Scandinavia may be considered insincere

because they are often nicer and less direct in their communication styles. Polish employees often appreciate more direct forms of communication and management. In the same vein, the direct Polish style may come across as harsh or rude to staff or volunteers in the UK.

Better transfer of knowledge

One of the main reasons we created Anima International was to ensure the effective transfer of knowledge, experience and skills across countries. We still think there is a long way to go with this, especially regarding more philosophical or organisational culture transfer. For example, it is much easier for us to transfer the knowledge about how to effectively write press releases from one country to another than it is to transfer knowledge about how to ensure you hire the best people, as the latter is specific to the organisational culture and not just a skill to tick off. There is lots more important work to be done here.

Do you have a workplace code of ethics or a similar document that clearly outlines expectations for employee behavior?

Yes. You can view it using this link:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Zw_w0IbR_9327dNnQRshdk2GR_HVrwglmAOfC1HqwCl/edit?usp=sharing

How much time and funding is allocated for the professional development of staff?

Our employees are encouraged and expected to spend 5-10 hours of their work hours per month on self-development, and a large portion of our staff are on the upper end of this scale. We treat self-development and constant learning as a valuable part of our work. Every single employee includes a section about self-development in their OKRs (our system of creating long-term plans for work) so learning is evaluated and prioritised using the same systems as other tasks and projects connected with our work. Our employees create their plans for self-development independently and can set educational goals along with their mentors/supervisors if preferred. The system with self-development OKRs is present in all Anima International countries.

Moreover, we offer our employees access to internal and external training materials and courses. Funding allocated to personal development is currently unlimited. We provide funding based on the estimated cost-effectiveness rather than the cost alone. While it currently seems unlikely, this system may change if our self-development expenses start to put a strain on our organisational capacity.

As for as access to courses/training/books and all self-development materials in the organization, volunteers have the same freedom of access as employees.

We also have a self-development policy. More information on this can be found in the answer to "Does your organization have any other important or unusual policies you'd like us to know about?"

Do you offer a health care plan or a healthcare reimbursement account?

In every country where we operate general healthcare is free or reimbursed by the government. The only country where this is not the case is Ukraine, so here we do offer staff standard health care insurance offered by the state. Nonetheless, due to limits for employers, in countries with enough size we also provide optional premium health care.

How many days of paid time off, sick days, and personal leave do you offer full-time employees per year?

We offer all full-time employees paid time off, paid sick days and personal leave. The amount varies according to the laws of the countries in which they are employed.

Paid time off - between 20 (Lithuania) and 30 days per year (France), not including national holidays.

Sick days - varies very widely between countries based on the law and depends on how much time is taken off and for what illness. Currently there is no real 'limit' in any country but the amount of salary the employee receives generally decreases the longer they are on sick leave, due to legal constraints. We can provide more in-depth explanations for each individual country if needed.

Personal leave - This is taken when needed with no limit, decided on a case by case basis

List of Policies

Please indicate which of the following policies your organization is committed to, in writing.

Please note: while we think it is generally better to have more of these policies rather than fewer, we do not expect every organization to have all or even most of these policies in place. We do not currently require organizations to have a certain number of these policies in order to receive a recommendation from us.

Checklist:

- ✓ Regularly scheduled performance evaluations
- ✓ All positions have clearly defined essential functions with written job descriptions
- ✓ Staff salaries are determined by a formal compensation plan
- ✓ A written statement that your organization does not discriminate on the basis of race, sexual orientation, disability status, or other characteristics
- ✓ A written statement supporting gender equity and/or discouraging sexual harassment

- ✓ A simple and transparent written procedure for filing complaints
- ✓ An optional anonymous reporting system
- ✓ Mandatory reporting of harassment or discrimination through all levels of the managerial chain, up to and including the board of directors
- ✓ Explicit protocols for addressing concerns or allegations of harassment or discrimination
- ✓ All reported instances of harassment or discrimination are documented, along with the outcomes of each case
- ✗ Regular, mandatory trainings on topics such as harassment and discrimination in the workplace
- ✓ An anti-retaliation policy protecting whistleblowers and those who report grievances
- ✓ Flexible work hours
- ✗ Internships are paid (if your organization has interns; leave blank if it does not)
- ✓ Paid family and medical leave
- ✗ Simple and transparent written procedure for submitting reasonable accommodation requests
- ✓ Remote work option is available
- ✗ Audited financial documents (e.g. for U.S. organizations the most recently filed IRS form 990) are available on the charity's website
- ✓ Formal orientation is provided to all new employees
- ✓ Funding for training and development is consistently available to each employee
- ✓ Funding is provided for books or other educational materials related to each employee's Work
- ✗ Paid trainings are available on topics such as: diversity, equal employment opportunity, leadership, and conflict resolution
- ✗ Paid trainings in intercultural competence (for multinational organizations only)
- ✓ Simple and transparent written procedure for employees to request further training or support

Does your organization have any other important or unusual policies you'd like us to know about?

These are some of the policies you may be interested in that are not covered in other answers:

Movement building

Our movement building policy states that employees can be paid even if they spend their work time helping to build the movement as a whole, and not necessarily working for the benefit of Anima International itself. For example, staff members can choose to dedicate a portion of their time to training people from other organisations and other countries which will have no immediate benefit to AI, but will benefit the movement as a whole. We have assisted, advised or trained people from across the world and will continue to do so in the future.

Transparent salaries

While all our member organisations have formal compensation plans, some of our countries take this to the next level by working with flat, transparent salaries for all employees including management. In Poland, for example, we publish all employees' salaries on our website and in the press for everyone to see and there is very little difference between the salaries of employees and management.

Psychological support

The first half of the year was a challenging time for Anima International, having gone through a change in CEO and also feeling the effects of the pandemic. Because of these challenges, we decided to dedicate a portion of our funds to the psychological support of staff. Staff members and volunteers in all countries were given the opportunity to have therapy costs covered by the organisation. We believe this is a good investment, firstly for the mental health of our staff and activists and secondly to ensure that we can continue operating efficiently.

Self-development policy

Our self-development policy states that all staff should invest between 5-10 hours of their paid work per month on learning and self-development. This may include reading books, taking online or offline courses or learning a language for example. Other options are also available. We include this self-development work as part of our OKRs to ensure that it is given the same priority as other projects.

Corporate Social Responsibility report

In one of the biggest branches of Anima International - Otwarte Klatki (Polish Open Cages) we publish our Corporate Social Responsibility policy. In the report we highlight our sustainability approach on climate change, human rights, governance and social well-being. The report was done using GRI Standards - <https://www.globalreporting.org/standards> - global standards for sustainability reporting. This year was the second time we compiled and published it. Only two other NGOs publish such a report in Poland. Link to the report from 2020:

<https://panel-otwarteklatki.ok.k8s.dance/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/SOK-RWS-2019-lq.pdf>

If your organization has an employee handbook or written list of policies, please provide a link here or email it to us.

Note: This information was shared with ACE via email.

Is there anything else you'd like us to know about your organization's human resources policies?

When it comes to the organization's policies, culture, and management practices it's crucial to underline the specific structure of Anima International to gain a better understanding of the way we operate.

Anima International is a new organization that is still being formed as a result of a joint effort of Anima (Scandinavia) and Open Cages (Eastern Europe). Data on merges from for-profit industries suggests that most of them fail, and the main factors are cultural and leadership style differences. This is why we aim for an organization that is more of a coalition of various groups than one hierarchical monolith. This structure and the fact that the merge is still in progress means not every policy reflects exactly every group status. Saying this, we agree upon the best practices and management described here, but that implementation is at various stages depending on the country.

Furthermore, in regards to structure, the independence of national groups means minor policy differences are a fact not only because of the merge but also in regard to every member organization's growth stage, cultural (and legal) context, and capacity. To be more precise, while it's the role of Anima International leadership to ensure and help with the implementation of policies in every country, we also have to be mindful and respectful that smaller groups have a harder time finding the required time and expertise to dedicate operations to it and consult every policy with legal experts in the country they operate in. This is why there may be minor differences between countries, like the Polish chapter of Anima International and, for example, Belarusian one.

It's also worth mentioning that in Europe a lot of policies are determined by law, like free paid time, maternity leave, health benefits, protection against discrimination, harassment, providing a job description, etc., so there is no need to have written policies governing some of these issues.

Additionally, we would like to add that as an organization we have always valued organizational culture and worked on it from the beginning of the organization. We believe culture and its management are crucial in creating an effective, dynamic and flexible organization. We are continuously working on this culture of personal development, trust, respect, independence, and open discussions. While we can try to reflect this in some policies we implement, like transparent and flat salaries in some of our groups, or specific incentives in the workplace (like paying employees to help other organizations in their work time), most of our culture is not written. And to be frank, it's hard to imagine the effectiveness of such policies if they are written. But little active or hard effort is put to propagate these values within the group. While we know that some policies are required and important to have, and organizations should build fail proof systems, we discovered that a lot of evidence in management practices points to the fact that not every policy works and not every policy is sufficient to fix potential problems.

On a final note, we would like to point out that because of our structure and leadership style we have about 700 people in Anima International, while more than 600 are volunteers, they share virtually the same access to our organization, be it Google Drive, Slack workplaces or Trello boards. This creates a challenging environment to operate in due to various personalities, big group diversity and cultural backgrounds, and a lot of interpersonal relations. While we have had some conflicts and personal problems, the most important HR issue took place this year when we had to remove our CEO. This was a challenging moment for Anima International but we are confident that we came out of it stronger than ever. We feel proud that we were able to listen to our staff and volunteers and take action, even when it required the removal of the most powerful member of the organisation.

Leadership and Strategy

Please identify 1–5 key members of your organization’s leadership team.

Leader 1

Please list this leader's: (1) name, (2) role, (3) the number of years they've been with your organization.

Kirsty Henderson, Acting CEO, 2.5 years

Leader 2

Please list this leader's: (1) name, (2) role, (3) the number of years they've been with your organization.

Jan Sorgenfrei, Director of Campaigns, 16 years

Leader 3

Please list this leader's: (1) name, (2) role, (3) the number of years they've been with your organization.

Jakub Stencel, Director of Development, 6 years

Leader 4

Please list this leader's: (1) name, (2) role, (3) the number of years they've been with your organization.

Marta Cendrowicz, Director of Corporate Outreach, 5 years

Leader 5

Please list this leader's: (1) name, (2) role, (3) the number of years they've been with your organization.

Kristina Mering, President of Nahtamatud Loomad (Estonia), 3 years

Questions for Primary Leader:

What do you consider to be your organization's major strengths?

We aim for full transparency

We try to be as transparent with our staff, volunteers, donors and others in the animal protection movement as possible. Transparency is one of our key values as we believe that it makes us more effective. We try to be honest about mistakes we have made as well as difficulties we are facing. For example, many of our organisations are transparent about salaries, including the algorithms which are used to decide them. Our largest group, Otwarte Klatki, even publishes the salaries of all staff, including leaders, on its website. We are far from being perfect, however, and we would like to uphold our value of transparency even stronger in the future.

We are willing to sometimes make mistakes

In Anima International, we accept that all of us sometimes make mistakes. We also acknowledge that the greatest learning opportunities often come from what we would normally call 'failures'. With this in mind, part of our internal culture is to remove some of the shame that is often felt around the idea of making mistakes, and ensure that not only do people feel comfortable making them, but they use the experience to become a better activist. We share mistakes openly within the organisation, and even have a dedicated 'failure wall' Slack channel where staff and volunteers can write about the latest mistake they made. On many of our regular calls we have a standing agenda item where everyone can share a story about a mistake they made recently, including leadership. The talk I gave at this year's CARE conference was entitled "Why mistakes will be your biggest success" during which I made a mistake. This is also designed to demonstrate that everyone makes mistakes, including those with the most experience.

We have lots of leaders

While I previously mentioned problems that have arisen because we are a merged organisation made up of several different groups, there are also strengths to this approach. One of those is the fact that because we previously existed as different and more or less independent organisations, we are able to count lots of experienced and capable leaders as part of the organisation, leaders who were pushing things forward in their country, on their own, before Anima International even existed. This means we have lots of knowledge and experience at our fingertips, and the possibility of having a leader bottleneck is somewhat minimised. Ensuring we support and encourage future leaders, in our organisation and beyond, is central to the future success of the movement.

We think of wellbeing in activism

People are our biggest asset. We strive for an environment in which people can prosper not only now, but in the future to come. Activism is hard, emotionally exhausting and sometimes dangerous. We go to farms and film animal torture, we are being sued by powerful corporations and personally attacked by groups that are adjacent to the factory farming industry. We need to be aware of how this all contributes to a decrease in health and life satisfaction and aim to create a place where people can not only fight our fight, but also rest.

We put a lot of emphasis for psychological safety

Group performance is predicted by many things, but one of the most important is psychological safety. The ability to speak up freely without a feeling of shame, embarrassment or fear. We try to cultivate psychological safety, be honest with each other and make sure people can question everything and ask about everything. We fight status and ego, we focus on what is correct and what is not.

We work grassroots

We work as a grassroots organisation

Most of our work is done by people who are not hired. We have a few hundred people scattered throughout the countries in which we work and this is constantly growing. We want to be part of the movement that will bring about change, so we structure ourselves in such a way that will give us the greatest chance of being successful. This is uniquely challenging, but at the same time rewarding.

We focus on the goal, not on the tool

We try to be evidence based and critical. We don't take our intuitions, experiences and opinions as facts. We seek data, knowledge and good arguments against our thinking. We train ourselves to constantly look to improve and aim for our tools to be as effective for social change as possible.

We give people autonomy

Every person, whether hired or a volunteer is a co-owner of our organization. We try to structure our organization having this thought in mind. We give people freedom, responsibility and autonomy. They are responsible for goal-setting and the structure of their teams' work. We think this combination of top-bottom and bottom-up management gives us an advantage in the effectiveness of our activism.

What do you consider to be your organization's major weaknesses?

Cultural differences/merge problems

I see the fact that Anima International is an organisation made up of several others that have 'merged' as being one of our main weaknesses. We were created by the coming together of nine, now 10, individual organisations rather than a central office creating its own branches. This means there are specific issues such as cultural differences, various styles of working and

differences in organisational culture that are more difficult to overcome. For example, we find that our staff and volunteers in Poland are used to much more direct communication and feedback, whereas people in the UK or Denmark tend to err more on the side of politeness. Otwarte Klatki and Anima both have their own ways of doing things, and in order to function effectively as one organisation a lot of work is needed to either agree on the differences or choose a direction. When colleagues from across Europe work together these differences are easily identified.

Growing too quickly

By 'merging' to essentially become one organisation in 2018, Anima International jumped from being two or even three much smaller organisations to being one of the largest animal protection organisations in Europe, with around 80 staff and hundreds of volunteers. We hired more staff on an international level and then my French organisation, Assiettes Végétales joined, bringing the number of organisations to 10. This was rapid growth which happened almost overnight. I also think that it is one of our weaknesses. Where it would normally take an organisation years or even decades to make such a big jump in size, which has some advantages, I believe we grew too quickly.

We are addressing this by being aware of this as an issue throughout leadership and by limiting the number of new staff or projects that we take on in the near future. We need some time to settle and stabilise. We also rolled back on a few projects, such as the idea of having a more focused presence in the US and starting an office in Germany, both of which have now been put on hold.

Fallout from removing a key member of leadership

Any leadership transition is difficult. A leadership transition where the CEO had to be removed for bad behaviour towards staff and volunteers is going to be particularly hard. We feel that while making this change was certainly the right thing to do and will make us much stronger in the long run, short-term it resulted in a weakening of the organisation as it came with the expected destabilisation of our internal operations and encouraged us to question the foundations on which AI was built. One of our leaders described the event as having surgery to improve our health. The problematic area was removed and this will allow us to heal and get stronger, but right now, we feel weaker having just woken from the procedure.

Because we are 'going back to the drawing board' on some strategies following the CEO's removal, in some ways it feels like we are slowing down with our progress, whereas in reality we are simply strengthening our foundations before moving forward again at full speed.

What's the best decision you've made as a leader?

I have only been Acting CEO since April 2020 when our former CEO was removed, but I would say the best decision I've made during this time is to initiate the re-evaluation of our strategies, culture and previously made decisions. To do this, I, along with the rest of Anima International's Managing Board, completed what we call a 'Roadmap' exercise. This is a structured exercise of

intense reflection, introspection, questioning and prioritisation. It is also a space where anyone can flag concerns, introduce ideas and have much needed discussions. The result is a clearer understanding of what our priorities actually are and who needs to do what in order to make progress. The process is very thorough and we are of course still in the middle of working through much of the most important work that was identified with this project, but i'm proud that I decided to do this immediately after the change in CEO as it is fundamental to everything we do throughout the organisation.

What's the biggest mistake (or maybe hardest decision) you've made as a leader?

Again, I haven't been Acting CEO for a long time, but I have certainly made mistakes. One that stands out is not communicating more with Animal Charity Evaluators regarding the Facebook thread discussion in the Effective Animal Advocacy group. I feel that had we communicated more effectively, the ongoing discussion regarding the issue may be quite different. At the very least, we should have been more proactive in sharing information with ACE regarding the CARE conference and we should have asked more questions to ACE, with the aim of listening and learning more. The issue is complex and ongoing, but for sure I believe greater communication on behalf of Anima International leadership would have been helpful here.

What changes have you made to your organization as a result of past successes?

Success with broilers in Denmark encouraged us to push new strategy in other countries

In a similar question from ACE last year, we wrote that we had changed strategy in Denmark regarding broiler chicken outreach. We wrote - "Historically, Anima was a more traditional animal rights organisation using the normal tactics like demonstrations and a "bad cop" approach. This evolved over recent years into adding a more professional corporate outreach style and more recently we took the decision to begin working even closer WITH the companies. Significant progress has therefore been made by entering into positive dialogue with broiler suppliers, who are now agreeing to provide broiler chickens which meet the ECC standard when needed. As this was the stumbling block for many companies (which couldn't source the needed chickens) we expect to see many commit to the ECC in the future."

Our expectations proved true and Denmark has now got several large companies on board with the ECC such as Joe & the Juice, Circle K Denmark and Sunset Boulevard. This slower, more incremental way of working with companies on broiler campaigns, which turned out to be successful, has also allowed us to work on a change in strategy in other countries.

In Ukraine for example, our organisation was struggling to get any major companies on board with a cage-free pledge, namely because there are almost zero cage-free suppliers. Taking inspiration from Denmark we decided instead to focus on building relationships with producers as well as retailers, and this year created the Cage-Free Business Alliance to bring all stakeholders together. The same kind of strategy was used when we worked on a 'positive momentum campaign' with several groups in Eastern Europe to spread the news about Metro's

commitment to go cage-free worldwide. Many of the countries we worked with such as Serbia, Bulgaria, Croatia and India either don't want to use the usual bad cop strategy or they have already found that it doesn't work well in their countries. By sharing our expertise and experience in Denmark with an alternative, we were able to help these other countries make progress.

Changing campaign in France to be more focused on incremental institutional change

We have also made significant changes to the way we run our campaigns in France. Here, we work 100% on institutional meat reduction by encouraging large companies and public institutions to implement daily plant-based options. At the beginning of our campaign two years ago, we took on more of a bad cop role, organising protests and utilising corporate style campaigns designed to pressure the administrations. We slowly began to realise that much more progress was possible if we worked with the decision makers and rather than asking them to go from zero vegetarian options to a plant-based meal every day it was more effective to introduce the idea slowly by running a Semaine Verte Dans Les Assiettes (Green Week, in English) so the chefs and managers could see that it was a success and possible to do without committing to a daily option immediately from the beginning.

Offering psychological support to staff and volunteers

This year has been very hard for many of us in Anima International. First the pandemic and confinements, the removal of our then CEO and resulting destabilisation, national crises like the ongoing war between two countries in which we work (Ukraine and Russia) and the popular uprising and resulting police violence and torture of protestors including some of our volunteers in Belarus. Throughout all this we realised that our successes for animals can only come when our staff is psychologically healthy and supported. With this in mind Anima International decided to offer to pay for psychological help for employees and volunteers to get through this difficult time and to ensure that no one was left out in the cold because they lacked the funds to get the help they needed. I consider this to be based on past successes because we have seen in the past how important good mental health and mental health support is for our staff and the organisation's aims more generally.

What changes have you made to your organization as a result of past failures?

Investing more in culture and psychological safety

Evidently, the removal of our former CEO has greatly affected our work, our priorities and our staff and volunteers this year. I think Anima International leadership acted with integrity to protect our people as soon as the extent of the problems became known, however, the issues that arose permeate the organisation still. It is now our responsibility to fix these issues and ensure that the same issues don't arise in the future. To learn from our past failures we have decided to:

- Spend time researching and identifying what allowed our former CEO's behaviour to continue, behind the scenes, for as long as it did. Identifying where there were structural, procedural or cultural problems will help us avoid this in the future.

- Ratify our commitment to having a psychologically safe workplace. By psychological safety we mean somewhere that people feel safe to speak their minds without fear of retaliation, saying the 'wrong' thing, being humiliated, shamed or laughed at. This includes staff and volunteers not being afraid to voice their opinions and raise issues where they exist.
- Create an internal culture that genuinely reflects the values that Anima International was built on - compassion, transparency, effectiveness, factfulness.

Deciding to limit our international expansion

After our change in CEO we were better placed to review previously held assumptions and re-evaluate whether we still felt they were the right direction to take. One of the strategies we decided to not continue for the time being was that of international expansion. We had plans to start a presence in the US and Germany, however, taking a look at this with fresh eyes we felt that it would be a mistake. I feel that the original decision to expand in these locations was taken too quickly without looking at all the facts. Luckily we were able to turn this mistake into a learning experience without too much loss for the organisation in terms of time and resources.

Growing too quickly

Similarly to the above, I feel that Anima International has grown too quickly, both in terms of the number of countries in which we operate and also the number of staff members we have hired. Growing very fast has had some advantages of course, and I don't think it has affected our successes, however it has put a lot of strain on internal operations and culture creation which I think could have been to some extent avoided, or at least minimised, had we grown at a slower pace. This is something we now recognise and so we are able to hold our ambitions for growth in check.

Underestimating the difficulty of conducting a merge

Perhaps the biggest failure that I think Anima International has made is that of not understanding, or acknowledging widely, just how difficult it is to merge organisations. As this wasn't addressed fully from the beginning we are now running into some internal problems such as staff bottlenecks, culture dissemination and cultural differences between countries, differences in operational processes and organisational cohesion in general.

While none of these failures can be solely blamed on one person or one mistake, and nor should they, I do feel that Dobrusia's personality was so strong, and her ambition to move forward at a rapid pace so present, that many of the questions above which are now clear issues in the organisation were left unchecked for much too long. My aim is to untangle ourselves from these difficulties and to make slow and steady progress moving forward.

What does your organization do differently from other animal organizations? How does your organization stand out?

We invest a lot of time and resources in making other organizations succeed

We want to share what we know and partner wherever we can. We believe that independent organizations might in many cultural and political contexts be more effective and diversification is a key factor in innovation. As Otwarte Klatki (who later merged with Anima Denmark to create Anima International) we got a lot of support and mentoring from more experienced organizations and we were always happy to give back to the movement. Anima Denmark was one of the organizations that invested time and money into our success without taking public credit for it. We believe therefore that both sides of the merged organization have always been committed to helping others.

Transparency, involvement and psychological safety

We try to be as transparent as possible, which can take many forms. We generally do not announce the decisions of leadership to the staff in the form of orders to be executed, but listen to their ideas about how to improve their projects or campaigns. We also encourage our staff to understand what other people are working on and struggling with (including leadership). People are not connected only with their department. Thanks to this approach, people can get input from others who have different experiences and expertise and if we decided to end one of our campaigns it would be relatively easy for people to transfer to another project

As leadership we consult with staff and volunteers in many decisions and we find their input valuable. We do offer our expertise or react if something strays too far from the strategy of the organization, but in our experience such situations are really rare. In our opinion, even if there are situations where we need to intervene, they are usually a great opportunity to have meaningful discussions about strategies and goals. We believe that thanks to being involved in many strategic discussions and decisions, most of our staff members have a very deep understanding of issues we are working on and could easily run their own organizations if they wanted.

We are also working hard to create an organization where people can speak up if they have concerns and we think this has benefited us a lot. A lot of effort of the leadership team goes into getting people from different countries to work with each other, feel connected to their colleagues and enjoy working for Anima International. When someone criticizes decisions or actions of leadership we make sure to praise it (even publicly) to show everyone that this is a behavior that is totally acceptable and even expected from them.

Have you had a leadership transition since the beginning of 2019? If yes, please describe the transition process.

In April 2020 Anima International removed then CEO Dobrosława Gogłóza from the organisation after it became apparent that her behaviour towards several members of staff and volunteers was not in line with our values. This decision was relatively quick and unexpected, and was certainly not something that we planned for.

As part of the transition process the Managing Board of Anima International elected Kirsty Henderson as the Acting CEO to help guide the organisation through the next few months. We

immediately began work on re-evaluating our goals, our structure, our work and our values, with the aim of using this as an opportunity to start anew with reaffirmed agreement from and direction for staff. We made a point of communicating often with staff about the process and challenges we are facing, and this renewed transparency is something that we intend to hold on to.

We also started requesting more in depth feedback from staff members as part of this process and Kirsty embarked on the task of having a 1-2-1 meeting with all staff members in the organisation in order to learn more about them, their work, what they see Anima International to be and what they want to see it become in the future.

We expect that the CEO position will be chosen permanently in the next few months, and it is possible that Kirsty will stay in the position.

Please provide a list of board members and brief descriptions of their occupations or backgrounds.

Governing Board

Those on the Governing Board appoint the members of the Managing Board

- Joh Vinding
- Thorbjørn Schiønning
- Lina Lind Christensen
- Gabriele Vaitkeviciute
- Pawel Rawicki

Managing Board

Day to day management of the organisation

- Kristina Mering
- Jan Sorgenfrei
- Jakub Stencel
- Marta Cendrowicz
- Kirsty Henderson

Marta Cendrowicz is a board member and International Corporate Campaigns Director in Otwarte Klatki, with five years of experience in animal advocacy. She has a Masters degree in Czech studies. Before she assumed a leading role in an animal rights organization, she worked for an international company in a manager position. Moreover, Marta has over ten years of volunteer experience in organizing concerts, events, exhibitions, workshops and music festivals in Wrocław, Poland. She was also a co-founder of the informal feminist group Liberta, which organized self-defense training and festivals, i.e. 16 Days Against Domestic Violence and Lesbians, Gays and Friends Festival. Marta's hobby outside of work is powerlifting.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/marta-cendrowicz-46807512a/>

Kirsty Henderson is an experienced animal rights activist - she has been campaigning for animal protection for eight years. As well as being Acting CEO of Anima International, Kirsty is the founding President of Assiettes Végétales, a French NGO which concentrates on large-scale plant-based institutional work, now also a member of Anima International. She holds a Masters degree in History.

www.linkedin.com/in/kirsty-henderson

Jan Sorgenfrei is a co-founder of Anima and Anima International. He has been an activist in the international animal advocacy movement for over twenty years and he has more than a decade of experience as an advisor to other organizations. Jan graduated from Copenhagen University with a specialization in animal ethics. He's a father of a teenage daughter.

Jakub Stencel is a co-founder of Anima International and a board member of Otwarte Klatki. He has ten years of experience in the animal rights movement. Jakub specializes in growth, development, and operations.

www.linkedin.com/in/jakub-stencel

Lina Lind Christensen has nine years of experience in the animal advocacy movement, including seven years working for Anima in Denmark, specializing in corporate outreach, cage-free and broiler campaign work. Lina is the founder of the "Frie Vinger" sanctuary, which rescues and rehomes laying hens and broiler chickens. She has an MA in Philosophy with a specialization in animal ethics. Lina won several awards for her work and is featured in The Unbound Project film The Machine.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/lina-lind-christensen-748b553a/>

Kristina Mering is the president of Nähtamatud Loomad (Open Cages Estonia) and has been an animal rights activist for fourteen years. She has an MA in Sociology. Kristina received the volunteer coordinator of the year award in 2018 and the NGO of the year award in 2019 from the President of Estonia.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/kristina-mering-51639814a/>

Paweł Rawicki is a co-founder and President of Otwarte Klatki. He's been an animal rights activist for over thirteen years. He's the coordinator of welfare campaigns, including the campaign for the fur farming ban in Poland. He was previously involved in a cooperative bookshop/cafe/live music venue, Falanster. He has an MA degree in Sociology.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/pawe%C5%82-rawicki-9310a7136/>

Gabriele Vaitkeviciute is a co-founder of Tušti Narvai (Open Cages Lithuania). She has seven years of experience in the animal rights movement. For four years she's been advising other NGOs in Lithuania on fundraising, communication, and work with volunteers. She's the coordinator of the fur campaign in Lithuania.

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/gabriel%C4%97-vaitkevi%C4%8Di%C5%ABt%C4%97-a26a6a9b/>

Joh Vinding is a co-founder of Anima International. He has twenty years of experience in the field of animal protection working for Anima. Joh has an MA degree in Danish and Media Studies. Joh is a father of a young daughter.

Thorbjørn Schionning is a co-founder of Anima International. He has over ten years of experience in animal advocacy, working for Anima in Denmark. He specializes in corporate outreach and media work. Thorbjørn has an MA degree in business administration and communication. Thorbjørn lives with his teenage son and a younger daughter.

What does your organization do to create or revise your strategic plan? How often do you revise strategy?

We don't have a formal schedule of revising strategy as we believe in many of our campaigns we have to be quite opportunistic due to the flexible nature of our work. We built a structure of goal setting and information sharing to be adaptive. Our short term strategy is therefore revised every three months when we set our Objectives and Key Results. We also build roadmaps, sometimes reaching out to a year or more in advance, but also more as a tool to visualize priorities than as a rigid plan. In case of big changes or noticing problems we will conduct bigger revisions of our plans. This happened in 2020, when we changed CEO and had to rethink Anima International's priorities just after the merge, based on what we learned that works and what doesn't. Feedback from individual country organisations helped us to understand the shortcomings of our structure and plans. After this, we scrapped previous priorities and created a fresh roadmap for Anima International.

How are the board and staff involved in the strategic planning process?

Our structure is based on open allocation management style and matrix structure. This model supports cross-team communication and encourages independence in setting objectives. This is reflected in the fact that our activists - staff and volunteers, set their plans using the Objective Key Results system (called OKRs). The teams have autonomy in setting their objectives and roadmaps and then based on this they provide strategy for the teams higher in the hierarchy. The role of leadership is to support groups and their needs, fill the experience or knowledge gaps and facilitate information sharing, and lastly they work on minimizing coordination costs between groups.

How do you set goals and monitor progress towards those goals?

In Anima International we use the OKR system to set goals and monitor our progress.

Purpose

OKRs are a tool to plan and evaluate our work. To track progress both on the individual and team level. Companies like Google use OKRs as a better way of evaluating employees. OKRs should always reflect the purpose of the organisation.

With this in mind, all staff and some volunteers work using the OKR system. OKRs stands for Objectives and Key Results. Each employee sets their own OKRs and re-evaluates them after each quarter. Often this evaluation has input from their supervisor and frequently teams or countries organise their own calls at the end of each quarter to discuss what they completed, where they could improve and get further feedback. Using OKRs is a great way to plan for the next three months and means that every team member is constantly assessing where they can have the most impact.

We write down OKR plans for the campaign and groups in one document in order to gather information in one clear document on planned activities. Good OKRs are 50% above what you think is possible. So they are also a tool of motivation. And if you have your OKRs in mind, it's easier for you to NOT do the random tasks that are not that important, because your OKR is pushing you forward.

Transparency

Transparency in our campaign plans and individual objectives is important for several reasons.

- It helps groups such as the media team to better plan their work, which is highly dependent on the activities of individual campaigns
- It will help campaign teams to plan the timing of the various activities so that they do not overlap with other important events organised by other campaigns
- It will make it easier for employees from other teams to get involved in activities where they do not work on a daily basis, when time permits
- It will help in assigning tasks to volunteers
- It will make it easier for us to collect information and create an archive of activities undertaken in Anima International.
- Transparency builds trust and engagement

How it works

Objectives = what do we want to do?

An objective should be concise and should outline what we want to do. It should also inspire.

Key results = how do you want to achieve your objective

Key results are how you know whether you accomplished your objectives.

Has your organization engaged in any formal self-assessments? How, when, and how regularly?

For organizational self-assessment, we use OKRs (Objectives and Key Results) goal-setting management framework. Each quarter we track our staff's individual goals and organizational objectives. We put numerical values on our results, but it's not a heavily data-driven system by design.

Additionally, we track a lot of data throughout the organization - media impressions and equivalent advertising value, our social media statistics, digital marketing performance indicators, corporate commitments obtained, staff and volunteer diversity and morale, etc., Most of these are not a key component in our organizational performance assessment, but they add useful context.

Finally, we occasionally engage outside counsel to help us undergo more formal self-assessments. Earlier this year we employed an external company to assess the organisation in Poland by collecting information from all employees. The company also asked employees for truthful feedback about the strengths and weaknesses of those in leadership positions so they can learn to be better leaders. The outside evaluation was overseen by voting members in Poland (as opposed to employees, including directors) to maximize impartiality. We were pleased with the process and may consider doing something similar in the future.

Does your organization have retrospective or “post-mortem” meetings following major projects?

After major projects, whether that be large-scale fundraising campaigns, a corporate policy campaign or the implementation of a new and important operational procedure, we gather data and results and then have the chance to "debrief" on how the project went. As part of this debrief we invite participation from staff and volunteers involved and discuss:

What went well?

What results did we achieve?

What problems did we encounter?

How could we improve the project if we were to run it again?

All staff also work with OKRs (objectives and key results) which means we encourage everyone to monitor and reflect on their work constantly, doing this more formally once every quarter when new OKRs are implemented. At the end of each quarter all staff can see whether the projects they chose as priorities were achieved, if where they spent their time was a good decision and where they fell short. This means that not only do we formally review and critique our major projects, but also our every day work.

Finally, we also have all staff meetings once per year where we do some serious self-reflection and planning on strategy, direction and how to improve the organisation.

International Operations

Do you operate in more than one country?

Yes

In which countries do you operate?

- Belarus
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France
- Lithuania
- Norway
- Poland
- Russia
- Ukraine
- United Kingdom

How long have you operated in each country?

- Denmark: 20 years
- Poland: 8 years
- Lithuania: 6 years
- Belarus: 3 years
- Estonia: 3 years
- Norway: 3 years
- Ukraine: 3 years
- United Kingdom: 2 years
- Russia: 1 year
- France: 1 month

Have you stopped operating (or closed a subsidiary) in any country? If yes, when and why?

We haven't stopped operating in any country so far, however it's maybe worth mentioning that we were thinking about more work in Asia, mostly China, as we are often contacted by local activists, but we decided not to pursue this for the moment due to the high uncertainty of the project. We also had plans to be more visible in the United States. We were contacted by activists and donors who expressed an interest in getting to know Anima International better and helping us. Our main aim with this idea was to grow our capacity and fundraising opportunities. After a lot of discussions we decided to halt these programs as we felt we had grown too quickly with our global presence and wanted to focus more on our main priorities after we removed our previous CEO. We preferred to not risk our current capacity and by that negatively influence work in other countries, especially ones in post-Soviet regions. While we still identify a lot of room for more funding in the US, we think that by not focusing enough on politically challenging countries with huge factory farming industries in which we already operate, like Russia, it could have negative long-term consequences.

What is your approach to deciding which countries to expand into?

We don't have one simple and standardized approach to deciding which countries to expand to. However, we do recognize two ways we try to expand.

One is based on perceived need and is more active. If there is a lack of resources in a specific country, we actively try to focus our attention on these regions and look for people who we can support or collaborate with as partners. This approach would be mostly motivated by factors like the scale of the factory farming industry, political significance or the state of local animal advocacy movements. This approach is risky and there is a bigger hazard of us not grasping the cultural context properly, especially for countries that are further from our cultural circle. It requires vast resources and open mindedness to not enforce solutions that we think are the best, while ignoring the voices of local people.

Our second approach is based on requests of people who want to become part of Anima International and who share our values, as well as our approach and culture. This is how Anima International was built, it focuses on mutual respect, trust and a shared vision, as we can currently be defined as a coalition of groups. This approach is less tractable for newer groups or for the ones which don't yet have a strongly developed movement.

In both approaches we are not simply looking for places to expand to, but rather to find people who are excited about animal advocacy. In our opinion, the most effective interventions will be based on a good understanding of local culture and the social-political environment. We believe that it can be more valuable to learn from more experienced activists or individuals, but it's important that there are many organizations all around the world that are run by independent local leaders. This is why we avoid to a certain extent a more top-bottom approach and we use a more collective decision-making method when structuring and building our organisation, and we seek to carefully strike the balance between experience and the intuitions of less experienced advocates about their countries.

Are your subsidiaries financially independent?

Most of our subsidiaries are independent from Anima International, but they rely heavily on Open Philanthropy Project provided budgets, especially the newer organizations in our coalition. We actively work to make them more independent. At the same time most of our subsidiaries would be able to operate fine without Anima International's help. It's worth remembering that one of Anima International's main goals is to provide more resources to less privileged regions to boost activist efficiency. This is why Scandinavia and Western countries like the United Kingdom help countries in Post-Soviet regions. It's worth adding that in Eastern European countries from the post-Soviet block it's sometimes dangerous for activists to operate and due to the political atmosphere activists have to operate differently than what is usually considered normal in the West. For these reasons, in these countries we are not yet fully registered as independent organisations and thus these countries are not financially independent. Moving funds to these

countries poses significant risk or a pretext for repression, potentially even arrest in worst case scenarios.

Do your subsidiaries have independent boards?

Yes, most of our subsidiaries have independent boards, but countries like Belarus and Russia don't and our young group in Norway is in the transitioning phase. In Eastern European countries from the post-Soviet block (Belarus, Russian Federation) it's sometimes dangerous for activists to operate and due to the political atmosphere activists have to operate differently than it's generally considered normal in the West. For these reasons, in these countries we are not fully registered as independent organisations.

What do you do to understand the local context of the countries in which you operate?

Understanding the local context is a long term project in which we know we can still improve. We often find ourselves in situations where we try to advise our organisations and teams on their strategy, but we have to be very careful of confusing well-grounded campaigning experience and confidence with simple arrogance and ignorance. To minimize errors coming from ignorance of cultural and ethnic differences we always hire local activists with experience in animal protection. We also try to host conferences, listen to experienced activists and network with them. We also dedicate mentors from an experienced pool of our activists that spend time in the countries in which we operate and educate themselves.

Our structure and open allocation model of management is less prone to errors in strategy, because of heavy encouragement of bottom-up decision making. At the same time we sometimes encounter problems with a more centralized approach to activism, when we work as part of bigger coalitions, for example when it comes to cage eggs campaigns. Most activism funds come from the United States, so there is sometimes a lack of insight regarding the dangers and obstacles in Eastern European countries, especially post-Soviet ones.

Who is responsible for decision-making for local programs carried out by the subsidiaries?

The party responsible for decision-making is the team that owns the responsibility in question. To elaborate on our structure, both within a single organization and within the whole coalition it is based on swarmwise models (more often called an open allocation management style) with a mix of matrix organizational structure. Therefore the organizations inherit the strategy from the local teams working on the ground. The higher in the hierarchy the more the function of leadership is to facilitate information sharing, mentoring and lowering coordination costs, both vertically within the organization, but also horizontally between teams that operate in external organizations.

Who is responsible for the strategy and direction of the subsidiaries?

Our structure both within a single organization and within the whole coalition is based on swarmwise models (more often called an open allocation management style) with a mix of matrix organizational structure. Most strategies are shaped within the individual teams responsible and are then adopted by individual country organisations. Where relevant, this strategy is then adopted on an international level in Anima International. For example, strategy about fundraising is created by the fundraising team and then adopted by leadership. Due to the bigger autonomy of organizations than of internal teams, the subsidiaries are also more autonomous.

The main role of Anima International is to provide guidance, minimize coordination costs and provide horizontal resource exchange in the form of funds and knowledge. We have no formal power over subsidiaries. The amount of time Anima International spends in a single country is also dependent on the stage of development of the organization. In countries where we started working in a more active form (like Norway, Belarus, Russia and Ukraine) we are more engaged in mentoring than in more mature organizations.