

# EVALUATION DEPARTMENT

REPORT 1/2018



## **From Donors to Partners?** Evaluation of Norwegian Support to Strengthen Civil Society in Developing Countries through Norwegian Civil Society Organisations

Annexes 1 to 11 of the Evaluation Report

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# Annex 1: Case study Ethiopia

In the 2005-2015 period NOK 560 Million was channelled from Norad through Norwegian CSOs for strengthening civil society in Ethiopia. An insignificant amount went through international CSOs or directly to civil society organisations in the country (NOK 0.3 Million) while a larger amount came from other budget sources (NOK 672.5 Million) – also channelled to and through international, Norwegian and local CSOs. Over 21% of total Norwegian aid to Ethiopia was channelled through Norwegian CSOs with the figure rising to 47% if all CSO channels from other budget sources is added. See Table A1.1 above.

Our mapping found that 19 Norwegian CSOs received Norad support for civil society strengthening in Ethiopia in the evaluation period. They are listed in Table A1.2 (next page).

The funding from other Norwegian development aid sources is mainly coming from the Regional Africa grant, from specific sector budget lines (e.g., health, climate and more) and from humanitarian allocations. The support is provided by the Norwegian Embassy, by the

**TABLE A1.1** / NORWEGIAN AID TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN ETHIOPIA (2006 – 2015) (NOK MILLION)

Long term aid for civil society strengthening through Norwegian CSs (Norad's civil society grant)	560.0
Long term aid through international CSOs and direct to civil society in the recipient country (Norad's civil society grant)	0.3
Aid from other budget sources channelled through Norwegian and international CSOs and/or directly to local CSOs	672.5
Total Norwegian development aid	2 631.5

SOURCE: NORAD'S NORWEGIAN AID STATISTICS, ACCESS TO MICRODATA

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by other Norad Departments and Sections. Significantly, the main channels for support from these other budget sources are largely some of the big Norwegian CSOs supported from the civil society grant and working with the same Ethiopian partners. This applies in particular to the Norwegian Church Aid, Save the Children and the Development Fund (a main exception is the Norwegian Refugee Council that receives substantial funding for humanitarian relief, but does not receive funding from the Norad civil society grant). Thematically, grant from other sources have covered a range of sectors in addition to major humanitarian relief related to refugees and drought/food security. Currently,

a focus for much of the support from other budget sources is related to climate resilience in agriculture, gender (especially linked to female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices), and education. Noteworthy is the also the Embassy's support for a joint donor-fund for civil society strengthening. This DFID-led multi-donor fund - *Civil Society Support Programme* – distributed over 20 million pounds to more than 500 local

**TABLE A1.2 / NORWEGIAN CSOs IN ETHIOPIA WITH NORAD SUPPORT (PERIOD AND AMOUNT IN NOK MILLION)**

Norwegian CSO	Length	Amount
Save the Children Norway	2006-2015	152614
Digni (Norwegian Missionary Society, Norwegian Lutheran Mission, The Norwegian Bible Society, Youth with a Mission)	2006-2015	144967
Norwegian Church Aid	2006-2015	90413
Norwegian Peoples Aid	2006-2015	58973
The Development Fund	2006-2015	8208
FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development (Norwegian Women's Public Health Association, Sagal Help to Self-Help Organisation)	2006-2015	13821
Right to Play	2011-2015	5745
Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) - Norway	2006-2015	15608
Drylands Coordination Group	2007-2015	17557
Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	2006-2015	3264
Skogselskapet I Oppland	2007-2013	10486
Environmental Movements in the South	2008-2010	3519
Global Aid Network	2006-2010	4409
NBS	2006-2010	1977
Adopsjonsforum	2010-2014	903

CSOs in the 2012-2016 period.<sup>1</sup> Norway through its Embassy was one of the seven donors funding this programme and has indicated that it is prepared to contribute NOK 11.7 million for the 2nd phase (2017-2020).

<sup>1</sup> See also the 2016 evaluation of the first phase of the programme, Nedico (2016), *Ethiopia Civil Society Support Programme Final Evaluation 12 November 2016* (Addis Ababa, unpublished).

Based on criteria developed in the inception report nine of these organisations were selected for further study. Table A1.3 shows their share of total aid flows from the civil society grant to Ethiopia.

For these organisations, we collected documents on partnership policies and country projects and programmes. Representatives of most of them were also interviewed.

**TABLE A1.3 / SELECTED NORWEGIAN CSOs AND THEIR SHARE OF ALLOCATION FROM THE CIVIL SOCIETY GRANT TO ETHIOPIA**

Norwegian CSO	Share of funding (%)
Digni (Norwegian Missionary Society, Norwegian Lutheran Mission)	26
FOKUS (Norwegian Women's Public Health Association, Sagal Help to Self-Help Organisation)	3
Norwegian Church Aid	16
Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	1
Norwegian Peoples Aid	11
Save the Children Norway	27
The Development Fund	2

**TABLE A1.4 / CASE STUDY PROJECTS**

Norwegian CSO	Ethiopian Partner	Programme/location
Norwegian Lutheran Mission	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Development and Social Service Commission (EECM/DASSC)	Bena-Tsamai Pastoral Community Development Project, South Omo, Southern State
Norwegian Church Aid	Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC)	WASH, Agriculture and Health, Ankober, North Shova, Amhara State
	Tamira Reproductive Health and Development Organisation	Safe Youth Sexual and Maternal Reproductive Health, Sashemene, West Arsi, Oromia State
Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU)	Workers Awareness and Trade unions Capacity Building, National
	Ethiopian Industrial Federation of Construction, Wood, Metal, Cement & other trade unions	Organisational development, National
Save the Children Norway	Mary Joy Development Association	Promotion of Investment in Children, Addis Ababa
	Love for Children Organisation	Integrated Community and School Based Prevention and Protection of Children without Appropriate Care, Addis Ababa

The team then selected four Norwegian organisations and seven Ethiopian partners and projects for case studies in the country. The selected partnerships and projects are listed in Table A1.4.

### A1.1 THE ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT

Ethiopia has a long tradition of informal community-based, self-help associations. However, apart from the Churches there were few formal CSOs in the country until the famines of the 1970s and 80s. The enactment of the 1993 Ethiopian constitution opened up

the political space for CSOs and the number of formally registered organisations increased from 70 in 1994 to 3800 in 2009. Several Norwegian CSOs – such as Norwegian Church Aid and Norwegian Peoples Aid - began their work in the country as response to the famines and/or support for the development work of the liberation movement spearheaded by the Tigrayan People’s Liberation Front. The missionary organisations – the Norwegian Lutheran Mission and the Norwegian Missionary Society – had a much longer history with a country presence and close relations with the

Evangelical Mekane Yesus Church dating back to respectively, the late 1940s and the late 1960s.

Relationships between civil society organisations and the Government deteriorated following the 2005 elections. The introduction of the 2009 Charities and Societies Proclamation (the “NGO law”) was driven by the view that some charities had played a significant role in opposition politics around the 2005 elections. The NGO Law also reflected concerns about the accountability and independence of civil society organisations and

the ruling party's ideological view that CSOs have only a marginal role to play - filling gaps in government service delivery.<sup>2</sup>

The 2009 NGO law classifies civil society organisation as 'charities' who provide activities for third parties or the public good or 'societies' whose activities benefit their members' interests. It established the Charities and Societies Agency to register, license and supervise charities and societies at the federal level. However, the Churches and the trade unions were not required to register with agency. Two aspects of the law place particular constraints on civil society and deeply affected Norwegian CSOs:

*The '90/10 Rule'*: any charity or society receiving more than 10% of its funds from foreign sources is prohibited from engaging in activities relating to human rights, justice, peace building, democracy and governance. Therefore, *Ethiopian Charities and Ethiopian Societies* can work on these issues, whereas

<sup>2</sup> See more on this and the country context in Kendra E Dupuy, James Ron & Aseem Prakash (2015), "Who survived? Ethiopia's regulatory crackdown on foreign-funded NGOs", *Review of International Political Economy* Volume 22, 2015 - Issue 2; Yntiso Gebre (2016) "Reality Checks: The state of civil society organizations in Ethiopia", *African Sociological Review*, vol. 22, No 2: 2-25; as well as the many reports and studies from *The Tracking Trends in Ethiopia's Civil Society Project* (TECS). TECS was an initiative of the Civil Society Sub Group of the Development Assistance Group. It began in early 2011, and completed in November 2014.

*Ethiopian Resident Charities and Ethiopian Resident Societies* cannot. Currently 67% of registered organisations are Ethiopian Resident Societies or Resident Charities. Several Norwegian CSOs have been strongly affected. Some programmes had to be terminated – such as the Norwegian Church Aid's (NCA) initiative to facilitate inter-faith initiatives involving all the main Churches to promote peace and reconciliation in the country. More significantly, many Norwegian CSOs made an effort to continue with the rights-based approaches, community mobilization and advocacy, but had to reclassify and rename their programmes. NCA's programme on violence against women (including female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices) was turned into a programme on reproductive health. Save the Children Norway's support to the child rights programme was turned into a programme named "Child Friendly National Systems and Structures". Importantly, the NGO law contributed to increased cooperation between the Norwegian CSOs, their local partners and local authorities with the authorities often assuming the main responsibility for rolling out services.

*The '70/30 Rule'*: There was also a requirement that CSOs must spend at least 70% of finance on operational activities and no more than 30%

on administration. Spending on networking, capacity building, training, workshops and so on were generally considered as administrative costs. This put strong restrictions on the ability of Norwegian CSOs to collaborate with smaller, new or emerging local CSOs. It has also led to a situation where a large share of the funding to many CSO projects is being allocated to construction of public building and facilities. On the other hand, there has been great flexibility also by government officials on the ground allowing many administration costs to be reclassified as operational costs.

Following implementation of the NGO law 45% of CSOs failed to re-register. Many of these may have been 'brief-case CSOs', established in response to the availability of donor funding. However, available data suggest that of 125 CSOs explicitly registered as advocacy organisations only 12 or 13 re-registered. The NGO law has ensured that the landscape is now dominated by service-delivery organisations.

## **A1.2 PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES**

Norwegian CSOs in Ethiopia represents a wide variety of approaches to partnership. Common to all of them is that they have abandoned implementing operational projects on their own and seek to work through partners. Many were operational at the start of the evaluation period,

but this has now ended (with some exceptions related to mainly Save the Children in the humanitarian field). Norwegian Church Aid ended its operational project (in Water, sanitation and hygiene) in 2013. Now all organisations have partners and work through partners. They have to a varying extent elaborate partner policies and strategies. However, there are major and important differences in how partnership is understood and not least practiced.

For some Norwegian CSOs in Ethiopia partnerships are managed from the head office in Norway with the Norwegian CSO interacting with their partner(s) through mutual and often informal visits, and through email and phone conversations. The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions as well as Norwegian Women's Public Health Association and Sagal Help to Self-Help Organisation are examples of this approach in the Ethiopia case.

Other Norwegian CSOs manage partnership through a country office in Ethiopia. The main examples are the Norwegian Church Aid and the Development Fund, which both have a range of local partners. The Missionary Society and the Lutheran Mission also have a direct representation in country, but this is a small office within their country office responsible for

managing all relations with their sole partner – the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus.

Save the Children Norway represent a third approach – channelling the Norwegian Norad-funding directly to the new (from 2013) merged country office of Save the Children International which manages the Norwegian funding and the relations with partners on their behalf. This move towards a joint/merged office under the auspices of an international organisation is a trend justified by aid effectiveness considerations. Norwegian Church Aid is also moving in that direction with a joint country office under their global ACT Alliance in several other countries (such as Zambia, South Africa and Palestine).

The understanding of partnership and the role of partners in strengthening civil society also varies between partners. Some partners have elaborate partnership policy documents in place, including tools and instruments helping their own staff to turn this into operational guidelines. The Norwegian Church Aid stands out in this respect. They understand partnership as a mutually empowering relationship and see partnership as a way of strengthening civil society. The Norwegian Church Aid will contribute to strengthening partners' capacities to participate in formal

and informal networks, their organisational development and financial capacity.<sup>3</sup>

In Ethiopia, the Norwegian Church Aid currently has 14 partners. These are core partners – essentially faith-based organisations representing all the main religions in the country - as well as strategic partners linked to needs of individual programmes. Programme theories have also been formulated for each of their three development programmes in the country, identifying the role of community mobilisation and organisation of civil society.<sup>4</sup>

Save the Children Norway has formulated a strategic approach to partnerships, but their approach has a stronger emphasis on the interaction between authorities and civil society organisations to advance children's rights, provide protection and to deliver public services, such as education and health. Support to civil society partners is a component within that approach. Furthermore, with the new Save the Children structure with one merged office in Ethiopia, Save the Children Norway is

3 See NCA (2015), *Norwegian Church Aid Partnership Policy*, Oslo NCA; NCA (n. d.), *NCA partnership assessment 2016-2020, Mapping of organisational, accountability, advocacy and financial capacities, Information for NCA Country Offices*, Oslo: NCA; and NCA (n. d.), *NCA partnership assessment 2016-2020, Questionnaire*, Oslo, NCA.

4 See NCA Ethiopia office (2015), *Norwegian Church Aid. Ethiopia Strategy 2016-2020* and NCA Ethiopia office (2017) *Ethiopia Annual Report 2016*.



not directly involved in managing partnership relations. Save the Children Norway is involved in designing programmes and interventions, including partner selection, to be funded from the Norad civil society grant, but it is not involved in management of the Norwegian-funded programme. Instead, Save the Children Norway seeks to contribute to Save the Children Ethiopia through influencing Save the Children internationally (Norway e.g., currently chairs the advisory group on education) and through the offering of technical advice to the Ethiopia office, including on partnerships.<sup>5</sup>

The Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) have a less clearly developed partnership policy or guidelines for assessing how partners may contribute to civil society strengthening. They are guided by commitment to supporting a partner based on shared values and bonds of affinity, which goes well beyond traditional development aid perspectives. For NLM the long-term development programmes is one component in a much bigger relation with a

<sup>5</sup> See more on this in Save the Children Norway (2014): *Investing in children, Save the Children Norway Strategy 2014-2018*, Oslo: Save the Children; Save the Children Norway (2017), *SCN country engagement plan 2017-2018 Ethiopia*; Save the Children International (n.d. – 2017): *Partnership framework*; Swedish Development Advisors (2015), *Review of Save the Children Norway (SCN) Final Report (submitted to Norad)*; and Naomi Blight and Judith Friedman (2017), *Save the Children Norway Partnership Review. Final Report*. IOD Parc. (commissioned by Save the Children Norway)

Church. NLM regards support for civil society strengthening as a secondary objective. For LO it is about solidarity between trade unionists. This also shapes interaction in the partnerships.

The other organisations in the bigger sample will essentially have distribution in approaches corresponding to the models and approaches outlined above.

### **A1.3 PARTNERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS AND VALUE ADDED**

In general, all staff of local partners interviewed spoke highly of their relations with their Norwegian partners. Specific disagreements with priorities and decisions of the Norwegian partners were recorded, but this was generally with bigger organisations and a long history of engagement and trust.

The Norwegian partners differ in the focus, content and management of their relations with partners. One dividing line is the extent to which local partners are contracted to implement programmes and projects developed by the Norwegian organisation. An organisation like Save the Children International seems primarily focused on implementing programme with a more limited attention to building local partners to become independent civil society

actors. While the partnership policy of the Save the Children International also emphasizes the importance of long-term strategic local partners, our impression from interviews with the local partners visited is that the focus of the relations between the country office and the local partners revolves around programme implementation. Save the Children Norway will emphasise the country engagement and ability to provide professional input to the country office, but the impact of this appears mainly on selected thematic areas (education, child rights governance) and to some extent on conceptualization and design of interventions, but less on partnership with local partners.

Towards the other end of the spectrum, we noted that the Norwegian Church Aid emphasizes the need to support the strengthening of civil society. Their approaches emphasize the importance of supporting the organisational capacity building of their partners, both through direct support for organisational development, targeted support to strengthen their programme implementation, and efforts to ensure that they became part of various civil society networks. The Norwegian Church Aid does experience challenges in devising effective strategies for support to capacity building of their core partners – the social and economic development organisations

of the main Churches. On the other hand, they have much success in strengthening the capacity of some of the strategic programme partners.

The missionary organisations and the trade unions are in a slightly different situation. Both NLM and the LO are working with their “natural” and value-based partners and their approach is very much guided by their overall relations with the Mekane Yesus Church and the Ethiopian trade union movement. For NLM it is about providing support to the Church to implement programmes in local communities. For LO is about financial support enabling the trade unions to strengthen and grow their organisation through training courses in targeted areas.

In Table A1.5, we have positioned the six Norwegian CSOs on a continuum from having an instrumental approach to partnership – seeing partners as means to implement pre-set objectives to an intrinsic approach where strong partners are recognized as ends in themselves.

The Norwegian Church Aid has been placed both under 3 (strategic partners) and under 4 (faith-based partners). None of the Norwegian CSOs have been placed under 5 mainly because of insufficient two-way relations with local partners.

**TABLE A1.5 / THE PARTNERSHIP APPROACH OF NORWEGIAN CSOs IN ETHIOPIA: INSTRUMENTAL VS INTRINSIC**

Instrumental approach		←—————→		Intrinsic approach	
1	2	3	4	5	
	> Save the Children Norway	> Norwegian Church Aid	> The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions		
			> The Norwegian Lutheran Mission		
			> Norwegian Church Aid		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Partners seen as means to implement pre-set objectives</li> <li>&gt; Power monopolized by one partner</li> <li>&gt; Sub-contracting</li> <li>&gt; Capacity building goes down only</li> <li>&gt; Accountability goes up only</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Strong partners are recognized as end in itself</li> <li>&gt; Power shared between partners</li> <li>&gt; Autonomous partners cooperating</li> <li>&gt; Capacity building goes in both directions</li> <li>&gt; Accountability goes in both direction</li> </ul>		

There is a pattern where the more professionalized partnerships tend to be more instrumental and results focused. The approaches are not dualistic either. Most of the partnerships combine intrinsic/instrumental and formal/informal, but with the increasing demanding planning and reporting requirements, there is a trend towards formalization.

The “added value” of the Norwegian CSOs in Ethiopia can be summarised under three dimensions: professional/thematic; capacity

strengthening; and contribution to networking and civil society.

### **A1.3.1 Professional contributions**

Most Norwegian CSOs will provide some value added support and is able to professionally strengthen their local partners.<sup>6</sup> For the Norwegian Church Aid and Save the Children Norway (but more indirectly via the international country office) value added is provided through

<sup>6</sup> The data for this section is based largely on interviews with Norwegian CSOs and local partners.

thematic advice and technical competence linked to management, programme development and implementation.

The Norwegian Church Aid's support to Tamira's new "Safe Youth and Maternal Health Programme" in Ethiopia is an example. The Norwegian Church Aid provided professional support in different ways. It helped develop the questionnaire that was used in needs assessments (interviews with stakeholders, focus groups) and helped crystalize the findings from the survey. They also helped facilitate training of Tamira staff before the launch and attended Tamira's sensitizing workshop with communities, government and other CSOs. They also helped with specific training related to the new maternal health care component, including trainer of trainers. Beyond this, the Norwegian Church Aid formally visits the programme twice a year for monitoring purposes in addition to more frequent informal visits.

In relation to the programme with the Orthodox Church in Ankober, the Norwegian Church Aid has provided a range of professional support. A main contribution has been on support to planning and implementation of the water, sanitation and hygiene component with advice related both to technical aspects and in relation

to how to mobilise and engage with the direct beneficiaries to increase ownership and sustainability.

The Norwegian Church Aid have also been able to provide strong added value through an ability to initiate strategic initiatives. This relates mainly to initiatives involving Church partners in joint ecumenical initiatives and campaigns in areas such as peace and reconciliation, or the fight against harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation.<sup>7</sup>

Save the Children Norway's primary role has been in providing thematic advice to the country office, mainly in relation to programme design and implementation to the child rights programme and in education. The country office provides professional support to civil society partners relating to programme implementation. The sheer size of Save the Children's Ethiopia programme – a budget of USD 170 Million, 200 staff and 50 offices – combined with a defined thematic focus and a range of partners, including the government, implies that it has the potential to launch major national initiatives.

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<sup>7</sup> See e.g. the assessment in Nicola Jones et al. (2016): *Evaluation of Norway's support to women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation. Ethiopia case study report* (Oslo: Norad Evaluation Department)

The Norwegian Lutheran Mission works with only one partner (The Mekane Yesus Church) and their assistance is mainly in supporting programme management in the districts where they are funding development programmes. They do not have staff with technical skills comparable to what is provided by the Norwegian Church Aid or Save the Children.

The Norwegian trade unions provide less direct, but has an advantage in that they are able to speak to their trade union partners as trade unionists. The support to programmes is mainly to share experience from Norway relating to organisation, gender and collective bargaining.

The Development Fund will be comparable to the Church Aid with the Norwegian Missionary Society being comparable to the Lutheran Mission in this area.

### **A1.3.2 Organisational and financial competence**

All Norwegian CSOs in Ethiopia have a focus on this and are contributing to strengthening the organisational capacity of their partners. The dominant dimension has been on administrative and financial capacities and on programme implementation. There has not been much support related to governance and accountability functions.

The Norwegian Church Aid and also the Development Fund now uses partner assessments as a basis for identifying base lines and plans for capacity building support. In the case of Norwegian Church Aid, three of their core/faith-based partners, were identified in 2016 as having major organisational weaknesses that needed to be addressed. One was so serious that the funding was suspended for a year. These weaknesses all revolved around reporting and financial management. It became the focus for capacity building to local partners in the current programme period.

One of the local partners identified by the Norwegian Church Aid as having certain organisational weaknesses – the Development and Social Services Commission (DASSC) of the Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – is also a partner for the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) and the Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS). These two organisations also provide some support for organisational strengthening. The NLM has been running a capacity enhancement project for DASSC since 2008. The current 2015-17 phase of the *Performance and Competence Enhancement Project* targets DASSC in Southern Ethiopia with the aim of strengthening the capacity of coordinating and branch offices related

to programme management and implementation.<sup>8</sup> In the case of NMS, there is a special programme on women empowerment in Western Oromia with the Mekane Yesus Church itself.<sup>9</sup> The team has not reviewed these NLM/NMS projects.

Save the Children's Ethiopia office mainly seeks to strengthen partners through programme implementation. Save the Children Norway emphasises that support to strategic civil society partners should go beyond simply supporting the capacity to implement a programme. In relation to the two local partners visited, the team were not able to trace any such support although it may be evident in relation to other partners.<sup>10</sup> The evaluation team visited old partners based in Addis and not new partners involved in the education programme.

There is also a noticeable shift in some partnerships over time. Local partners get

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<sup>8</sup> See the project document from NLM/DASSC (2014), *Performance and Competence Enhancement Project for Local Partners in South Ethiopia (PACEP 2015-2017)*, Addis Ababa (unpublished).

<sup>9</sup> See D and T Training and Consultancy Services (2016) *Mid-Term Evaluation Report of Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus Western Ethiopia Women Empowerment Program (WEWEP)*, Addis Ababa (unpublished, commissioned by the programme).

<sup>10</sup> Save the Children's Ethiopia office carried out a partner assessment of one of the partners visited (Love for Children) with the help of local consultants. See Mela Development Training & Consultancy Services (2013) *Report on Organizational Capacity Assessment of Love for Children Organization* (Addis Ababa, unpublished, commissioned by Save the Children Ethiopia).

initial support for organisational development that gradually gives way to a stronger focus on programmes. One example is the Norwegian Church Aid's support to their partner Tamira. The Norwegian Church Aid provided significant thematic and capacity building support enabling Tamira to expand and become sustainable. It now has a range of donors and has become an important actor in various regional and national CSO networks. Tamira staff interviewed claimed that the added value of the Norwegian Church Aid was that they shared a common vision and was keen to see that Tamira became strong – not just to see good report on activities implemented. They had been coaching rather than controlling. They also demonstrated, according to Tamira, how to work with new stakeholders, especially with faith communities and religious leaders

However, in none of the partnerships examined have partnerships evolved into a relation with support being provided as core funding to the local partner.

### **A1.3.3 Networking competence**

Norwegian CSOs also help strengthen the networking capacity of their partners, although the contribution in this area appears less dominant compared to the other two dimensions above.

Save the Children in Ethiopia is often strong in facilitating networking within their own programmes. They bring partners together in a formal Partnership Council (the Partnership policy advisory committee) and partners also meet informally in different programmes. The Norwegian Church Aid facilitates networking between their partners and various networks. The Development Fund has a facility whereby their 10 local partners are encouraged to exchange staff between themselves. The Norwegian Lutheran Mission and the Norwegian trade unions may mention civil society networking but has far less focus on this in their relation with the partners.

Finally, the Ethiopian context also has strong implications for how the Norwegian CSOs work with their local partners. This has implications not just for selecting thematic areas and so on, but also in relation to capacity building and networking. For example, more capacity building activities is now implemented by Norwegian CSOs for the partner rather than by the local partners themselves. According to regulations, local partners cannot spend more than 30% of their income on administrative costs, including capacity building, training and networking. This has strong negative effects, especially for small organisations. In some cases, Norwegian CSOs has compensated for this by organising and

funding these activities themselves. Another example is education and Save the Children's programmes there. They used to provide funding directly to government institutions, but from 2016 that was no longer possible. Instead Save the Children's hire staff and seconds them to government institutions.

#### **A1.4 RELEVANCE AND AID EFFECTIVENESS**

The relevance of the Norwegian CSO's partnership with their Ethiopian partners was assessed in relation to the needs of local partners, to local needs in the country and to Norwegian government priorities. The team's assessment in relation to local partners is generally positive. We have found many examples of Norwegian CSO suggested and initiated projects that initially may have been met with some scepticism, but local partners have since been convinced and been supportive. Examples of such projects are several of the gender-related projects in Ethiopia (such as the Norwegian Missionary Society's women empowerment programme with the Mekane Yesus Church in Western Ethiopia or the maternal health component in the Norwegian Church Aid's project with Tamira). However, in the case of very large and big CSOs – such as the Save the Children's Ethiopia programme with its 50 offices, a staff of 2000 and an annual budget of USD 170 Million –

we did note that small local partners complain that they find themselves marginal with limited ability to get its voice heard. The asymmetry relations between a donor and a recipient appears significant particularly big in such cases.

However, we also note that local partners are not always in agreement with decisions by the Norwegian CSO partners. The Development and Social Service Commission of the Evangelical Mekane Yesus Church for example, in interviews with the team, expressed strong disagreement with the Norwegian Lutheran Mission's decision to phase out partnership projects in certain Church Synods in favour of moving to even poorer areas (e.g. in the Somali state) – areas which are in alignment with government poverty reduction priorities, but not with the Church's own priorities.

Relevance in relation to local context is a more challenging question. In relation to development needs on the ground, we note that that partnerships focusing on service delivery are often high, but it also depends on public policy priorities or direct beneficiaries. The relevance may not always be high in relation to the expressed needs of the local population, but may be high in relation to government policies and priorities. One example of this is in relation to female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices.

Relevance in relation to Norwegian development aid objectives are generally high in the Ethiopian case. The partnership programmes are aligned with the broad grant scheme rules guiding the civil society allocations. We noticed that the large big Norwegian CSOs active in the country (Norwegian Church Aid and the Development Fund) all have substantial funding from the Embassy and other Norwegian sources. This is support for projects that essentially amounts to an expansion and broadening of programmes implemented by the same Norwegian CSOs and their partners with funding from the civil society grant.

The team noted that there was limited coordination between the Norwegian CSOs in Ethiopia. They operate independently of each other even if they work within the same sector or with the same partner. Some interaction is taking place such as between the Norwegian Lutheran Mission and the Norwegian Missionary Society facilitated by the joint umbrella body DIGNI. There is however little coordination on the ground and in programme implementation. We noted that three Norwegian CSOs have partnership with the Mekane Yesus' Development and Social Services Commission - all focusing on rural development projects (but in different geographic regions). There is no coordination in relation to capacity building support to the partner.

There are some joint programmes between Norwegian CSOs and some informal communication. This includes the cooperation between the Save the Children and the Norwegian Church Aid in combating female genital mutilation in Ethiopia and between Norwegian Church Aid and the Development Fund climate resilience in agriculture. These initiatives are however, funded from other Norwegian aid sources than the civil society grant.

### **A1.5 RESULTS**

All the Norwegian CSOs in our sample have adopted a result based management approach with much efforts put reporting on achievements and results. The quality and amount of support provided to partners vary greatly between them. In general, there is much emphasis placed on reporting for direct beneficiaries on the ground. In the Ethiopian case, this would also imply involving the local authorities (at the zonal level) in joint monitoring exercises.

#### **A1.5.1 Service delivery and beneficiaries**

Findings in relation to direct beneficiaries are in many respects impressive. The Norwegian Church Aid reports that in 2016 their three development programmes reached 140 000 people. This includes in the water, sanitation and hygiene programme nearly 100 000 people,

construction of 7000 latrines in 100 villages, 129 communities, etc.<sup>11</sup> In the water and sanitation project visited (5 kebeles in Ankober) the expected results in the current phase included provision of 3,697 people (1,862 female and 1,832 male) basic water supply for domestic and productive purposes.<sup>12</sup>

Project visited in Save the Children will also report similar high numbers, especially in the education programmes, and so on. The Norwegian Lutheran Mission and the Norwegian Missionary Society report similar stories from the project sites, often in very remote, marginal and poorly accessible areas.

The report from the Confederation of Ethiopian Confederation of Trade Union tells us that in the first half of 2017, 203 males and 173 females received training, 125 new unions were established and 60 new collective bargaining agreements were about to be signed. All facilitated by the partnership with the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions.<sup>13</sup>

11 See e.g., the Norwegian Church Aid Ethiopia (2016) *Annual Review 2016*, Addis Ababa, NCA.

12 Water Resources Development Department, Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter Church Aid Commission (2016), *Annual Project Progress Report (June-December, 2016), Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion Project in 5 Kebeles of Ankober Woreda, North Shoa Zone of Amhara National Regional State* (unpublished).

13 See CETU education and training department (2017), *Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions Project activity report to LO-Norway, June 2017*, Addis



Some of these figures may be an exaggeration in the sense that the partnerships cannot claim responsibility for all achievements. Other factors also contribute. For example, in the case of Norwegian Church Aid's partnership with the Orthodox Church and their project in Ankober, we note that the climate resilience component was also co-funded by a German partner. There is however, no reason to doubt that these projects are making a real difference in the life of many targeted communities. Many of the Norwegian CSOs are also working with their partners in very poor and vulnerable parts of the country where the projects are making a huge difference for affected communities.

In particular, the team highlight many efforts to mobilise and organize small groups of beneficiaries (farmers/pastoralists, women's groups, youth, parents/teachers/children) through often innovative community forums and discussion clubs. This has helped create knowledge, awareness and ownership and helped ensure sustainability of the interventions. In water supply, for example, affected communities play a critical role in maintaining the infrastructure established. Results have been more challenging to measure within the broad thematic area of

Ababa (unpublished).

reproductive health, which revolves around improved gender rights and access to health facilities, and reduction and prevention of female genital mutilation and other harmful traditional practices. This has been an uphill battle with many obstacles linked to social norms, traditional beliefs and attitudes. One of the most effective strategies used by the Norwegian Church Aid in trying to change social norms has been engaging with religious leaders at national level so that they can take ownership of the issue and then work through their own institutional structures to disseminate messages down to community level. The Norwegian Church Aid work with all the major religious institutions in the country, including the Ethiopian Orthodox church, the major Protestant churches, the Catholic Church, and the Ethiopian Muslim Development Agency. It has worked successfully with all but the latter to develop and publish position papers based on each religion's own texts setting out why female genital mutilation is a harmful traditional practice and should be discouraged by religious leaders.

On the ground, the Norwegian Church Aid and also the Norwegian Lutheran Mission and others are addressing deeply embedded social norms by using youth clubs, community conversations and more. These have proved an effective way of teaching people about the

harmful effects of female genital mutilation and sexual and reproductive health. The Norwegian Church Aid's partner Tamira, a youth association, targets some 10 000 young people directly in Shashemene town and woredas and seeks to provide sexual reproductive health services to 5000 people and to strengthen the capacities of 6 government health centres and 10 other service provision centre by the end of 2018. They report good progress.<sup>14</sup>

Our impressions as well as findings from related reviews and evaluations are that although much progress has been recorded, it has also been very uneven with unintended backlashes also being noted when attempting to move a successful project to a new location.<sup>15</sup> Long-term commitment together with

<sup>14</sup> See Tamira Reproductive health and development organisation (2016), *Narrative Report to NCA (2016), "Safe Youth Sexual and Maternal Reproductive Health" 2016* (unpublished).

<sup>15</sup> See e.g., Joar Svanemyr & Yimegnushal Takele, *End-term review of the Strategic Partnership between Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) and Save the Children International (SCI) for the Abandonment of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (2011 – 2015)*, Final report, 14 October 2015 (unpublished Norad Report). A main 2016 Norad evaluation also examined the work by one of NCA's strategic partners in this area, Kembatti Mentti Gezzima (KMG). It found that in the two woredas of Kembata zone in the Southern state where the organization has been especially active KMG has succeeded in transforming the lives of a significant number of individuals, including girls at risk of genital mutilation. The scaling up to other woredas in the zone, however, has been less successful, and there has been slower progress in reducing genital mutilation. See Nicola Jones et al. (2016): *Evaluation of Norway's support to women's rights and gender equality in development cooperation. Ethiopia case study report* (Oslo: Norad Evaluation Department) (<https://www.norad.no/globalassets/publikasjoner/publikasjon-er-2015/evaluating/evaluation-of-norways-support-to-womens-rights-and-gender-equality-in-development-cooperation/evaluation-of-norways-support-to-womens-rights-and-gender-equality-in-development-cooperation-ethiopia.pdf>).

the role of Church/religious leaders and other community leaders are often a requirement in addition to dedicated use of community forums. Tamira has made much progress by comparing indicators from kebeles where they have worked for a long time compared with neighbouring kebeles where they have not been engaged. However, in some of the projects on this – including the Norwegian Lutheran Mission’s project with the Mekane Yesus in Bena-Tsamay – the time perspective is overly optimistic. Three years is short period to change social norms.<sup>16</sup>

### **A1.5.2 Advocacy and strengthening civil society**

The overall conclusion is somewhat mixed. The Norwegian CSOs have largely been able to adapt to shrinking space for civil society and government restrictions. They have taken advantage of space available and been able to support partners’ efforts to mobilise on the ground. This has mainly been linked to service delivery and rural development, but also child rights and education, and has involved a range of community forums as channels for knowledge and awareness rising. The contribution at national level has been more

<sup>16</sup> The current phase is the third in the Bena-Tsamay district (woreda), but each phase targets a different sub-district (kabele).

modest, but there are some notable exceptions and strategic interventions. One is the efforts by the Norwegian Church Aid to mobilise all the main faith based organisations in various national efforts. Another, but more thematically limited case is the efforts by Save the Children to advance children’s rights.

The main results are found in relation to the strengthening of individual local partners. Norwegian CSOs have contributed to increase the capacities and awareness of local partners needed for realising rights. Organisational and project-implementation capacities have been strengthened.

The team also notes that risks and dangers has become more evident with the more restrictive context in Ethiopia. There is a danger that Norwegian CSOs responding to restrictive and repressive context may run the risk of developing capacity to satisfy needs rather than tackling the more sensitive task of developing capacity to realise rights.<sup>17</sup> We cannot draw any

<sup>17</sup> See also the recent in-depth evaluation of Swedish support through Swedish CSOs for further discussion of this. Cf. Jethro Pettit et al. (2015), *Evaluation of the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations 2010 - 2014, Final Synthesis Report*, Sida Decentralised Evaluation 2015:36, Stockholm: Sida, Department for Partnerships and Innovations, Civil Society Unit ([https://sidacivilsocietyeval.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_strategy\\_for\\_support\\_via\\_swedish\\_civil\\_society\\_organisations\\_2010-2014\\_final\\_synthesis\\_report.pdf](https://sidacivilsocietyeval.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/evaluation_of_the_strategy_for_support_via_swedish_civil_society_organisations_2010-2014_final_synthesis_report.pdf)).

conclusion on this yet, but we note a tendency among some – including the Norwegian Lutheran Mission and the Norwegian Missionary Society – to emphasise the former with others – such as the Norwegian Church Aid or the Development Fund - (still) seeking to emphasise rights, but struggling to do so.

Save the Children in Ethiopia appears to make progress in influencing government policies on child rights in selected areas, including at the local level through establishment of child parliaments seeking to hold a dialogue with the local government councils (the Woreda). However, this seems mainly to be based on programmes directly with government, with the civil society partners visited appearing more disconnected from some of these efforts. Through Save the Children’s Partnership Council efforts are also made to influence and open up space for civil society action. The evaluation team has not been in a position to assess the effectiveness of this.

### **A1.5.3 Unintended effects**

The reports from local partners also to some extent addresses the issues of unintended or unplanned effects. To some extent, this is simply a reflection of a weak project document, but we also observe that there are other issues highlighted. In some, lessons from one



programme intervention has created important lessons and benefits for other programme interventions, mobilisation of community forums in one programme has important spin-offs to other programmes and so on. Successes in service delivery in one area (kebele) lead to requests and demands from potential beneficiaries in neighbouring areas and so on.

However, we also notice other types of “unplanned” results. Common to nearly all service delivery projects for example, is complaints related to the per diem rates for local staff and government officials involved, a remuneration typically associated with training. Will the targeted staff attend and stay committed once the project closes and there are no funds for additional remuneration? Will it reinforce donor dependency and undermine sustainability?

Another effect in the Ethiopia case not specifically planned was the growing cooperation and interaction with government authorities, especially at zonal and woreda levels. This emerged out of government need for control and regulation, but it has helped to ensure better alignment between Norwegian CSOs, local partners and national policies and priorities in delivery of basic services.

### **A1.6 SUSTAINABILITY**

There is uneven attention to this in the partnership studies, but in most cases, the financial support is linked to programme activities. For some local partners, the Norwegian grant is the main source of income, but most partners have several funding sources. Some local partners will remain also without partnerships with Norwegian CSOs. This includes the Churches and the trade unions. Some local organisations began almost fully funded by Norwegian CSOs but several of them have now become organisations with funding from their Norwegian partners being a small component in their total income. Examples included the Norwegian Church Aid’s Tamira or Save the Children’s Mary Joy Development Association.

Another important dimension is what would happen to the programmes and impact sustainability if the Norwegian CSO ended its support. A notable feature in the Ethiopian context is the strong relations with government and its service delivery programmes. The government – through agricultural extension workers, health officials, education officers and others – play a key role as implementers in nearly all projects studied. Norwegian-funded projects may provide a small or big project staff to provide support and assistance, including

paying for upgrade of facilities and project expenses. In the case of education, Save the Children also second staff to local authorities.

The close cooperation with government holds well for sustainability. The assumption is that the government will be able to sustain activities when the Norwegian funding ends. The assumption holds to some extent: the government has staff and funds to keep the basic services running. On the other hand, there is high staff turnover and little additional funding for staff training. Moreover: there is even less funds and capacity to keep the community mobilization up and to sustain efforts to change social norms and traditional practices.

### **A1.7 NORWEGIAN CSOS AND PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES**

The discussion above does not allow for firm conclusions about what partnership approach is most effective for strengthening civil society. Strong country presence and regular capacity building is no guarantee for impact on civil society. Large Norwegian CSOs with a major presence in the Ethiopia and/or working through an international federation may more easily achieve bigger results for beneficiaries by being able to reach more people in the communities. This is important, but these models may not necessarily have similar

advantages in building the capacity of individual organisations, or civil society networks.

Norwegian CSOs without a presence in Ethiopia may also be able to play an important role and add value for local partners when the partnership is based on common values, interests and commitment. However, when partner programmes involve implementation of major projects on the ground requiring strong professional competence and skills Norwegian CSOs with a presence in the country may be better positioned to add value to programmes compared to CSOs without such presence.

The choice of partnership approach is however, only one factor in determining impact on civil society. Cost considerations are important and so are the purpose and objectives in relation to the country context.

## Annex 2: Case study Uganda

### A2.1 OVERVIEW OF NORWEGIAN SUPPORT

620.9 Mill NOK was channelled from Norad through Norwegian CSOs for the purpose of strengthening civil society in Uganda between 2006- 2015. Only a small amount went through international CSOs or directly to local civil society organisations (1.8 Mill NOK) while a large amount came from other budget sources (670.6 Mill NOK) – also channelled to and through international, Norwegian and local CSOs.

As is evident from Table A2.1, the Norwegian support channelled through Norwegian CSOs for strengthening civil society is significant. While much funding from other budget sources is for humanitarian purposes, there is also some funding for long-term development programmes, including funding both to international NGOs as well direct support for strengthening of Ugandan CSOs. This includes funding from the Norwegian Embassy for a multi-donor fund - Democratic Governance Facility (DGF). This Fund provides grants for Ugandan CSOs working on promoting civic space, accountability, and democratic procedures. Several local partners of Norwegian CSOs in our sample have received grants from DGF.

**TABLE A2.1** / NORWEGIAN AID TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN UGANDA (2006 – 2015) (NOK MILLION)

Long term aid for civil society strengthening through Norwegian CSOs (the Norad civil society grant)	620.9
Long term aid through international CSOs and direct to civil society in the recipient country (Norad civil society grant)	1.8
Aid from other budget sources channelled through Norwegian and international CSOs and/or directly to local CSOs	670.6
Total Norwegian development aid	3940.2

SOURCE: NORAD'S NORWEGIAN AID STATISTICS, ACCESS TO MICRODATA

33 Norwegian organisations have received funding from the Norad civil society grant between 2006 and 2015. Table A2.2 (next page) presents all the organisations, the period in which they received support and the total size of this support. While a significant majority of the funding is received by larger a smaller number of organisations, there are more Norwegian organisations active in in this field in Uganda than in the other sample countries.

The team selected five of the largest Norwegian CSOs for further study:<sup>18</sup> Save the Children Norway, Plan Norway, Caritas Norway, Atlas Alliance and the Strømme Foundation – absorbing 59% of all funds in the evaluation period.

The team then selected Ugandan partners and projects for the five organisations based on data collected from project documents and interviews with staff of the Norwegian. Table A2.4 lists the selected CSO partnerships. The team decided to include the Uganda Childs

18 Care Norway and World Wildlife Fund Norway were only active in Uganda out of our three case countries, and were thus dropped in order to maximise the number of comparisons across contexts.

**TABLE A2.2 / NORWEGIAN CSOs THAT RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM THE CIVIL SOCIETY GRANT, 2006-2015 (NOK MILL)**

Norwegian CSO	Period	Amount
Save the Children Norway	2006-2015	161.7
Plan Norway	2006-2015	61.9
Caritas Norway	2006-2015	55.3
Atlas Alliance (The Norwegian Association of Disabled, The Norwegian Organisation of the Blind and Partially Sighted, The Signo Foundation, The Norwegian Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus)	2006-2015	50.6
WWF Norway	2006-2015	50.2
Care Norway	2006-2015	48
Strømme Foundation	2006-2015	36.5
The Royal Norwegian Society for Development	2006-2015	30.5
The Norwegian Bar Association	2006-2015	22.6
Lions Aid Norway	2006-2014	16.9
Right to Play	2011-2015	15.6
Digni (The Pentecostal Foreign Mission of Norway, The Salvation Army Norway)	2006-2015	14.4
FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development (The Norwegian Women and Family Association, The Norwegian Council for Africa)	2006-2015	13.3
Norwegian Nurses Organisation	2009-2015	13
The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	2006-2015	8.7
The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities	2008-2013	4.1
Norwegian Friends of Uganda	2006-2012	3.3
Adina Foundation	2012-2015	3.1
The Norwegian Humanist Association	2007-2012	2.4
EMiS – Environmental Movements in the South	2008-2009	2
Norwegian Church Aid	2006-2010	1.9
Nasjonalt Åndelig Råd for Bahá'íer i Norge	2007-2010	1.3
NORCODE	2010-2015	1.2
SOS Children's Villages Norway	2012	1.1
The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise	2007	0.7
Transparency International Norway	2014	0.4
Norwegian College of Dance	2015	0.2
The Norwegian Guide and Scout Association	2006-2007	0.2

SOURCE: NORAD AID STATISTICS, ACCESS TO MICRODATA

Rights Network in the sample although Save the Children Uganda does not currently fund it.<sup>19</sup> It has been a long-term strategic partner. We agree that such a sample is limited and findings cannot be generalised for the organisations involved. The case study approach has been used to identify potentially generic issues – relevant for the discussion of the questions in the evaluation.

## A2.2 COUNTRY CONTEXT – SHRINKING SPACE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

The CSO Law and registration rules and procedures are increasingly restrictive, but most organisations in our sample say that they have few problems in registering, as they work on issues that are not deemed politically controversial.<sup>20 21</sup>

19 Save the Children claims that funding is ongoing, while UCCRRN said differently.

20 Several evaluation reports describe the role and challenges of civil society in Uganda, such as for instance: Devlin-Foltz, D. (2011). *Civil Society Advocacy in Uganda*, The Aspen Institute, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (2013), *Evaluation of Danish Support to Civil Society*. Recent developments also discussed in Democratic Governance Facility (2017) *Civil Society Conversations: Outcome Paper*. Kampala, 31 May 2017. Interviews, both with specific organisations, peak organizations such as NGO Forum, donors and local experts, confirmed most of the findings.

21 As a prominent case of a hybrid regime, the situation for civil society in Uganda has been thoroughly described and discussed in the academic literature as well. For recent contributions that underline different aspects, see for example Hammett and Jackson (2017) *Developing a 'civil' society in partial democracies: In/civility and a critical public sphere in Uganda and Singapore*. *Political Geography*, 2017, 1-11. King & Hickey (2017) *Building Democracy from Below: Lessons from Western Uganda*. *The Journal of Development Studies* 53, 1584-1599.

**TABLE A2.3 / SELECTED ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR SHARE OF NORWEGIAN CSO FUNDING TO UGANDA, 2006-2015**

Norwegian CSOs	Share of Norwegian CSO funding to country (%)
Save the Children Norway	26
Plan International Norway	10
Caritas Norway	9
Atlas Alliance (Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted, Norwegian Association of the Disabled and SIGNO)	8
Strømme Foundation	6

**TABLE A2.4 / SELECTED PARTNERSHIPS**

Norwegian CSOs	Partner and projects
Save the Children Norway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Uganda Child Rights NGO Network</li> <li>&gt; THRIVEgulu</li> </ul>
Plan International Norway	Straight Talk Foundation
Caritas Norway	Caritas Uganda and Caritas Gulu
Atlas Alliance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD)</li> <li>&gt; Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted (NABP)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda (NUDIPU) / Association of Micro Finance Institutions in Uganda (AMFIU)</li> <li>&gt; Uganda National Association of the Blind (UNAB)</li> </ul>
Strømme Foundation	Charity for Peace Foundation

More vocal rights-based advocacy organisations have also been under indirect and direct attack from Government, and are often seen as partisan actors or even as part of the opposition (sometimes with merit). Indirect methods involve difficulties in the registration procedure (rules are applied selectively, registration processes are delayed), tax audits, threats and suppression of funding opportunities, while direct methods involve shutting down and prosecuting organisations seen as participating in activities viewed as subversive to the interests of the government, such as organising mass protests or advocacy campaigns on politically sensitive issues such as grand corruption. Authorities typically do not use Civil Society Legislation to shut down organisations, but rather refer to other, more general criminal laws (such as the Public Order Management Act, The Anti-Terrorism Act). While arrests are frequent (most recently seen in relation to the debate on the removal of the Age Limit for Presidential office), prosecutions and convictions are rare. It is also interesting to note that the law enforcement agencies do not use the newly created Civil Society Act to investigate and prosecute civil society actors, even though the law provides strict criteria for how such an investigation should take place.

Vocal advocacy organisations tend to receive foreign funding direct from Embassies or through multi-donor funds, such as Democratic Governance Facility. Vocal rights-based organisations active at the national level do not feature prominently among the type of Ugandan partners that Norwegian CSOs typically cooperate with. Interviews with other donors and the CSO apex body confirm that there is a divide in Ugandan civil society between ‘service providers’ and ‘controversial advocacy organisation’, and that these typically have different sources of funding.

CSOs providing services in combination with less vocal advocacy have not faced any serious problems. In fact, many of these organisations are performing important service delivery functions that are welcomed by the state. Notably, organisations working on disability and child rights are faced with an enabling environment as they can work within laws and regulations that clearly stipulate the rights of their constituencies. All the five organisations in our sample claim to have good relationship with the governments.

Sex education in school has recently been banned – which in practice means any mentioning of family planning and sexual

minorities (LGBTI issues) would create red lights and be banned.

### **A2.3 PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES**

The team has identified the international network, country office and bilateral approach to partnerships. The Ugandan partnerships evaluated cover the variety of approaches – bilateral (NAD, NABP, Caritas), country office (Strømme) and international network (Save the Children, Plan). The former tends towards intrinsic whereas the middle and former tend towards instrumental. One key difference seems to be whether they are targeting like-minded organisations (intrinsic) or whether they are targeting delivery of services/activities to key constituencies (implementation). Another difference is the relative value placed on strengthening civil society as an aim in itself versus/or as a tool to achieve other objectives.

Save the Children Norway and Plan Norway channel its support through international organisations with strong country offices. Strømme Foundation has a decentralised structure and operates through a regional/country office in Kampala with primary responsibility for planning, implementing and monitoring SF’s development cooperation programmes. Caritas Norway and the Atlas Alliance (National Union of Disabled Persons

in Uganda and Uganda National Association of the Blind) have no country presence and provide support directly to their partners from the offices in Norway.

All the organisations have partnership policies from short/rudimentary to very comprehensive. Partnership is for instance placed at the core of Save the Children International’s global theory of change. It is seen as a collaborative relationship and one of mutual learning. Key partners include governments, civil society organisations - particularly children and young people’s organisations and their parents.

Strømme Foundation states that

*“A key feature of our development cooperation strategy is our partnership model. We work entirely through local implementing partner organisations in our intervention countries. Although this may be a demanding structure, we believe it ensures a cost-effective, culturally sensitive and contextually appropriate approach to development”.*

The same is true for the other organisations in terms of approach. We will now turn to the characteristics of the partnerships.

**TABLE A2.5 / NORWEGIAN CSOs – INSTRUMENTAL VS INTRINSIC APPROACHES**

Instrumental approach		←—————→		Intrinsic approach	
1	2	3	4	5	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Plan Norway</li> <li>&gt; Save the Children Norway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Strømme Foundation</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Caritas; The Norwegian Association of the Disabled; Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Partners seen as means to implement pre-set objectives</li> <li>&gt; Power monopolized by one partner</li> <li>&gt; Sub-contracting</li> <li>&gt; Capacity building goes down only</li> <li>&gt; Accountability goes up only</li> </ul>				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Strong partners are recognized as end in itself</li> <li>&gt; Power shared between partners</li> <li>&gt; Autonomous partners cooperating</li> <li>&gt; Capacity building goes in both directions</li> <li>&gt; Accountability goes in both direction</li> </ul>	

#### **A2.4 PARTNERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS**

All the Norwegian organisations work through partners in Uganda. They vary considerably concerning how they relate to their partners and what the primary goal of the partnerships are. We have positioned the five Norwegian CSOs on a continuum from having an instrumental approach to partnership – seeing partners as means to implement pre-set objectives to an intrinsic approach where strong partners are recognized as ends in themselves.

As Table A2.5 illustrates, there is a pattern where partnerships based on common values and informal dialogue also seem to have a

larger focus on building the partner organisation, while the more professionalized partnerships tend to be more instrumental and results focused. As we highlight in the following analysis of strengths and weaknesses the individual partnerships, neither of these approaches are necessarily better. The partnership approaches change also over time from intrinsic to instrumental. The Norwegian Association of the Disabled (NAD) and National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda (NUDIPU) partnership started for instance with organisational capacity strengthening while specific projects were added later. The approaches are not dualistic either. Most of



the partnerships combine intrinsic/instrumental and formal/informal, but with the increasing demanding planning and reporting requirements, there is a trend towards formalization.

#### **A2.4.1 Caritas and Atlas Alliance**

Both Caritas Norway – Caritas Uganda partnership and the two partnerships of the Atlas Alliance members (NAD-NUDIPU and NABP-UNAB) were (and are) founded in direct collaborations between like-minded organisations who cater for similar constituencies in their respective countries. The partnership has been long-term – more than ten years while concrete development projects have emerged later and changed along the way. Both Caritas and NAD focused in the beginning on strengthening the capacity of their Ugandan partners and added projects later. Both NUDIPU and Caritas Uganda (UNAB to a lesser degree) are today relatively strong national organisations with vocal leadership, ability to document results on the ground and equipped with a national advocacy profile based on local experience and evidence. The organisational growth has been organic and incremental – organisational capacity has not been built by a short-term capacity strengthening interventions. The Norwegian CSOs have been the main partners (and donors) for the Ugandan organisations and

can take credit for some of the organisational growth. This is a strength and advantage, but on the other hand, it is raising difficult sustainability/phasing out issues. Uganda. Finally, when contracting external partners to help with programme implementation (such as in the case of AMFIU for NAD/NUDIPU) these Norwegian organisations often also engage their implementing partners and help them build capacity on key technical issues.

Caritas Norway did not select local partners based on any formal assessment of organisational gaps and needs. There was no partner choice for Caritas Norway or Norwegian Association of the Disabled in Uganda since the partners were obvious. Assessments of capacity have been carried out later and informed programme/organisational development decisions, when this was deemed necessary. Another characteristic is that a few experienced and committed individuals have been involved on both sides for a long period – from the initiation through planning and implementation. The turnover has been minimal – at least until recently. Individuals who have known each other have been partners – not only organisations. Neither Caritas Norway, Uganda Association of the Blind or Norwegian Association of the Disabled has had country offices or Norwegian

country presence (through a separate office).<sup>22</sup> They have followed what we have called “the bilateral model” with two to three visits every year and regular contact by mail and Skype.

#### **A2.4.2 Plan Norway**

Both Save the Children International and Plan International are large professional international CSOs, but operate differently. Plan Norway phased out its support to Uganda at the end of 2015, but used to fund specific projects within the Plan International’s Uganda country programme. Plan Norway referred to Plan Uganda as their main partner – meaning that their main interaction and involvement had been with Plan Uganda – and the technical contributions and added value would be found there. Plan Norway was to some extent involved in project design meetings and in supervision and monitoring of project progress – programmatically and financially for the project we looked at. However, in meeting with Straight Talk Foundation – managing one of the Plan Norway’s funded projects; they referred to Plan Uganda as their partner and explained that the involvement of Plan Norway had been limited to specific meetings and special events.

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<sup>22</sup> The Norwegian Association of the Disabled has recently (from 2016) employed a Ugandan technical advisor in Kampala. He acts as the arm of Norwegian CSO, but we consider the model to be most like the bilateral since there is still extensive direct contact and no formal representation established.



Plan Uganda did an assessment of Straight Talk Foundation before entering into an agreement. Straight Talk was also involved in the design of the project and could with its media-experience add considerable value to what Plan Uganda did on its own. An evaluation of the project identified weak follow up from Plan Uganda and lack of capacity strengthening during the implementation of the project as weaknesses. Straight Talk mentioned turnover of staff in Plan Uganda as a problem. New people had to be introduced to and learn what the project was about reflecting weaknesses in Plan's ability to follow up and support individual partners.

The partnership between Plan Uganda and Straight Talk is not an example of a long-term strategic partnership. It was based on projects and availability of funds. The Straight Talk project came for instance to an abrupt end in 2015 – when Plan Norway suddenly phased out its support to the country – without any warning, proper explanation (as seen from Plan Uganda's perspective) and a gradual phasing out strategy.<sup>23</sup> The gap in the budget could not be filled and the project suffered. This was an example of partner divorce without any counselling, proper phasing out and reasonable compensations.

<sup>23</sup> Plan Norway explained in an interview that the decision to phase out support to Uganda was based on a request/demand from Norad to focus its support more – geographically and thematically.

### **A2.4.3 Save the Children Norway**

Save the Children Norway operates differently. They fund a separate sub-programme within the Save the Children Uganda country programme – often referred to as the “Norad programme”. Save the Children Norway takes not only financial responsibility for funding this programme for five years, but is also involved in its design, technical support during implementation, financial monitoring and evaluation. Save the Children Norway works out an annual “Engagement plan” in which it specifies what and how their staff should contribute to the “Norad programme”. Save the Children Uganda office benefits generally from thematic advisors from Norway, but they focus on those projects and partners funded by Norway. Here they also add significant technical value in agreed thematic areas – possibly more than in building/strengthening partnerships<sup>24</sup>.

We met with Uganda Child Rights CSO Network (UCRNN) – funded by Redd Barna before the unification process was completed. UCRNN used to have a close dialogue and interaction with Save the Children Norway, but said that such interaction ended in 2014. Save the

<sup>24</sup> Save the Children Norway adds that SCI Uganda has technical specialists providing guidance to all projects supported by all donors. The thematic advisers from Norway provide technical guidance based on the engagement plan. Therefore, the partnership is strengthened at country level not through involvement of Norway only.

Children Uganda staff took over from that year. UCRNN found that follow up became less regular, more technical/instrumental and less oriented towards discussion and learning.

One of the purposes of establishing a unified country office was to strengthen the impact of Save the Children International by having a larger joint multi-donor programme. Such transformation would imply reducing the visibility and direct involvement of each national Save the Children organisation by having joint Save the Children International country offices. Save the Children has provided core support to the country programme from programme design, development and technical capacity strengthening. It has maintained visibility by taking responsibility within the unified system for thematic priorities globally and specific programmes within country programmes. Both Save the Children Uganda and Save the Children Norway claim that such a model still works and works well but depend on good and regular communication and consultations at all levels.

Save the Children Uganda has made strides to introduce “an intrinsic” partnership approach in its overall policy. Save the Children Norway has also in the application to Norad its policies focused on partnership. Staff at Save the

Children's office interviewed claimed that the strong partnership policy/approach in Uganda can be credited to the influence and involvement of Save the Children Norway – and feedback from critical evaluations that claimed that Save the Children International used partners mainly instrumentally. However, only a small part of the total Save the Children Uganda budget in Uganda is implemented by and through civil society partners. Most funds are used in collaborative projects with the Government<sup>25</sup>. Save the Children have donors with different priorities and partner principles such as Japan and US and in interviews with country office staff they explained how they had to manage those conflicting expectations – between self-implementation and optimal effective service delivery promoted by some donors and/or working through partners by others.

#### **A2.4.4 Strømme Foundation**

We have placed Strømme Foundation in between instrumental/formal and intrinsic/informal. It used to follow an instrumental approach to partners – using them as contractors and consultants for implementing their programmes. This has to a large extent been changed, but not fully. New partnership

<sup>25</sup> Save the Children Norway states that capacities among CSOs are still weak. There is also a need for self-implementation in the current situation with a high influx of refugees.

policies and principles have been introduced. Strømme Foundation has probably the most or at least one of the most systematic processes to select intervention areas and partners. They map country needs by looking at poverty in different districts and select districts with high levels of poverty and few donors. Then they search for partners – not the strongest, but the weaker with a potential to grow and being in line with what Strømme Foundation wants to achieve. However, in their documents, they still use the term implementing partners – a reminiscence from previous practice and could easily be changed.

When partners are identified, Strømme Foundation carries out a systematic organisational capacity assessment followed by a capacity-strengthening plan addressing gaps in capacity. As such, Strømme Foundation funds both organisational capacity strengthening and project interventions. They claim that capacity building is an end in itself, but we could not find examples of partners only receiving capacity-building support<sup>26</sup>. Strømme Foundation has also a strong Regional/National Office in Kampala providing regular support to

<sup>26</sup> It is often difficult to know what is the most effective strategy – only organisational strengthening or in combination with project activities. Norwegian Association of Disabled started with only capacity strengthening and added projects later, while the majority combines the two.

all partners in all identified areas. The office has local staff of high calibre.

Strømme Foundation is a Christian organisation, but with no “natural partners”. They are in the difficult “matching business” – searching for good partners and making it even more difficult for themselves by giving a priority to weak partners – with an expected potential. Some partner become more long-term and strategic than others, but the duration should ideally not be longer than five years and as such different from the “bilateral” organisations. Strømme Foundation is a professional “capacity builder”, but should take much higher risks and follow another approach than Caritas and NAD being able to stay with and nurture long-term partnerships.

#### **A2.5 RELEVANCE**

We have not come across any projects and/or activities that were not found relevant by the partner organisation. The question whether there could have been a better and more effective alternative use of the same resources is difficult/impossible to answer. Theoretically – yes, but it would have required knowledge of what those alternatives were.

There is also strong evidence of mutual respect and understanding between Norwegian CSOs

and their partners. The Ugandan partners consider Norwegian colleagues as cordial, flexible, respectful and knowledgeable – not imposing their own policies and priorities. This does not preclude Norwegian CSOs promoting and suggesting new approaches and ideas. The programme on increasing financial opportunities for the blind was introduced by NABP to UNAB, but crucially UNAB where allowed to change the profile of the programme to improve its applicability for Blind and Partially Sighted in Uganda.

NAD introduced NUDIPU's programme on inclusive micro-finance. It was embraced as an extremely useful continuation of the programme, as it both allowed NUDIPU to increase its outreach and provide a critical service (access to finances) for their key constituency (thereby sneaking in a capacity-building component even though it technically had been phased out). Engaging with a mainstream financial actor in AMFIU also allowed mainstreaming of the principles and ideas of economic inclusion for people with disabilities. The program has and is rigorously evaluated through NUDIPU's collaboration with NHH Norwegian School of Economics with

relatively impressive results both in terms of outreach and output.<sup>27</sup>

Caritas Norway's focus on equity and gender was not immediately adopted by Caritas Uganda, but Caritas Uganda has become proud of achieving better gender equity in all leadership positions. The increased attention on gender has improved gender balance in leadership positions and in the development of a gender equality policy, as well as hiring expertise on gender in the organisation. Family planning was and is a controversial issue for the Catholic Church. Caritas Norway has decided not to push such issues, but been clear about its position. LGBTI issues are ruled out by all organisations as possible issues to pursue in Uganda.

That funds made available for certain thematic priorities have influenced Ugandan CSOs are certain. They have also cleverly adopted and used the appropriate donor terminology of the day. The significant funding over the last ten years of for example pro-poor advocacy and human rights contributed to create a large number of national advocacy organisations ready to absorb those funds. With the

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<sup>27</sup> See for example Nerbøvik & Nordmo (2016) *Saving to empower the disabled: An impact study from rural Uganda*. Bergen: NHH. Save (2017) *Summary Manafwa Study*.

significant decrease in such funding from several donors, many of the advocacy organisations struggle financially or have been closed.

Norwegian CSOs has also contributed to national and local advocacy, but the picture is mixed. Broadly speaking, there are two types of CSOs in Uganda: Those primarily geared towards national advocacy and those primarily geared towards service delivery.

National advocacy organisations are significantly more politically controversial in Uganda than CSOs focusing on local service delivery. While the political space for civil society is shrinking in Uganda, our analysis seems to indicate that this depends on the activity. The political risks associated with supporting controversial CSOs might be too large for individual Norwegian CSOs to handle. The controversial CSOs typically receive their funding from basket funds (pooled donor funds such as the Democratic Governance Facility) or are multinational human rights organisations. Rights for Children and people living with disability are neither in themselves controversial, but more importantly – all the Norwegian CSOs and their partners have practiced “soft” advocacy – avoiding sensitive and controversial issues, such as human rights

for sexual minorities and government corruption<sup>28</sup>. Several of the CSOs have pursued grassroots and evidence-based advocacy – documenting experience from local projects and used such cases for national level advocacy. The advocacy work of Caritas Uganda has to a large extent followed such an approach. National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda (NUDIPU) is an active and professional advocacy network with a list of “Disability Demands 2016-2021”.

Norwegian CSOs typically employ a grassroots-based human rights approach that prioritizes individual change at the local community (bottom-up development) over national advocacy. As many of the national level advocacy groups typically lack these kinds of structures and abilities, they would not be natural partners of the Norwegian CSOs.

Finally, it could be argued that a general relevance concern with the support to Ugandan CSOs is a lack of focus on internal governance challenges. A recent, unpublished report on the function of civil society organisations in Uganda based on roundtable discussions with local

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<sup>28</sup> Caritas Norway agrees with the conclusion, but adds that they have been clear on the rights for sexual minorities in the dialogue with Caritas Uganda. Caritas Uganda took also an active role in advocacy related to sustainability and fair distribution of the income from the oil sector (an example of national level advocacy).

stakeholders across the country highlight that in addition to the challenging external environment, many Ugandan CSOs also suffer from internal weaknesses such as having a founder syndrome, lacking grassroots structures, and failing to have proper procedures in place for complying with government regulations. While some of these issues can be seen as at least partially a result of the challenging external environment, there are structural elements internal to CSOs that should be addressed by the organisations themselves. These include building internal democracy within organisations and making sure that the civil society organisations remain part of local society and economy.

#### **A2.6 ADDED VALUE**

All the Norwegian CSOs and partners were aware of the need to prove and document “added value” – contributions to their partner in Uganda beyond financial support. The “multilateral organisations” – Plan Norway and Save the Children Norway have most problems documenting direct added value and attribute such value to Norwegian contributions. Save the Children Norway has adopted the most systematic and proactive approach to add value to the country programme - in particular the Norwegian funded sub-programme – from conception through implementation to follow

up. However, their support is mainly geared towards thematic areas and possibly less contributing to strengthening partner capacity. Plan Norway is also involved in programme and project processes, but its involvement with partners and projects is more detached and irregular. Their main partner is Plan Uganda being responsible for country partners. The project supported through Straight Talk Foundation had weaknesses (identified in an evaluation) which a closer follow up from Plan Norway/Uganda could have detected.

The added value components are not well documented in annual reports, so we don't have sufficient evidence to draw any firm conclusion, but it seems that a large part of the capacity strengthening is focused on financial/administrative capacity, fundraising, monitoring, evaluation and reporting – all capacities necessary for partners to comply with donor and Norad requirements. Save the Children Norway is focusing also on programmatic substance – being a technical advisor mainly to partners and projects in the “Norad programme” (as referred to by Save the Children Uganda) – also benefiting the country programme more broadly.

The local partners of Caritas Norway, NAD and UNAB all describe significant added value

provided by their Norwegian partners, both in terms of organizational growth and project activities. This they ascribe to the long-term nature of the collaboration and the common values that result from representing similar constituencies. The added value in these relationships are often more obvious in that the Norwegian organisations are extremely important vis-à-vis other partners, but this also creates challenges concerning dependency and sustainability.

## A2.7 PROJECT RESULTS

We have only assessed the effects and impact of selected projects and interventions. The overall findings and observations from evaluations, annual reports, interviews and selected projects are that projects progress well – activities are implemented and outputs delivered as planned and short-term objectives are to a large extent achieved. This is also in line with meta-evaluations of CSO projects (Norad. Tracking Impact 2011). The challenges with CSO projects are more related to limited scope and coverage of interventions and weak or missing wider effects.

An evaluation carried out by Caritas Uganda provides an illustrative example of results: In the period 2013-2017 Caritas Uganda and Caritas Norway have been implementing a

programme on improved governance and sustainable livelihoods in four regions of Uganda with the financial support of Norad. The programme reaches 6000 households (30 000 people) annually. An external mid-term evaluation of the programme in 2015 documented very good results of the programme and concluded that it was on good track to reaching its set of objectives. The evaluation from 2015 found “*tremendous progress towards realization of the target outcomes.*”<sup>29</sup>

There are also examples of unintended positive effects such as microfinance being linked to a rehabilitation programme for the disabled (Norwegian Association of the Disabled) and negative effects such as partnerships being terminated because of persistent weak capacity and/or financial irregularities (Strømme Foundation).

There was agreement and to some extent frustration in both Norwegian CSOs and their Ugandan collaborates that the “results agenda” promoted by donors including Norad had moved time and resources from strategic and programmatic dialogue to planning, monitoring

<sup>29</sup> See F. Luzze (2015). *Mid-Term Evaluation Caritas Uganda/Caritas Norway Partnership. Integrated Programme for Good Governance and Sustainable Livelihood.* Ulinzu Innovations Consult Ltd.

and reporting (both in Norway and Uganda) – meeting increasingly complex reporting requirements. There is also some evidence that more complex objectives and interventions have been “crowded out” for tangible service-delivery projects. The annual reports tend to focus on numerical and easy to measure achievements. Organisational capacity, advocacy and civil society strengthening are inherently much more difficult to measure and results are also not so well reflected. Not that such areas can't be assessed, but the categories of results are often different and should be measured differently.

Most of the organisations have an explicit rights-orientation in their strategies and objectives covering human rights, civil society, democracy, gender equality, poverty reduction, etc. – all long-term complex objectives. The question is what results are counted as results and how – when it comes to reporting to Norad. Among other things, the organisations claimed that it was getting less recognition for its advocacy work, as it was not as visible and countable as for organisations working with national level, political issues. The ‘results agenda’ thus arguably contributes to the shift in focus from civil society as advocacy organisations and change actors at the national level to civil society as service providers working with local organisations.

### **A2.7.1 Contribution to civil society**

All the five organisations have contributed to strengthening civil society in Uganda in one way or another. However, an underlying challenge is the weak conceptual clarity about what constitutes civil society - a requirement for knowing how to support and strengthen that society and measure the results. Civil society is used as an attractive and progressive term, but operational plans for how to strengthen civil society at various levels have not been worked out.<sup>30</sup>

All the five could refer to strengthening of individuals, groups and informal networks at local/community level – people coming together for a common purpose and being strengthened as a collective – even at a small scale. The saving groups supported by Norwegian Association of the Disabled through the Uganda’s National Union of Disabled Persons and Association of Micro Finance Institutions is one example. The Plan project through Straight Talk Foundation established youth clubs in schools. Caritas Uganda works with community groups in four dioceses. Strømme Foundation is involved in local community development work – all making contribution

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<sup>30</sup> The same is true for “capacity strengthening”, but to a lesser extent. Project interventions are most often well presented and explained while civil society is a short add-on.

to strengthening civil society at the local/ grassroots level. The evaluation could find examples of such strengthening – even if we can’t measure the scope and level of impact.

All the five Norwegian CSOs support Ugandan partners or in other words, they contribute to strengthen individual civil society organisations. There are also examples of Norwegian CSOs seeing organisational development as an end in itself. The work with Caritas, Uganda National Association of the Blind and National Union of Disabled Persons Uganda have in periods focused exclusively on strengthening the organisations with projects added later. Strømme Foundation claims that capacity strengthening is for them an end, but in practice, all partnerships combine capacity strengthening and project interventions. Plan and Save the Children Uganda have adopted a partner approach, but most partners play a role within their broader programmes and objectives. The Uganda Child Rights NGO Network (UCRNN) is different. UCRNN is considered and treated as a strategic long-term partner.

There is an important conceptual and practical difference between (a) identifying a thematic area and or/sector, searching for relevant partners in that area and consider its

contribution to nurture those organisations in their own right– helping them to operate and deliver more efficiently and effectively and (b) do the same, but define and place them within their own programmes and make sure they contribute to similar objectives. There are pros and cons for each approach. We conclude that most of the partners come in category (b).

When it comes to civil society at national level, the situation is much more complex. Save the Children Uganda provides support to several civil society networks for children. Plan Uganda does the same. UNAB and NUDIPU are themselves national network organisations. Caritas -Uganda is not formally a CSO (church based organisations are not categorized as CSOs in Uganda and do not fall under the CSO Law), but is in practice member of the national CSO forum and active in other national networks. Strømme Foundation has a slightly lower focus on national level networking.

What is missing – or falling between chairs - is an understanding and approach to civil society in Uganda – as the arena between the family, government and market as it is usually defined. Do Norwegian CSOs support that arena creating space for a vibrant and active civil society – and are the contributions strategic including choice of rights actors and actions? Do the Norwegian



have the knowledge and basis for making such decisions? The answer is clearly no. Each Norwegian CSO select individually their own partners based on their internal criteria. This is also what would be expected, but this leads to an extremely fragmented approach to civil society strengthening (by Norway) – no overall analysis of the state and developments within Uganda civil society as a basis for planning and selecting partners and projects. The fact that most bilateral donors have terminated direct funding to Ugandan government, have increased the amount of money available for CSOs (and also for UN and global thematic funds)<sup>31</sup> – raising questions about their capacity to absorb such funds. Norad or the Embassy could have played a role in doing a broader civil society analysis, but the Embassy is detached from most of the Norwegian CSOs – only to some extent involved in reviewing their applications, but not systematically and for all<sup>32</sup>. They did express in interviews with the team a wish to be more and better informed and involved Nor has the Civil Society Department in Norad has taken up that responsibility – so the broader issue of civil society in Uganda is falling between chairs.

31 The Embassy confirms that Norwegian funds have not been shifted to CSOs.

32 The Embassy commented that they have in the last three years been more involved in Norad supported NGOs and in “reviewing the broader issue of civil society in Uganda.” The last year, the Embassy has spent some time on mismanagement cases related to Norad contributions and followed up support to and by DGF and recipients of multi-donor funding.

In other words, there are clear deficiencies in almost all partnerships in terms of how they are contributing to building a vibrant, national civil society capable of affecting and altering outcomes on politically sensitive topics. Most direct project activities are well planned and formulated, while the broader aims and objectives are so well operationalized.

## **A2.8 CHOICE OF APPROACH**

All the partnership approaches we identified in the methods chapter are presented in our sample of organisations in Uganda. We are not able to assess and conclude which approach is the most efficient and effective, but the partner reports can contribute and inform the discussion.

The international network approach has most layers and intermediaries and is potentially the most costly. Both Plan International and Save the Children International have large offices in Kampala with both local and international staff. Funds are channelled through headquarters in London, before forwarded to country offices, partners, projects and ultimately beneficiaries. On the other hand, resources from many donors are pooled and used to cover administrative expenses. The outreach and coverage are also high. However, Save the Children has not yet been able to assess to what extent the “new unified model” is more cost efficient/effective

than the former. There is still parallel project and financial monitoring by both Save the Children Uganda and Save the Children staff. The level of thematic advice and support has also increased which should not be considered as administrative expenses.

Strømme Foundation has a locally staffed regional/country office – less costly than Plan and Save the Children, but the support costs are relatively high because of the comprehensive assessment and selection processes and level of capacity strengthening support provided.

The bilateral approach followed by Caritas and National Union of Disabled Persons in Uganda is even less costly. Two to three trips each year from Norway is much less than maintaining an office in Kampala. On the other hand, the level of direct capacity support is smaller.

Money aside: The most interesting question is what approach is most effective for strengthening civil society? A problem is that the choice of approach is just one factor determining civil society impact. Based on our observation, we could not conclude that strong country presence and regular capacity strengthening is a guarantee for building a strong civil society. Caritas Uganda, National

Union of Disabled Persons Uganda and Uganda National Association of the Blind are examples of well-established national CSOs in which Norwegian CSOs have played important roles – without any country presence.

Strømme Foundation has different partners – to a large extent small and weak local organisations. It would probably be difficult to support and monitor such organisations without a physical presence. Poor people are mostly poorly organised – making it difficult to reach and communicate with them. Donor requirements are also so that too small/informal/weak CSOs are excluded from funding. Only those that meet basic organisational requirements can become donor partners.

## **A2.9 SUSTAINABILITY**

All partnerships have critical sustainability issues, particularly when it comes to funding. The only partnership that we can relatively safely say has contributed to lasting structures is the NAD-NUDIPU partnership. The “multilateral” organisations are robust, but that is because their international organisations increase their fundraising capabilities and possibly lower their administration costs. The concrete Norwegian contributions are often lost if support is withdrawn. However, it should be noted that sustainability is a general CSO

challenge in Uganda, and that this is partly a result of the current government being relatively happy to allow CSOs to deliver services and represent the interest of groups that they are currently not able/willing to represent. Lacking state capacity thus makes sustainability without donor funding relatively unattainable.

As matter of fact, large parts of civil society in Uganda is a donor construction. A majority of CSOs will not be able to sustain their services without external donor support and many of them would not have existed without donor funds for “strengthening civil society”. In our group of organisations Plan International, Save the Children International and Strømme Foundation are international donors. They are all concerned with sustaining the benefits of their programmes, but they depend on donor funds and would disappear without. Given the level of poverty in Uganda, it is not unexpected that national CSOs will not be able to sustain themselves financially based on local resources.

Caritas Uganda and National Union of Disabled Persons Uganda is in a slightly different situation. The Catholic Church will remain regardless of donor funding – not all Caritas Uganda projects, but the Church will have a diaconal mandate – serving their members

and country.<sup>33</sup> The National Union of Disabled Persons Uganda is an interest organisation for various organisations of disabled people. Again - some of their projects will not be sustained at the same level without external support, but National Union of Disabled Persons Uganda will most likely continue as an interest-/ and advocacy organisation for the disabled in Uganda.

A general sustainability challenge in Uganda is linked to the political system. While the state in Uganda is not lacking capacity concerning some issues, in terms of service delivery there are still major deficiencies. The CSOs who typically focus on addressing these gaps in service delivery work on amicable terms with the government, but there are significant challenges in terms of government uptake. According to both some of the organisations, apex bodies and donors, there is a willingness to engage and adapt at the local government level, but there is little political change at the central government level. The question then is if the support provided by these CSOs allows the government to remain ‘wilfully’ weak concerning service delivery and rights for particularly marginalized and vulnerable groups?

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<sup>33</sup> It is doubtful that Caritas will be sustained without external donor funding, but the Catholic Church will. Caritas Norway clarifies that Caritas is part of the Catholic Commissions – an integral part of the Episcopal Conference in Uganda. However, in our meeting with Caritas Gulu, they questioned their sustainability without donor funding.



## Annex 3: Case study Nepal

This annex first provides background information about the Nepal civil society context and a brief overview of Norwegian funding to Nepal via Norwegian, international and local organisations. It then presents findings and briefly discusses some main conclusions relating to the CSO's selected for in-depth study. The information presented is based on a document review and interviews with representatives of Norwegian and Nepalese CSOs. As requested in the terms of reference for the assignment, there is an emphasis on the views and perceptions of local partners.

### A3.1 CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL

Up until the 1950s, Nepal was an isolated kingdom resisting contact with the external world. A feudal, primarily Hindu, power structure underpinned an absolute monarchy with the ruling king regarded as a deity by a large proportion of the population.

Pre 1990, The Social Services National Coordination Council regulated and supervised the NGOs, while the Social Welfare National Coordination Council handled majority of the

funding agencies. The Queen was the chairperson, and the presence of international NGOs in Nepal was regulated from the Royal Palace. During this period, it was illegal for anyone to engage in development activities in Nepal without the Government's permission.<sup>34</sup> The monarchy retained power until 1990 when, in the face of a broad popular rebellion, the constitution was revised establishing a constitutional monarchy with an elected multi-party Parliament. Prior to this change the scope for civil society was very limited in the Nepali judicial system, although a number of organisations managed to be operational despite this.

Broad segments of Nepali society did not feel that the changes instituted went far enough. During the 90s and 2000s, Nepal went through a series of governments, a violent insurgency, the mass murder of most of the Royal family by one of its own members and, ultimately failing, attempts to re-establish the monarchy. A new

constitution was promulgated in 2015 establishing a new version of the complex Nepali government administrative structure.

Nepal is one of the most natural disaster prone countries in the world, recently illustrated by massive earthquakes in May 2015. After a decade of post-conflict transition, political and social progress in Nepal has been slow. The GDP per capita is USD 707 and 25 percent of the population lives on USD 1.25 per day or less. Frequent natural disasters negatively affect livelihoods and food security.<sup>35</sup>

Following the political changes of 1990, a massive expansion of civil society organisations has taken place. Initially these were accompanied by international NGOs free to engage in independent service delivery programming. A number of Norwegian NGOs engaged in such programming. More recent governments have insisted on international stakeholders establishing partnerships with

<sup>34</sup> Overview of Civil Society in Nepal, ADB, 2005 <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/28970/csb-nep.pdf>, downloaded 171009.

<sup>35</sup> Based on WFP Country Brief, [https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/wfp273247\\_1.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/wfp273247_1.pdf), downloaded 171009.

local organisations and implementing programming through them.

The current civil society organisation environment encompasses close to 40,000 entities registered with the government. They range in scope from "bag – community-based organisations" (i.e. an individual with some papers and a name seeking funding) to networks of like-minded groups of people bound by a thematic or ethnic interest to large, professional para-statal organisations such as the Nepal Planned Parenthood Federation or the Nepal Red Cross. All civil society organisations in the country need to have a relationship with local or national government institutions. With the changes in government administration, following from the new constitution, a significant decentralisation of decision-making mandates and resource allocation is taking place. Local civil society organisations are investing significantly in trying to understand and adapt to the new systems.

A 2016 EU report<sup>36</sup> describes the legal environment and notes that the new Constitution of 2015 recognises the rights to association, peaceful assembly and

<sup>36</sup> EU country roadmap for engagement with civil society, 2016 – 2020, Draft approved July 2016, <https://eeas.europa.eu/sites/eeas/files/csormp.pdf>, downloaded 171009

**TABLE A3.1 / NORWEGIAN AID TO CIVIL SOCIETY IN NEPAL (2006 – 2015) (NOK MILLION)**

Long term aid for civil society strengthening through Norwegian CSOs (Norad's civil society grant)	391.2
Long term aid through international CSOs and direct to civil society in the recipient country (Norad's civil society grant)	1.7
Aid from other budget sources channelled through Norwegian and international CSOs and/or directly to local CSOs	444.0
Total Norwegian development aid	2771.7

SOURCE: NORAD'S NORWEGIAN AID STATISTICS, ACCESS TO MICRODATA

freedom of expression. The constitution also guarantees the right to information as a fundamental right as well as recognising several other rights including groups rights. The report goes on to identify civil society strengths as a country wide presence, broad representation, an active and catalytic role in promoting democracy and human rights, actively increasing awareness about rights and duties as well as a prominent role in promoting inclusion of minorities and good governance. Weaknesses are also noted such as an inability of NGOs to include diversity, widespread donor dependence, a lack of transparency and good governance, weak management and a lack of inter-NGO coordination.

The evaluation team notes that much of the capacity development support provided by the sampled Norwegian CSOs is focused on the weaknesses identified in the EU report cited above.

### A3.2 NORWEGIAN SUPPORT TO NEPAL

In the 2005-2015 period NOK 391 Million was channelled from Norad through 23 different Norwegian CSOs for the purpose of strengthening civil society in Nepal. A minor amount went through international NGOs (NOK 1.7 Million), none went directly to Nepali civil society organisations. A larger amount came from other budget sources (NOK 444 Million). Approximately 14% of total Norwegian aid to Nepal was channelled through Norwegian CSOs within the budget heading 160 (70). Adding other channels and budget sources aiming at strengthening civil society, the figure rises to 30%. See Table A3.1 above.

Other major disbursements during the period were: NOK 23 million from the budget heading for regional support<sup>37</sup>, NOK 85 million for

<sup>37</sup> 151 - Bistand til Asia, 78 - Regionbevilgning for Asia

emergency support, humanitarian aid and human rights<sup>38</sup> and NOK 15 million for peace, reconciliation and democracy.<sup>39</sup> Of the total funds disbursed for civil society and democracy development, NOK 15 million was for exchange activities by the Norwegian Fredskorpset.<sup>40</sup>

A total of NOK 117 million of non-civil society grant allocations was channelled via international organisations, with one of the main recipients being the Netherlands Development Organisation.<sup>41</sup> NOK 160 million was disbursed directly to Nepalese organisations, including NOK 30 million to the local office of Save the Children, NOK 24 million to Kathmandu University, NOK 22 million to the Informal Sector Service Center, NOK 16 million to the Media Initiative for Rights, Equity and Social Transformation Nepal and NOK 12 million to the Sankalpa Foundation.

### A3.3 CASE STUDY PARTNERSHIPS

Based on criteria developed in the inception phase of the evaluation, the evaluation team selected 13 Norwegian CSOs receiving funding directly from Norad. These included three

38 163 - Nødhjelp, humanitær bistand og menneskerettigheter

39 164 - Fred, forsoning og demokrati

40 160 - Sivilt samfunn og demokratiutvikling, 77 - Utvekslingsordninger gjennom Fredskorpset

41 NOK 38 million, Social Inclusion Research Fund.

**TABLE A3.2 / SAMPLE OF NORWEGIAN CSOs WITH PROGRAMMES IN NEPAL**

Norwegian CSO	Size (Share of Norwegian CSO funding to country - %)
Atlas Alliance	19
Norwegian Bar Association	3
Digni	9,5
Plan Norway	13
Norwegian Red Cross	4
Save the Children Norway	21
Strømme Foundation	4
Development Fund	11

umbrella organisations. The selection criteria were based on total funding over the evaluation period, length of engagement and geographic breadth of engagement. The sample thus only contains

- › organisations allocated over 10 million NOK combined for the three case countries between 2006 and 2015
- › organisations that were present in at least one of the countries for more than 5 years and that were active in at least one of the countries in question in 2015
- › organisations that were active in at least two of the case countries

Of these 13 organisations, eight were active in Nepal. The table above shows that they represent a spread in share of Norwegian CSO funding to Nepal.

For these Norwegian organisations, we identified the following local partner organisations: (see the next page)

**TABLE A3.3 / LOCAL PARTNERS FOR THE SELECTED NORWEGIAN CSOs**

Norwegian CSO	Local partner organisation
Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People	National Federation of the Disabled - Nepal
Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted (NABP)	Nepal Association of the Blind Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh
Norwegian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities	Parents Federation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities Equal Rights and Full Participation – Nepal
Norwegian Bar Association	Nepal Bar Association (NEBA)
HimalPartner	Kathmandu University Outreach Centres United Mission to Nepal Early Childhood Education Centre Higher Ground Community Development Service Koshish Educational Horizons Nepal
Normisjon	United Mission to Nepal
Norwegian Red Cross	Nepal Red Cross Society
Plan Norway	Banke Association of the Blind (BAB) Dalit Empowerment Center (DEC), Baglung Dalit Janasamaaj Nepal (Oppressed People Society) (OPS), Registered in Parbat Disable Association Myagdi (DAM) Environmental. Preservation Services for Development Nepal (ENPRED), Parbat Friends of Disabled (FoD)/Hospital and Rehabilitation Centre for Disabled Children (HRDC) National Deaf Federation Nepal (NDFN) National Federation of the Disabled Nepal (NFDN) Nepal Association of the Blind (NAB) Nepal Gaja Development Foundation (NGDF), Baglung Parent Federation of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (PPPID) Rastriya Dalit Bikash Sanstha (NDDO), Parbat Various organisations supported to develop Community Based Safe Schools through Rehabilitation and Reconstruction support to Earthquake Impacted Schools in Sindhuli

THIS COLUMN LISTS LOCAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS IN NEPAL. WHEN THERE ARE "SUB-PARTNERS" AS FOR PLAN, THE NAME OF THE PRIMARY PARTNER UNDERLINED. THIS IS FURTHER EXPLAINED BELOW.

**TABLE A3.3 / LOCAL PARTNERS FOR THE SELECTED NORWEGIAN CSOs**

Norwegian CSO	Local partner organisation
Save the Children Norway	Nepal Ministry of Education Nepal Ministry of Health Banke UNESCO Club (BUC) Banke Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) Nepal, Kalikot Working for Access and Creation PeaceWin Bajura Social Service Center (SOSEC) Nepal Dailekh Working for Access and Creation (WAC-Nepal), Achham Children as Zones of Peace (CZOP) National campaign, based in Kathmandu
Strømme Foundation	Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives Nepal Group of Helping Hands Nepal Rural Reconstruction Nepal
The Development Fund	Namsaling Community TCDF Tharu organisation Development Centre Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development Sahakarmi Samaj Jana Jagaran Samaj Dalit Welfare Organisation Community Based organization Development Center Youths in Empowerment Sector Nepal

We then selected partnerships for in-depth study and field visits. The criteria, developed in the inception phase, include length of partnerships (more than 5 years old and be current or recently completed), similarities of approaches across different contexts, representativeness for the Norwegian CSO's local partners, sectors and approach and inclusion of main sectors and types of Southern CSO, including focus on either capacity building of partners or activities. Due to logistical considerations and time available we also

aimed to select partnerships with projects in the same geographical areas to save time when doing field visits outside the capital.

As a first step, we excluded Digni and Norwegian Red Cross as they were included in a review covering very similar topics in the autumn of 2016. The review had a similar focus as the present evaluation and was carried out by Ternström Consulting and in part by the

same team of consultants.<sup>42</sup> Both Digni and Red Cross projects mainly relate to health, which is also covered in the Atlas Alliance partnerships. One represents a relatively small, one a relatively medium share of the Norwegian aid.

We also excluded Norwegian Bar Association, as this programme had ended in 2012, and

<sup>42</sup> See Ternstrom (2016) *Review of Four Organisations with Grant Agreements with Norad: Digni, FORUT (Campaign for Development and Solidarity), the International Planned Parenthood Federation, and the Norwegian Red Cross*, Norad, November, 2016 (unpublished).

the Norwegian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, as this programme was being phased out and two other partnerships under the Atlas Alliance umbrella remained.

Some other organisations were excluded after discussions with the Norwegian CSOs, as they were busy due to the recent floods at the time of the evaluation. Based on the location of the remaining projects and partners, we decided to focus on the areas of Kathmandu, Nepalgunj and Makhwanpur as these are relatively accessible and have clusters of programmes and partners. The final selection of partners for case study is shown in the table below. It provides a good representation of different thematic areas and approaches to both partnerships and civil society strengthening. An added benefit is that some of the local partner organisations had partnerships with more than one Norwegian organisation.

### A3.4 FINDINGS

In the sections below, we present key findings from the partnerships studied in Nepal. The first section focuses on different aspects of the studied partnerships, the second on relevance. The next two sections present findings relating to results and sustainability.

**TABLE A3.4 / SELECTED SAMPLE OF NORWEGIAN CSOs AND PARTNERS**

Norwegian CSOs in sample	Selected partnerships (incl. Norwegian/international country offices)
The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted	Nepal Association of the Blind (Kathmandu and Makhwanpur)
The Norwegian Federation of Organizations of Disabled People	National Federation of the Disabled Nepal (Kathmandu and Makhwanpur)
Plan Norway	Plan International Nepal country office Plan International Nepal Program Unit Office Nepalgunj Banke Association of the Blind (BAB) Banke National Federation of the Disabled Nepal (NFDN) Kathmandu Nepal Association of the Blind (NAB) Kathmandu
Save the Children Norway	Save the Children International Head Office Save the Children International Regional Office Nepalgunj Children as Zones of Peace (CZOP) National campaign Kathmandu Banke UNESCO Club (BUC) Banke Joint meeting in Nepalgunj with representatives of five Partner organisations: Karnali Integrated Rural Development and Research Centre (KIRDARC) Nepal, Kalikot Working for Access and Creation Nepal (WAC-Nepal), Achham PeaceWin Bajura Social Service Centre (SOSEC) Nepal Dailekh Banke UNESCO Club (BUC) Banke
Strømme Foundation	Strømme Foundation Nepal Office Lalitpur Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives (ABC) Nepal Kathmandu Group of Helping Hands (SAHAS) Nepal Makawanpur
The Development Fund	Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (Kathmandu and Dang) Jana Jagaran Samaj Banke, Bardiya

### **A3.4.1 Partnership approaches and characteristics**

Three types of organisational setup are identified: Bilateral, Bilateral with country presence of the Norwegian CSO and international networks. All three are represented in the Nepal sample: Three Norwegian CSOs work bilaterally (Development Fund, Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People and Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted), one has a country office (Strømme Foundation) and two belong to international organisations (Plan and Save the Children).

Bilateral relationships are found in the Development Fund and the CSOs receiving their funds via the Atlas Alliance (Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People and Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted). In Nepal, the Development Fund has direct partnerships with several small and one larger organisation. The Development Fund focuses on alleviating poverty by building and strengthening grassroots organisations around themes. The team visited two local partners: Bardiya Jana Jagaran Samaj, a programme focused on Democratic participation, sustainable food security and income for rural households. In Dang district, the team visited one of six similar projects in Nepal within a

regional programme called Community-based Biodiversity Management South Asia Programme. In this project, the Development Fund is collaborating with Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development, partly to access grassroots organisations.

The Atlas Alliance members collaborate with Nepali CSOs aiming at improving the situation for people with similar challenges in Nepal. The partnerships are based on an interest to improve the situation for persons with specific challenges – the blind and partially sighted, and people living with disabilities, respectively. This is strongly reflected in their choice of partners.

Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted has been working with Nepal Association of the Blind since soon after its establishment in the early 90's and has a close relationship and crucial role in Nepal Association of the Blinds recognition and capacity development. Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People has a similar relationship with National Federation of the Disabled Nepal.

Although not included in the case study, the two Norwegian CSOs HimalPartner and Normisjon (members of Digni) and FORUT would also fall in the bilateral category. Both work closely with

United Mission Nepal and establish long term, bilateral relationships with their local partners; Children Workers in Nepal in FORUT's case, Koshish and some education focused NGOs in HimalPartner's case. Normisjon has worked for many year's extending primary health care services in Okhaldunga, in close collaboration with government line agencies. They have recently initiated new relationships in Western Nepal.<sup>43</sup>

The Strømme Foundation works with local partners via regional and country offices. Strømme's Asia desk officer in Norway commented that they have a strict line of command, and there is little direct contact between their staff in Norway and local partners. He also noted that all Strømme staff in regional and country offices are local employees.

Strømme targets certain thematic areas, but these may shift over time depending on the focus of the present strategy. Strømme also work with a dual purpose of the thematic areas – as a means of improving the situation of target population and as a tool for strengthening partner organisations.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Document review and interview with Asia desk officer.



The two large international organisations are Save the Children International and Plan International. They have similar organisational structures where Northern partners coordinate or channel funds via international bodies. These are fairly new constructs for Save the Children, and some staff still remember the former system with closer relations directly with Norwegian staff<sup>45</sup> and can make comparisons. For long-term local partners, the internationalisation process has implied a shift away from, sometimes close, collaboration with Save the Children Norway to collaborating with the country office of the international body.

Both Plan International and Save the Children International have documented partnership policies that define how they should work with local partners. Programme documents and interviews show that their current support to local partners is based on project agreements governed by funding availability and distributed through structured bidding processes.

Plan Norway and Save the Children Norway have child-centred focuses and target certain thematic areas. They work with partners that share their thematic areas and can implement

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<sup>45</sup> Past practice described by interviewees as functioning similarly to current Atlas Alliance local partner relationships.

programmes in these areas. In Nepal, we studied the Save the Children Norway support to Children as Zones of Peace and Banke UNESCO Club via Save the Children International's Country office. We also met with representatives of four other organisations being supported via Save the Children's regional office in Western Nepal.

The selected Plan partnerships included Banke Association of the Blind, Nepal Association of the Blind and National Federation of the Disabled Nepal. All are supported via Plan International, which has a country office and regional offices in Nepal, including the one in Nepalgunj visited by the team.

The long partnership between Norwegian Red Cross and the Nepal Red Cross Society has a mix of bilateral and multilateral characteristics.<sup>46</sup> The two organisations have a relationship that goes back for decades. Both are members of the same international movement and Norwegian support has been both bilateral and multilateral, humanitarian and developmental. The support given has at times been administered by the international Federation and at times been managed by

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<sup>46</sup> Based on Ternström (2016) above.

Norwegians based in Nepal. There have also been periods without Norwegian support.

The number of organisational levels between decision makers in Norway and local partner organisations is closely but not completely linked to the type of organisational setup: For Save the Children Norway and Plan Norway partnerships, there are at least two layers between the Norwegian and local implementing partner (e.g. the international body, country office and regional offices in the country).<sup>47</sup> However, Strømme, due to its setup with regional and country offices, also has more than one layer between the Norway office and local partners.

We also encountered examples of cooperation between CSOs that work in Nepal, for example a group of Norwegian CSOs that meets regularly to discuss and coordinate activities (which proved useful in their response to the Nepal earthquakes).<sup>48</sup> In comments to the draft report, the Norwegian Association for the Blind and Partly Sighted noted that "There is

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<sup>47</sup> In comments to the draft report, Plan Norway notes that "Institution funded projects (such as Norad, MFA funded projects) are directly managed by Plan Norway. Plan International does not have decision-making role over these projects". Plan Norway also notes that the country office setup saves money for the Plan system as a whole, a contention that the evaluation team finds highly likely.

<sup>48</sup> Source: Comment by Development Fund staff in connection with initial findings presentation workshop.



collaboration between especially the Nordic associations of the blind in regards to whom are partners with whom in the South. It is not equivalent to the manner in which Plan and Save the Children work, but there is a consideration/process surrounding which organisations NABP has chosen as partners.”

### **A3.4.2 Initiation and length of partnerships**

Apart from Strømme Foundation’s partnership with Group of Helping Hands, the Development Fund’s with Jana Jagaran Samaj and Plan Norway and Plan International Nepal’s with National Federation of the Disabled Nepal, all partnerships reviewed in Nepal were based on relationships initiated more than 10 years ago. This distribution may be affected by our sampling of Norwegian CSOs, as it excludes Norwegian CSOs with short-term or small-scale funding in the three case countries.

There are also several examples of intermittent partnerships, where collaboration has been active when funds and interest for joint programmes have been available, and dormant in between, such as the partnership between Plan Norway, Plan International Nepal and Nepal Association of the Blind, where the current collaboration falls in the “below three years” category, while the history of collaboration contains several prior joint programmes.

Another intermittent partnership is that between Save the Children International and Banke UNESCO Club in Nepalgunj.

Finally, several of the Norwegian CSOs have main partners in the case countries, via which they work with local partners. This is confirmed in the internet-based survey to Norwegian CSOs – several commented that they do not *select* local partners – they *have* local partners.

The partnerships between Norwegian and Nepali CSOs were initiated by i) search for a local partner by the Norwegian CSO or the organisation representing them in the country; ii) by search for funding by a local CSO; or iii) by joint matchmaking. In our Nepal sample, a majority of the partnerships were initiated by the Norwegian CSO or its representative. A clear case of initiation by search for a local partner is Plan International, which has a tendering system for identifying implementing partners<sup>49</sup>: They advertise their intent to implement a specific programme in a specific location and invite interested and qualified local organisations to apply. Once an organisation has been approved, the details of the programme are developed together with the local partner. Save the Children has a similar

49 Interview with Plan Norway, verified in interviews with local partners.

system but with programme design more developed when the call for expressions of interest goes out.

However, both Plan Norway and Save the Children Norway fund programmes implemented via local CSOs that they collaborated more closely with at the time when they had more bilateral relationships (before the consolidation processes of their respective international structures). These partnerships also often originate from a search for an implementer.<sup>50</sup>

The Strømme Foundation has a more mixed approach: this organisation also actively searches for partners that can implement programmes using, or in line with, their approaches. However, in Strømme’s case, the focus is more on identifying local organisations with a potential for growth to become actors on the (local) civil society arena.

The partnerships under the Atlas Alliance umbrella have started with an aim to support the partner organisations’ capacity to support *their* members (smaller local CSOs) in representing target groups locally. The first contact varies, in the case of Norwegian

50 Interviews with local partners, long-term nature of collaboration verified in project documents.

Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted and Nepal Association of the Blind in Nepal, their relationship started when their representatives met at an international conference.

The Development Fund has an explicit focus of nurturing small or grassroots organisations. Their two studied partnerships in Nepal were however initiated in different ways: The partnership with Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development was initiated by a search for a partner, the support to Jana Jagaran Samaj was initiated by mutual search for partners – the Development Fund for a local partner to support, Jana Jagaran Samaj for a partner to help them grow. The collaboration between Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted and Nepal Association of the Blind grew out of a personal meeting at an international conference. Save the Children Norway's partnership, via Save the Children International, with Children as Zones of Peace in Nepal originated in a programme – Children as Zones of Peace has recently been registered as an NGO and may be described as the administrative body of a multi-INGO-NGO network focused on advocacy.

### **A3.4.3 Development of partnerships over time**

All sampled Norwegian CSOs initiated their partnership with the Nepali local partner with

a bilateral relationship. Several local partners attest to the Norwegian CSO relationship being more important than its proportion of total budgets would indicate. These local partners highlight the importance of regular long-term contacts and mutual respect for something that is perceived as joint efforts towards a common goal. Such perceptions were found to be strongest when the CSOs cooperating have a common identity born out of addressing similar challenges, although in different contexts, such as Nepal Association of the Blind and Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted or National Federation of the Disabled Nepal and Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People.

Partners with a clear professional identity in common also refer to the bonding effects of shared interests i.e. those focused on child rights or education. International structural changes have altered these relationships however. The shift to working through international organisations in the case of Save the Children is a consequence of structural changes in the corresponding international federation. According to Nepali interviewees, this structural change has caused the influence of the Norwegian CSO, on the quality and character of services delivered and on the advocacy undertaken, to decline in Nepal.

However, this decline in influence in Nepal needs to be considered in the context of a perceived increase in the Norwegian CSO influence in countries where the Norwegian CSO was previously not present. For example, Save the Children Norway's direct influence in Nepal has decreased following the consolidation of activities into Save the Children International, but on the other hand, their opportunity to influence policies and methodologies used by Save the Children International globally has increased.<sup>51</sup> In the bilateral partnerships, the Norwegian CSO makes direct contributions to the local partners, but this global effect is missing. Whether a declining influence due to a loss of bilateral presence in some countries is balanced by an increased influence in the countries where a prior bilateral relationship did not exist has not been assessed.

Local partners of Save the Children International who have experienced Norwegian CSOs in more bilateral relationships in the past and more recently through multilateral partners consistently note that the multilateral system implies standardisation of reporting

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<sup>51</sup> Interview with Save the Children Norway. See also SIPU International, *Evaluation of Save the Children Sweden during Sida's contribution to Save the Children's humanitarian work 2013-2015* for a more detailed discussion on how Save the Children members influence and quality control Save the Children International, Sida 2016.

(simplification through lack of differentiation of reporting requirements) but also greater demands on quality and level of detail of reporting (perceived greater bureaucracy but local partners also note the positive aspects of having better control of programming).<sup>52</sup>

Interviews with local partners consistently indicate that relationships with the multilateral partners are perceived as much more instrumental in that they are often based on tendering for preconceived projects where the local partners are treated as a subcontractor. It is noted however that many of the relationships become long term anyway as a consequence of multiple projects being allocated to the same local partner over time.

#### **A3.4.4 Content and quality of partnerships**

All information received by the team indicated good relations, good communication and dialogue and mutual respect between partners. In some cases, there were indications of mutual learning and exchange. These cases included the Strømme Foundation's partnerships with Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives and Group of Helping Hands, Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted partnerships with Nepal Association of the

<sup>52</sup> Interviews with local partners.

Blind, Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People's partnership with National Federation of the Disabled Nepal and to some extent the Plan Norway, Plan International Nepal Banke Association of the Blind collaboration.

It is also important to note that the character of relationships has changed over time. The allocation of resources to capacity building is related to perceived needs, which are dynamic. For example, in comments to the draft of this report, Plan Norway note that investment in partners' development was greater some years ago while it has become more focused on results implementation as capacity has increased. This is a pattern also present in some of the other partnerships.

Based on the information collected, there were two main objectives of partnerships: to implement projects or to strengthen CSOs. The first group includes Save the Children Norway and Plan Norway partnerships as well as some partnerships where the objective had shifted over time, from organisational strengthening to programme implementation. The Strømme Foundation, the Atlas Alliance and the Development Fund have objectives explicitly including the strengthening organisations but have different approaches for achieving this: The Strømme Foundation uses thematic

programmes aiming to empower individuals to build or strengthen local civil society organisations. The Atlas Alliance members aim to build and strengthen partner organisations. The Development Fund also aims to build grassroots organisations but have a less focused approach to do so.

Plan International in Nepal and Save the Children International in Nepal have programmes or methodologies that they use consistently and partners come in at a stage when these have already been set. However, once a local partner has been accepted there is scope for adjustments in the detailed planning of implementation. Included herein is often support to organisational capacity strengthening – mainly compliance related.<sup>53</sup> Programme development in these cases was to some extent made jointly, but within frames set by the Norwegian partner.

In some partnerships, programme development was perceived by the local partner as a joint process by the two partner organisations, such as Strømme Foundation and Group of Helping

<sup>53</sup> It is important to distinguish between the international organisations' country office capacity development support to local partners (as described here) and Norwegian Plan/Save the Children capacity support to the country office of the international. Staff of both country offices noted methodological and other capacity development support for the country office from their Norwegian member organisation.

Hands, Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted and Nepal Association of the Blind as well as Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People and National Federation of the Disabled Nepal. The Development Fund's partnership with Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development in Nepal is a rare example of a case where programmes appear to have been developed mainly by the local partner.

The Strømme Foundation and Plan International reported using standardised tools for assessing local partners' needs for support to strengthen organisational capacity. Strømme uses these tools in joint assessment exercises with local partners. Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted have made joint needs assessment with Nepal Association of the Blind and Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People with National Federation of the Disabled Nepal.

#### **A3.4.5 Value added and type of funding**

Most of the partnerships studied include support to both thematic and organisational capacity strengthening. Often there was a development over time: In early years of collaboration, the main focus is on strengthening the local partners' organisational capacity. Over time,

this share of support (and funding) decreases in favour of thematic and programmatic support.

In relatively few cases, support has been strictly focused on programmatic and thematic competencies. On the other extreme, we have the early stages of the partnerships between the Atlas Alliance members and their partners, where the main focus was on organisational strengthening. There are also some examples of partnerships where the local partner has the thematic competencies required and receives support only to strengthen the organisation (e.g. the Strømme Foundation and Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives or Group of Helping Hands).

In Plan and Save the Children partnerships, especially those that have been initiated after the consolidation processes in the case of Save the Children, there is mainly thematic or programmatic support. There is often also a component of support to strengthen organisational capacity, but this seems more focused on compliance-related issues.

There are also a few organisations who do not seem to receive any systematic non-financial support, e.g. Children as Zones of Peace from Save the Children International and Local

Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development from the Development Fund.

As with non-financial support, the type of funding supplied seems to shift over time within a partnership. In several cases, funding for capacity building and organisational development was prominent in the early stages of partnership in order to build the partner organisation, e.g. Plan Norway's support for establishing CBOs. However, there are also examples where partner organisations have become capable of attracting programme funding from other donors, but still needs core funding from the Norwegian partner. Interesting examples are the Nepal local partners Nepal Association of the Blind and National Federation of the Disabled Nepal, who both receive programme funding from among others Plan Norway (through Plan International), and core funding from Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted and Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People, respectively. Several of the smaller organisations visited cite access to local government resources as possible thanks to capacity development through core funding. Here, the core funding has a leveraging effect of enabling the local partners to attract and implement programmes for other organisations.

### A3.4.6 Tools for providing support

Within our sample, there are two ways of supplying both organisational capacity strengthening and thematic and programmatic support:

- › On the ground in the partner's country
- › Long-distance via visits and communication from Norway

Save the Children Norway, Plan Norway and Strømme have in-country representation via country offices – either their own, as the Strømme Foundation, or offices of Save the Children International and Plan International. This ensures frequent contact and access to both thematic and organisational support. However, it also means there may be little or no direct contact between the local partner and the Norwegian office or organisation. Hence, value added directly from the Norwegian partner to the local partner may be quite small.<sup>54</sup> However, there is also indirect value added: Both Plan Norway and Save the Children Norway seek to influence the strategies and methodologies of their respective organisations at a global level. The Strømme Foundation has a system for networking and learning among

<sup>54</sup> In comments to the draft report Save the Children Norway notes “This will vary depending on the partner competency, but both technical and thematic support is provided regularly by Save the Children Norway staff, both from the Oslo HQ as well as Advisors residing in the Asian region.”

partners that also creates indirect value added and support to local partners.

The organisations that have direct partnerships without on-the-ground representation are the Atlas Alliance members and the Development Fund. The Atlas Alliance members have a close affinity with their partners via their ability to identify with the partner organisations' target group and have close and frequent communication. Interviewees describe interaction with the Development Fund as less frequent, focused around two annual visits, structured as one for local partner joint interaction (for peer-to-peer learning etc.) the other for follow-up of individual partners.

Support has also been given by providing trainings and external technical support. Many local partners describe capacity-building efforts in collaboration with government agency staff (when focused on policy and service delivery technical skills) or internally (when focused on compliance and reporting issues).

### A3.5 RELEVANCE

All partner organisations sampled supported projects or programmes that were perceived as relevant and that were in line with the Nepal Government policy in their respective field.

In the more bilateral cases, support content and activities supported were generally developed in dialogue with the Norwegian partner organisation.<sup>55</sup> In many cases the joint nature of needs assessment, programme design and follow-up efforts made it impossible to identify if changes, organisational or in terms of strategy, were initiated by the Norwegian or Nepali partner.

The team encountered two cases where the relevance was not entirely clear: In one of the

partnerships, an interviewee questioned the relevance of including gender related activities as these were not perceived as prioritised by them and neither they nor the Norwegian partner had competence in this area. In another case, the team had concerns about the extent to which the similarity of programming across groups may be an effect of facilitator influence rather than actual community priorities.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> E.g. the Strømme Foundation and Group of Helping Hands, Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted and Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted as well as Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People and National Federation of the Disabled Nepal. Info based on interviews with local partners.

<sup>56</sup> Although the local framework within which the project activities were being implemented was commendably flexible to community preferences activities in different communities supported by the same facilitator were almost identical. The evaluation therefore wishes to highlight that an otherwise competent facilitator but with insufficient training or experience may influence community choices, thereby undermining the intention to support bottom-up participation and prioritization. Source: interviews with beneficiaries and document review.

The partnerships with Save the Children International and Plan International were based on calls for proposals where the Nepali partner had chosen to apply. The Nepali partner therefore assumedly found these activities relevant enough to bid for. However, several of them confirmed that these activities might not have been their first choice if the resources had been put freely at their disposal. All noted that once a contract (for a predefined project) was won both Save the Children International and Plan International were open to dialogue on how best to implement and were supportive in strengthening Nepali partner capacity to deliver and comply. Programme development in these cases were thus to some extent made jointly, but within frames set by the Norwegian partner.

The Strømme Foundation and Plan International reported having standardised tools used for assessing the local partners' needs for support to strengthening organisational capacity. The Strømme Foundation used these tools in joint assessment exercises with local partners.

Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partly Sighted had made joint needs assessment with Nepal Association of the Blind and Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People with National Federation of the Disabled Nepal. Banke UNESCO Club reported a joint assessment with Save the Children

International of Banke UNESCO Club's needs for capacity strengthening.

### **A3.6 RESULTS**

Results in terms of effects on civil society may be treated at different system levels; individual, organisational and broader legal or "civic space".

The results relating to organisational strengthening range from none or minor to very strong. The cases where the team assessed the results to be minor in recent years include some of the partnerships with Plan International and Save the Children International, and the Development Funds partnership with Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development, where the partners were selected according to criteria that they already be competent organisations. Strong results were reported in the Strømme Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives partnership and in the partnerships of Atlas Alliance members.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> In comments to the draft Save the Children Norway notes that "it could well be correct that organisational strengthening is minor, but it is important to note that some of these partnerships (and work with civil society) goes much further back than 2006 and consequently the input to organisational strength could have evolved from very strong to minor when different partnerships were started." Save the Children Norway in their comment further note that Save the Children Support is based on standardised tools and, emphasises financial transparency. Examples mentioned include Shakti Samuha, RCRD - Bhaktapur, CWISH, CWIN and KIRDARC. The evaluation team recognises past investments and notes that the partners mentioned also have multiple other international partners. Similar reasoning should be applied to Plan's capacity building investments.

The bilateral relationships involved more holistic changes such as overall strategy and governance structures while the international partnerships were focused on capacities needed to implement services contracted or live up to compliance rules. In several cases, local partners were being supported in helping multiple beneficiary groups or small CBOs to consolidate into more organisationally stable and sustainable NGOs.

The team notes that although the effect in terms of strengthening local partner organisations is sometimes substantial, the magnitude of this effect seems to be difficult to capture in reports. The Norwegian CSOs seeking to more broadly develop their local partners as autonomous organisations may gain from complementing their indicators for capacity development with external objective indicators such as ability to win contracts within more instrumental relationships. An example of this is the Nepal Association of the Blind's relationship with the Norwegian Association for Blind and Partially Sighted People. This has developed multiple aspects of local partner capacity, including its proven ability to win contracts with Plan International for inclusive education projects based on a more instrumental relationship. By adding indicators that capture



such effects, the results of the partnership would become more “visible” and assessable.

There were numerous examples of individuals (or groups of individuals) who had been empowered through greater awareness of their rights, improved skills to organise and claim such rights, or simply through expanded self-respect and/or income generating capacity. A range of examples were cited/shown of successful approaches to local authorities’/ duty bearers to highlight issues or access resources (road repair, recognition of Madrassas for local government school support, changed agricultural practices accepted by local government extension services, support for inclusion of disabled in “normal schooling” etc.).

In terms of effects on the legal environment or “civic space”, the evaluation team notes that multiple local partners have been active in advocacy, commonly on similar themes (rights, inclusion etc.). We also note that multiple local partners are proud to have contributed to significant changes in the legal environment (inclusion of child rights in the constitution, recognition of inclusion issues in the schooling system, recognition of minority rights). Meanwhile, we cannot attribute any of those changes to the activities of specific local partners

of to specific Norwegian support. There is however, consensus among stakeholders met that the concerted advocacy efforts of civil society as a whole has had significant impact on the emerging legal and policy landscape.

### **A3.6.1 Unintended effects**

Unintended effects noted by the team are anecdotal and based on interviews with staff and beneficiaries. They include:

- › Beneficiary groups taking the initiative to (or being requested to) replicate activities in nearby/related areas (for example Group of Helping Hands and Socio Economic Empowerment with Dignity and Sustainability programming supported by Strømme, Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development seed bank in Dang supported by the Development Fund).
- › Consolidation processes where CBOs group together to form NGOs in order to gain greater influence with local or district authorities (for example CBOs formed with support from Plan Norway some years ago near Nepalgunj, now consolidating and formalising).
- › Changing recruitment of casual labour following establishment of cooperative linked to Dang seed bank (previous system of recruiting for the coming season at Tharu annual

festival now being replaced by sharing and exchanging work within the cooperative).

- › Multiple other changes noted but difficult to say if they were “unintended” when project planning/targets include terminology such as “empower” or “strengthen” target groups. Many changes/initiatives by beneficiaries may be categorised as such.
- › The team did not observe negative unintended effects but the reader should note that key informants were almost exclusively linked to implementing organisations or beneficiaries of service delivery.

### **A3.6.2 Importance of the partner’s contributions**

The extent to which the partnerships are important to the local partner depends on the extent of financial dependence and the extent to which they get other kinds of support (organisational or thematic capacity building). In some cases, where the Norwegian partner has been instrumental in strengthening the local partner, (e.g. Atlas Alliance members) or where they provide a large share of funding (e.g. Strømme Foundation’s partnership with Agro-forestry, Basic Health and Cooperatives in Nepal), the importance is obvious.



Several local partners described the Norwegian CSO support as fundamental to the development of the local partner as an actor for their target group and within Nepali civil society. These CSOs described systems for administration and finance, organisational strategies and governance structures as existing in their current form only thanks to Norwegian support. Digitisation of financial systems, a more focused long-term vision/strategy, improved understanding of advocacy and a separation of governance and management were cited by several bilateral local partners.

Nepali CSOs collaborating with international organisations described capacity development support from them as focused on either service delivery methodology or compliance to back-donors. These local partners noted digitisation of finance systems, improved planning, monitoring and reporting. Improved capacity in the thematic focus of the project contract that had been won was also mentioned by interviewees; examples included advocacy, better understanding of links between inclusion and human rights, protection needs of children.

In a few cases, the local partner has been of high importance to the Norwegian CSO. Examples of this is the Development Fund which is to some extent dependent on Local

Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development for identifying new partners and Group of Helping Hands which has provided important input to methodology development in Strømme.

However, an aspect that should be lifted is that without the local partners, the Norwegian CSOs would not have access to funds from Norad's civil society grant. In Nepal, they would neither have access to the target population, as international NGOs are not allowed to act independently without local partners.<sup>58</sup>

### **A3.7 SUSTAINABILITY**

Several of the partners interviewed have noted discussions regarding exit strategies over the past few years. Meanwhile, many partnerships are not perceived by either party as "projects with an end" but rather as a permanent relationship the content of which may evolve over time, but where the relationship itself should remain. This is confirmed by comments provided in responses to the internet survey fielded to Norwegian partners: They do not select partners, they have partners with and via which they work.

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<sup>58</sup> Noted by several interviewees.

When considering sustainability of project effects, these will vary depending on project design. Programme documents show that many activities are focused on empowerment (Socio Economic Empowerment with Dignity and Sustainability and SAMVAD programming, rights awareness programming on gender, disabilities and inclusion of minorities) or the ability to organise (savings groups, advocacy networks). Such activities if done well have significant potential for sustainability of project effects.

When considering sustainability of activities, however, the team notes that activities are seldom sustainable. However, several local partners have shown that they are able to access sufficient resources from local authorities or other international NGOs for a limited continuation when projects end. Examples from both project documents and interviews include Socio Economic Empowerment with Dignity and Sustainability and savings groups, Banke UNESCO Club, Banke Association of the Blind etc.

Regarding sustainability of organisation organisational structure, the team assesses that all sampled local partners are likely to continue to exist even if all Norwegian support is withdrawn.

The effects on civil society in terms of changes in the legal environment or "civic space" described above are, according to most interviewees, unlikely to be reversed in the current political climate in Nepal, and can thus be assessed to be sustainable.

### A3.8 CONCLUSIONS

In this section, we draw some brief conclusions based on the findings presented above.

#### A3.8.1 Bases for partnerships and partnership approaches

The Nepal team have positioned the six Norwegian CSOs studied on a continuum from having an instrumental approach to partnership – seeing partners as means to implement pre-set objectives to an intrinsic approach where strong partners are recognized as ends in themselves.

In the Nepal case study, we found that one group of partnerships were based on shared identity or challenges (Atlas Alliance members), one group on common professional thematic areas (Plan International and Save the Children International) and one group more explicitly aiming at strengthening civil society (Strømme Foundation and the Development Fund). Digni members would be included in the first group, while the Red Cross organisations would be included in both the second and the third group.

**TABLE A3.5 / NORWEGIAN CSOS IN NEPAL – INSTRUMENTAL VS INTRINSIC APPROACHES**

Instrumental approach		←—————→		Intrinsic approach	
1	2	3	4	5	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Plan International Norway</li> <li>&gt; Save the Children Norway</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Development Fund</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; The Norwegian Association of the Blind and Partially Sighted</li> <li>&gt; The Norwegian Association for the Disabled</li> <li>&gt; Strømme Foundation</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Partners seen as means to implement pre-set objectives</li> <li>&gt; Power monopolized by one partner</li> <li>&gt; Sub-contracting</li> <li>&gt; Capacity building goes down only</li> <li>&gt; Accountability goes up only</li> </ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; Strong partners are recognized as end in itself</li> <li>&gt; Power shared between partners</li> <li>&gt; Autonomous partners cooperating</li> <li>&gt; Capacity building goes in both directions</li> <li>&gt; Accountability goes in both direction</li> </ul>		

We also found three main patterns regarding identification and capacity building of local partners:

- > Build partners: First, strengthen the capacity of the organisation, then fund and support programme implementation.
- > Find implementers: Search for organisations with the capacity to implement programmes, and then support them to comply with Norwegian partners' demands.

- > Mixed: Use implementation of programmes as a tool for building the capacity of local organisations.

All three models selected as categories for analysis of partnership relations in this evaluation have been used in Nepal. There is no standardised approach, and not one approach that can be identified as more effective and efficient than others. A key difference is that partnerships with local representation (country office) can maintain

greater intensity of interaction and better contextualisation of support. Another key difference is that organisations like Plan and Save the Children, can draw upon the collective experience and systems developed within the international organisations. A third key difference is that organisations that have a shared identity, e.g. disabled peoples organisations, allow a more in-depth "human" contextualisation (as compared to the organisational contextualisation made possible by local offices).

### **A3.8.2 Is civil society in Nepal getting stronger?**

Yes, but the question is to what extent this can be attributed to Norwegian aid from the Norad civil society grant. Some effects clearly possible to attribute to Norwegian support were noted by the team:

- › Strengthened civil society organisations (the local partners): Both interviewees and project documentation are consistent in identifying a series of examples of capacity strengthening of local partner organisations.
- › Increased number of civil society organisations (as grassroots organisations were formed and nurtured into CSOs): Norwegian CSO strategies have varied over time. For example, Plan supported the establishment

of CBOs such as savings groups in Bardiya, which survived project exit and are now consolidating into district level formal NGOs.

- › Empowered individuals, leading to increased enforcement of policies and laws: Several of the local partners and village level beneficiary groups, cited successful lobbying of local authorities to secure resources for their rights holders. Examples included running costs for established activities, land allocation (Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development), adaptation of regulations to specific needs (e.g. blind children in school, Banke Association of the Blind), investment in local feeder roads (Stromme partner) as well as inclusion of activities in local budgetary process following recognition of improved organisational capacity (acceptance of madrassas into school system following improved alignment with national standards, Banke UNESCO Club).
- › Leveraging effect of capacity building, which makes it possible for local partners to attract funding from other sources and thereby increase their activities: Several of the local partners noted that the administrative improvements following from capacity building had allowed them to attract resources from other donors.

- › Advocacy, leading to legal changes strengthening the rights of target groups: Interviewees cited inclusion of child rights and rights of the disabled in the Constitution. They also mentioned rights based policy changes and active participation in government development of regulations. They gave examples from education, social welfare and government agency internal capacity development such as training government officers in application of rights and addressing breaches of policy (Plan, Save the Children, Nepal Association of the Blind).

## Annex 4: Norwegian CSOs in Ethiopia, Nepal and Uganda, 2006-2015

The Table below provides a list of all Norwegian CSOs with partners in each of the three countries and funding received from Norad's civil society grant together with the total disbursement from the civil society grant to the Norwegian organisation in the evaluation period.

Norwegian CSO	Ethiopia	Nepal	Uganda	Global
Norwegian Church Aid	90.4	6	1.9	1 552.0
Digni <i>Member organisations</i>	145 <i>Norwegian Missionary Society, Norwegian Lutheran Mission, The Norwegian Bible Society, Youth with a Mission</i>	37.3 <i>Himalpartner, Normisjon</i>	14.4 <i>The Pentecostal Foreign Mission of Norway, The Salvation Army Norway</i>	1 491.4
Save the Children Norway	152.6	83.0	161.7	1 287.8
Norwegian People's Aid	59.0			1 118.3
Atlas Alliance <i>Member organisations</i>		72.9 <i>The Norwegian Organisation of the Blind and Partially Sighted; The Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People; The Norwegian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities; SINTEF Technology and Society; Impact Norway</i>	50.6 <i>The Norwegian Association of Disabled, The Norwegian Organisation of the Blind and Partially Sighted, The Signo Foundation, The Norwegian Association for Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus</i>	768.4
Norwegian Red Cross		17.0		621.7
CARE Norway			48.0	535.2
Strømme Foundation		14.0	36.5	427.1
Plan Norway	27.6	50.1	61.9	406.7
The Development Fund	8.2	42.0		338.9
World Wildlife Foundation Norway			50.2	318.2

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Norwegian CSO	Ethiopia	Nepal	Uganda	Global
FOKUS – Forum for Women and Development Member organisations	13.8 Norwegian Women's Public Health Association, Sagal Help to Self-Help Organisation		13.3 The Norwegian Women and Family Association, The Norwegian Council for Africa	291.8
FORUT		29		284.7
The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions	3.3	0.3	8.7	256.2
Caritas Norway		5.0	55.3	224.3
SOS Children's Villages Norway			1.1	173.0
The Royal Norwegian Society for Development			30.5	142.3
Adventist Development and Relief Agency, Norway (ADRA)	15.6	5.0		116.9
Right to Play	5.8		15.6	92.0
Lions Aid Norway			16.9	64.6
Norwegian Nurses Organisation			13.0	62.7
Drylands Coordination Group	17.6			58.3
EMiS – Environmental Movements in the South	3.5	2.3	2.0	55.7
Union of Education Norway		0.8		49.7
The Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities			4.1	48.4
The Norwegian Bar Association		12.7	22.6	40.4
The Norwegian Heart and Lung Patient Organisation		3.0		21.0
The Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise			0.7	13.3
Adina Foundation			3.1	13.1
NORCODE		1.1	1.2	13.0
FRI – The Norwegian Organization for Sexual and Gender Diversity		2.9		12.2

→

→

Norwegian CSO	Ethiopia	Nepal	Uganda	Global
Oppland skogselskap	10.5			11.4
Norwegian Ornithological Society		2.2		11.3
The Norwegian Guide and Scout Association			0.2	7.2
Transparency International Norway			0.4	6.3
Global Aid Network	4.4			5.9
The Norwegian Humanist Association		1.9	2.4	4.3
The Norwegian Bible Society	2.0			3.9
Norwegian Friends of Uganda			3.3	3.3
The Norwegian Association for Adult Learning		2.0		2.0
Adopsjonsforum	0.9	0.8		1.7
Nasjonalt Åndelig Råd for Bahá'ier i Norge			1.3	1.3
Fadderforeningen Tso Pema Tibetansk skole		0.2		0.2
Norwegian College of Dance			0.2	0.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>560.0</i>	<i>391.2</i>	<i>620.9</i>	<i>1 2901.6</i>

Source: Norad's Norwegian Aid Statistics, Access to microdata

## Annex 5: List of persons interviewed

Norway		
Name (Male/Female)	Position	Organisation
Jan Olav Baarøy (M)	Director, Department for International Programmes	Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)
Karianne Jensen (F)	Methodology and Results Advisor for Eastern Africa	
Kari Øyen (F)	Head, Division for Eastern Africa	
Kalina Sharp-Bergersen (F)	Advisor, programme quality	
Thora Holter (F)	Senior Advisor, Gender-based violence	
Kristina Rødahl (F)	Advisor, civil society strengthening	
Silje M. Ander (F)	Advisor, natural resources	
Wenche Fone (F)	Director, Civil Society Department	Norad
Margaret Berit Myklebust (F)	Senior Advisor, Civil Society Department	
Ane Eir Torsdottir (F)	Adviser, Statistics Section, Department for Quality Assurance	
Erlend Draget (M)	Adviser, Civil Society Department	
Tove Wang (F)	Secretary General	Save the Children Norway
Monica Sydgård (F)	Head of Section, Programme Quality	
Helene Andersson Novela (F)	Partnership/civil society advisor	
NN		
Henrik Stabell (M)	Area Director, East Africa	
Belinda Tran (M)	(Uganda)	
Ina Bøe (F)	Associate Area Director, East Africa	
Korina Szkudlarek (F)	Award Manager, Nepal	Caritas Norway
Sören Pedersen (M)	Regional leader, Asia	
Ingrid Finess Evensmo (F)	Programme Coordinator	
Dag Albert Bårnes (M)	Head, Administration and Finance	Digni
Kristian Larsen (M)	Senior Advisor	
Kåre Eriksen (M)	Senior Advisor	





Norway		
Name (Male/Female)	Position	Organisation
Elin Vannes (F)	Head of Development Aid Section	Norwegian Lutheran Mission
Ragnhild Mestad (M)	Advisor (phone interview)	Norwegian Missionary Society
Kjell-Sigurd Røisli (M)	Senior Adviser Programme	Plan Norway
Phyllis Horea (F)	Special Adviser Programme	
Terje B. Iversen (F)	International Director	Norwegian Association for the Blind and Partially Sighted
Kristin Kjæret (F)		
Marit Haug (F)		Norwegian Federation of Organisations of Disabled People
Knut Rune Saltnes (M)	Director	SIGNO
Marte Svare (F)	Coordinator	Atlas Alliance
Charlotte Johansen (F)	Coordinator	
Svein Brodtkorb (M)	Head International Department	Norwegian Association of the Disabled
Cindy Greer (F)	Programme Advisor	
Ingrid Christine Sandnæs (F)	Programme Advisor	
Cecilie Wathne (F)	Head M&E	Strømme Foundation
Titus Tenga (M)	International Director	
Bjørn Stian (M)	Asia Desk Officer	
Diis Bøhn (F)	Senior Advisor	LO International Department
Svein Olaf Evjen Olsen (M)	Senior Advisor (Ethiopia, Rwanda, Somalia, East Africa)	Norwegian Peoples Aid
Knut Andersen (M)	Country Director, Ethiopia (interviewed in Norway)	The Development Fund
Elin Cecilie Ranum (F)	Head of program department	
Aina Grødahl (F)	Program Coordinator - Nepal	
Leyla Kutlu (F)	Advisor	

Ethiopia		
Name (Male/Female)	Position	Organisation
Kassahun Follo (m)	President	Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions (CETU)
Tessema Heramo (m)	Head of Education and Training Department	
Rahel Ayele (f)	Head of Women Affairs Department	
Girma Borishie Bati (M)	Commissioner	Ethiopian Evangelical Church Mekane Yesus – Development and Social Service Commission (EECM/DASSC)
Abeya Wakawoya (M)	Program Director	
Tilahun Seifu (M)	Teamleader, Livelihood programme	
Zegeye H/Selassie (m)	President	Ethiopian Industrial Federation of Construction, Wood, Metal, Cement & other trade unions
Dajene Mebrate (M)	Project coordinator	Ethiopian Orthodox Church, Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC) branch, North Shova, Ankober, Amhara
Samuel Sisay (M)	Hygiene and Sanitation promoter	
Workaqequele Mlsibeb (M)	Construction Supervisor	
Focus Group, 16 males	Beneficiaries	Goro Kebele, DICAC Ankober Project
Focus Group, 12 females		
Agedew Redie (M)	Commissioner	Ethiopian Orthodox Church/Development Inter-Church Aid Commission (DICAC)
Yelekal (M)	Yelekal, Head of programme on refugees and migration	
Rev Milkias Mitachew (M)	President	Mekane Yesus/Southwestern Synod (SWS), Arba Minch
Orkaido Olte (M)	Director	DASSC Branch /SWS, Arba Minch
Abvham Anjuio (M)	Project Coordinator	Bena-Tsamai (Bena-Tsamai Pastoral Community Development Project)
Asnakesh Dagne (F)	Health officials	Health post, Chali Kebele, Bena-Tsamai
Kasayity Tsegaye (F)		
All 11 members of the women's "Onion Producers Association"; Nine of the 10 members of the women's "Women Development Association"; Two men that are voluntary coordinators/ supporters of the associations above; and Four of the 5 men's "Agina Group"	Joint Focus-Group Discussion/Interview with Members of three Vegetable and Animal Raising Project Participant Groups	Benna Beneficiary Communities of Chali Kebele of the Bena-Tsamai Pastoral Community Development Project.
Eivind Aalborg (M)	Country representative	NCA Ethiopia
Kidist Belayneh (F)	Head of Programmes	
Abdulhady Mohammed (M)	Senior PME/Grants coordinator	
Sileshi Gobena (M)	Senior WASH program officer	
Hilina Abebe (F)	Communications coordinator	



Ethiopia		
Name (Male/Female)	Position	Organisation
Lamessa Endalew (M)	Country representative,	Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) country office
Solomon Bogale (M)	Finance manager	
Argachew Wondemee (M)	Development Coordinator	
Klaus-Christian Küspert (M)	Director	Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS, English-speaking Africa and the Middle East)
Libageba Abitew (M)	Program Director-Nordic Portfolio	Save the Children Ethiopia Country office
Sesay Deieme (M)	Manager, Child Rights Programme	
Kinfe Wubetu (M)	Senior Programme Manager	
John Lundine (M)	Deputy Country Director, Programme Development and Quality	
Zebider Zewdie (F)	Executive Director,	Mary Joy Development Association
Afomia Debebe (F)	Project officer	
Wondwossen Mesele (M)	Programme officer	
Lemlem Tekuye (F)	Executive Director	Love for Children Organisation
Yosef Asrat (M)	Program officer	Tamira Reproductive Health and Development Organisation
Biruk Yirgalem (M)	Executive Director	
Dawit Biru (M)	Programme Manager (Safe Youth and Maternal Health Programme)	
Anteneh Tesema (M)	Health center coordinator	Health Centre Hursa Sinbo Kebele, Shashemene Woreda
Messeret Alemu (M)	OPD Head	Hursa Sinbo Kebele, Shashemene Woreda
Out of School Youth Club (12 m/f members)	Group discussion	
Community Conversation Groups (21 women and 23 men)	Joint Meeting with Members of Two Tamira Organized Community Conversation Groups	
Biftu Bira Association (Youth Reproductive health services) (8 m/f members)	Group discussion	Shashemene town
Muhammed Geleto (M)	Vice head	Town health office, Shashemene Town Administration Health Office
Ararsa Edao (M)	Maternal and Child Coordinator	
Andreas Gaarder (M)	Ambassador	Norwegian Embassy
Morten Heide (M)	Head of Development Cooperation, Councillor	
Sissel Idland (F)	Councillor	
Tsige Alemayehu (F)	Program officer	

Nepal			
Name	Sex	Position	Organisation
Nor Bahadur Limbu	M	President	Nepal Association of the Blind (NAB)
Nir kumar Magar	M	Braille Press Manager	
Sanju Acharya	F	Assistant Administrative Officer	
Sanjay Awali	F	Account Officer	
Bhabuk Thapa	M	Secretary	Banke Association of the Blind (BAB)
Bholanath Tripathi	M	Treasurer	
Dev Raj Sharma	M	Social Mobilizer	
Dhanmaya Sharma	F	Vice-President	
Amrit Kumar Rai	M	Project Director	Nepal Association of the Blind, Mahottari
Pream Maharjan	M	Field Officer	Nepal Association of the Blind, Makawanpur
Prabin Gwachha	M	Chair	
Jeevan Dullakoti	M	Field Supervisor	
Bharat Aryal	M	Teacher for the blind	Rehabilitation Education Programme, Makwanpur
School children	5M 4F	Interaction with 9 blind school children	
Shudarson Subedi	M	President	National Federation of Disabled Nepal (NFDN)
Kirtan Shrestha	M	Central Regional Coordinator	NFDN Central Regional Office, Makawanpur
Sita Malla	F	Central Regional Office Assistant	
Sarita Thapa Magar	F	Vice -president	
Durga Baniya	M	Vice- president	Association of the Deaf, Makwanpur, Disable Person Organization (DPO) Affiliated with NFDN
Jamuna Tilung	F	President	Disabled Concern Center, Makwanpur, DPO
Suresh Ghalon	M	President	Independent Living Center, Makwanpur DPO
Sharda Paudel	F	President	Parent's Association of Intellectual Disabilities, Makwanpur, DPO
Hem Paudel	M	Livelihood and Micro finance Coordinator	Plan International Country Office, Kathmandu
Laxmi Pathak	F	Inclusive Education Project, Team Leader	
Manisha Maharjan	F	Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator	
Madhuwanti Tuladhar	F	Project Coordinator	
Meenraj Panthee	M	Disability Inclusion Specialist	

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Nepal			
Name	Sex	Position	Organisation
Jhalak Man B.K	M	Program Officer,	Plan Regional Unit Office, Nepalgunj
Ramesh KC	M	Field Coordinator	
Sanjeev Kumar Joshi	M	Programme Coordinator	
Shena Lata Shrestha	F	Senior Programmme Manager	
Dharma Prasad Sharma	M	Principal	Bhawani Secondary School, Bardiya
Laxmi Bhhatarai	M	Blind Teacher	
Others	10M 1F	SMC, Construction committee	
Blind Students	3M 5F	Promoting Inclusive Education (PIE), Bardiya	
Bishnew Kumar Shrestha	M	Senior Coordinator (PMEAL)	Strømme Foundation, Sanepa, Lalitpur, Nepal
Bijay Godar	M	Programme Monitring Officer	
Jeevan Kumar Basnet	M	Programme Coordinator	
Ramesh Shrestha	M	Country Coordinator	
Swasthi Pradhan	M	Admin/Finance Coordinator	
Anand Bahadur Shrestha	M	Board Member	
Durga Ghimiri	F	President	ABC/Nepal
Rakshya Ojha	F	Team Leader	
Kirti Thapa	F	Sr. Manager, Child Rights Governance	Save the Children International, Nepal
Dr. Laxmi Paudyal	F	Programme Manager, Education	
Seema Baral	F	Director, Programme Operation	
Udhav Rai	M	Sr. MEAL Manager	
Deepak Bashyal	M	Coordinator	Children as Zone of Peace, Kathmandu
Krishna Subedi	M	Ex- Coordinator	
Narendra Dangol	M	General Secretary	
Atma Ram Bhattarai	M	Sr. Prog. Coordinator, Education	Save the Children, Regional Office
Bal Mukunda Mahat	M	Sr. Prog. Coordinator, Education	
Dil Bahadur Air	M	Program Coordinator, education	
Indra Bilas Baral	M	Deputy Field Prog. Manager	
Rat Raj Ojha	M	Prog. Manager, Child Poverty	
Sweta Dhoubhadel	F	Sr. MEAL Coordinator	
Virendra Thaguna	M	Assistant Director, Prog. Operation	





Nepal			
Name	Sex	Position	Organisation
Ashish Verma	M	Project Coordinator	Banke UNESCO Club
Nawa Raj B.C	M	Project Coordinator	SOSEC
Ram Bh. Rawat	M	Project Coordinator	PeaceWin
Tula Ram Pandey	M	Project Coordinator	KIRDARC
Krip Raj Joshi	M	Project Coordinator	WAC
Ashish Verma	M	Project Coordinator	Banke UNESCO Club
Parwej Ali Siddique	M	President	
Ram Shrestha		Project Officer	
Siraj Khan	M	Sr. Vice President	
Dr Balaram Thapa	M	Executive Director	LI BIRD Coordination Office
Pitambar Shrestha	M	Project coordinator	LI BIRD Coordination Office
Chitra Bahadur KC	M	President	Seed Bank, Dang
Durga Yogi	M	Manager	Seed Bank Cooperative
Kamala Bhandari	F	Member	
Kamala Bhhata	F	Vice Chair	
Nisha Pandey	F	Secretary	
Susta Bahadur Choudary	M	Member	Main committee, Seed Bank
Others	10M 5F	General Members, farmers	Seed Bank
Deependra Varma	M	Finance officer	Janajagaran Samaj (JJS)
Home Raj Kurmi	M	Chair	
Meena Kumari Pun	F	Mobilizer	
Oher Members	10M 5F	Other members	
Kanti Kohar	F	Beneficiaries, Field Observation Income Generating Activity	Laxmi group, Janajagaran Samaj
Gudiya Raidas	F		
Lakraze Raidas	F		
Ram Raidas	M		





Nepal			
Name	Sex	Position	Organisation
Sujan Lal Shrestha	M	Knowledge Management Monitoring Evaluation Coordinator, Central Office	SAHAS Field office
Krishna Bahadur Rawal	M	Programme Coordinator	
Nitish Kumar Joshi	M	Admin Finance Officer	
Pratap Shrestha	M	Project Officer	
Others	1M 2F	Social Mobilizers	
Women's Group	22 F		Field Interaction with SAHAS group
Women's Group	26F		Field Interaction with RRN Adolescent group
Vivian Hilde Opsvik	F	First Secretary	Norwegian Embassy
Dr. Ellin Graae Linnestard	F	First Secretary, Education and Gender Equality	
Raj Kumar Dhungana	M	Governance Advisor	



Uganda		
Name	Position	Organisation
Pricilla Serukka	Regional Director	Strømme Foundation
May Kamoga	Program Manager	
Doreen Muhereza	Communications Officer	
Margaret Atimango	Child Protection and Child Rights Governance Specialist	Save the Children Uganda
Michael Ocircan	Child Poverty Specialist	
Gilbert Atule	Resilience Coordinator	
Martin Lutaya	Awards Coordinator	
Michael Frederick Senoga	M&E Learning Coordinator	
Janet Nambuya	Partnership Manager	
John Musoke	Area Program Manager	
Monsgnor Francis Ndamira	Executive Director	CARITAS
Hellen Chanikara	Program Coordinator	
Tonnie Luyimbazi	M&E Officer	
Godfrey Onenthro Oturi	Research & Advocacy Coordinator	
Susan Eckey	Ambassador	Norwegian Embassy
Annlaug Rønneberg	Minister/Counsellor/Deputy Head of Mission	
Kyrre Holm	First Secretary	
Stella Ayo-Odongo	Executive Director, Child Rights NGO Network	UCRNN
Benjamin Wabuloko	Head of Programs. Child Rights NGO Network, Uganda	
Patrick Nelson Adupa	National Program Manager Child Protection	Plan Uganda
Jennifer Namusoke Nakalembe	Resource Mobilization Manager	
Paul Frederick Mugume	M&E & Research Coordinator	
Edison Ngirabakunzi	Executive Director	NUDIPU
Ambrose Ogwang	Program Officer	
David Kalyango	Finance & Administration	
David Talima	Head of Programs	Straight Talk
Yusuf Odongpiny	Project Coordinator	
Godfrey Walakira	Training & Development Manager	



Uganda		
Name	Postion	Organisation
Dora Single Alal	Program Director	THRIVEGulu
Austin Ojara	Project Coordinator	
Alex Akera	Counselor	
Christine Lamono	Regional Area Manager	Save the Children, Gulu
Geoffrey Opila	Education Manager	Charity for Peace, Gulu
Darwinton Bobbi Okot	Program Manager	
Allan Ouma	Supervisor Community Management Micro-finance	
Genevive Jane Achiro	Bonga Supervisor-DFID	
Immaculate Mercy Lamwaka	Bonga Supervisor-NORAD	
Margaret Acan	Finance & Admn. Officer	
Nancy Acan	Finance & Admin. Assistant	
John Bosco Komakech	Executive Director	
Longinous Along Ogwang	Branch Manager	UNAB
Denis Okettay Okello	Program Officer	
Richard Anguyo	Executive Director	
Teddy Odong	Program Coordinator	AMFIU
	Chairman	
Jackie Mbabazi	Executive Director	
Flavia Bwire	Manager Financial Inclusiveness	NGO Forum
Sophie Kange	Head of program on civil society strengthening	
Søren Skou Rasmussen	Component Manager 'Deepening Democracy'	
Barbara Acam	Programme Officer	Democratic Governance Facility, Uganda
Josephine Namusisi	Deputy Component Manager	
4 focus group interviews	About 65 participants in groups interviews, all in Lamogi subcountry, outside Gulu (Charity for Peace programmes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Pagak Primary School in Pagak Parish;</li> <li>2. Future Hope Nursery School in Gir Gir Parish, Olwal Centre;</li> <li>3. Community Managed Micro-finance in Ademu Demu, Gir Gir Parish,</li> <li>4. Saloon, Bonga Forum in Gir Gir Parish, Olwal Centre</li> </ol>

## Annex 6: Literature survey

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This literature survey maps and synthesizes the recent evaluation studies and academic literature on support to civil society in developing countries with relevance for the evaluation questions.

The first part presents findings from recent academic studies with a main focus on civil society and democratization.<sup>59</sup>

The second part summarises main evaluation studies related to civil society support. This includes all the main reports from the bilateral development aid agencies evaluating the role of northern CSOs as channels for support to civil society in developing countries.

## A6.1 ACADEMIC STUDIES

The scholarly literature on the role of civil society in democratisation and rights-promotion in developing countries have greatly over the past twenty years. The summary below addresses the changing context, the role of civil society in advancing democratization and human rights, and the role of foreign aid donors.

<sup>59</sup> There is a large body of literature on the much broader topic of «NGOs in development» which has not been synthesized. See e.g., one of the main introductory overviews by Dave Lewis and Nazneen Kanji (2009) *Non-Governmental Organizations and Development* (Routledge 2009).

### A6.1.1 Context: Civil Society in Developing Countries

#### Main conclusions from academic studies of civil society in developing countries

In recent years, there has been fightback against efforts to foster and consolidate space for vibrant civil societies in many of the countries that nominally democratized in the 1990s (Howell 2012; Hsu et al. 2017). This ‘shrinking space for civil society’ is interpreted as part of a general ‘democratic recession’ (Diamond 2015), the shifting balance of power and priorities within the Western donor community (Moknes and Melin 2012), growing disillusionment with the outcomes of the so-called third wave-transitions (Levitsky and Way 2015), and the increasingly contested nature of the ‘liberal world order’ (Poppe and Wolff 2017). In addition to mapping the causes of this shrinking space, the literature has also focused on highlighting how the space has been closed. Laws, regulations and formal institutions have been used significantly (Dupuy et al. 2016), though informal methods of co-optation and selective coercion are also frequently used (Brett 2017). Finally, there is an emerging literature on how NGOs in these settings can adapt to the new circumstances (Ron et al. 2017).

Dupuy, K., J. Ron, A. Prakash. (2016). *Hands Off My Regime! Governments’ Restrictions on Foreign Aid to Non-Governmental Organizations in Poor and Middle-Income Countries*. *World Development* 84, 299-311.

The article documents the closing space for civil society organisations by zooming in on laws that restrict foreign funding for NGOs. Through a study of legal changes in 153 low- and middle-income countries since the early 1990s, the authors show that these restrictions have become increasingly prevalent, particularly in aid-dependent countries that hold multiparty elections. They hypothesize that this is because civil society organisations in these settings are often seen as being anti-government.

Brett, E. A. (2017). *Representation and Exclusion in Partial Democracies: The Role of Civil Society Organisations*. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 2017 (online first).

In this introduction to a special section on the role of civil society organisations in partial democracies, Brett summarizes three separate studies that all delve into concrete aspects of this. The articles all highlight the inherent tension that most civil society organisations face today: they exist within a state that has the formal trappings of a democracy, but where governments nevertheless try to limit the space they have to work and hold power to account. The articles argue that civil society can play a critical role in pushing these regimes towards democracy, but that they are constrained not just by the regimes in power and their use

of patronage to co-opt civil society leaders, but also by donor behaviour and internal weaknesses. Regarding donors, the studies highlight a shift in donor focus in their work with CSOs from mobilization to service-delivery and that this shift has decreased the capacity of civil society to act as potential change agents. Internal weaknesses are linked to lack of internal democracy and leadership succession.

Diamond (2015) *Facing up to the democratic recession*. In Journal of Democracy

Highlights that the shrinking space for civil society must be seen in the light of a general democratic recession.

Howell (2012) *Shifting global influences on civil society: Times for reflection*. In Moksnes and Melia (eds.) *Global Civil Society: Shifting Powers in a Shifting World*

Provides a short and succinct overview of the effect of shifting global trends and power balance on the global civil society discourse.

Hsu et al. (2016) *'Going Out' or Staying In? The Expansion of Chinese NGOs in Africa*. In Development Policy Review

Argues that despite initial attempts to promote Chinese CSOs' activities in both democratic and authoritarian countries in Africa, they are yet to make a substantial impact.

Levitsky and Way (2015). *The myth of democratic recession*. In Journal of Democracy.

Many of the 'transitions' from authoritarian rule that took place in the 1990s were not transitions at all: the current problem is not democratic recession but authoritarian retrenchment. These environments have thus always been hostile to civil society.

Poppe and Wolff (2017) *The contested spaces of civil society in a plural world: norm contestation in the debate about restrictions on international civil society support*. In Contemporary Politics

The debate about the closing space of civil society must be seen in the light of the increasingly contested nature of the 'liberal' world order, as other models of governance that take a different view on public civic space are emerging.

Ron et al. (2017) *Can Human Rights Organizations in the Global South Attract More Domestic Fundings?* In Journal of Human Rights Practice

Article argues that in order to attract domestic funding organisations and partnerships should focus on local needs, define their value added and hire new staff.

### A6.1.2 Civil society and democratisation

#### Main conclusions from academic studies on civil society and democratisation

Over the past few years the literature has been concerned with 1) documenting the effect of the new empirical reality and 2) discussing and synthesizing what the effects of this shift has been in terms of civil society's contribution to democracy and development. In terms of the former, changes in both aid providers (Banks and Hulme 2014) and increasingly hostile domestic conditions (Dupuy et al 2015; Hayman 2016) have both contributed to a shift away from straight advocacy work to focusing more on service delivery. At the same time, studies show that in order for civil society to play a constructive role in processes of development and democratization in these countries what is needed is an integrated approach whereby civil society still can play a role as a vertical accountability mechanism vis-à-vis both citizens and governments (Fox 2015; Gauri 2013; Murdie & Davies 2012). In order to do this civil society must reconnect with its grassroots (Banks & Hulme 2014; Hayman 2016; Mangu 2012) while at the same time avoiding polarization (Way 2015).

Banks, N. & D. Hulme. (2014). *New development alternatives or business as usual with a new face? The transformative potential of new actors and alliances in development*. Third World Quarterly 35, 181-195

Banks and Hulme summarize a special issue containing 9 articles on “New actors and alliances in development”. Several of the contributions focus on civil society and their role in development. They highlight that civil society’s role has been switched to service provision, partly as a result of the importance of new privately controlled charities as funders as well as technological innovations. These technical innovations have led many NGOs to become ‘brands’, marketing themselves as much to donors in Western countries as to the local population.

Fox, J. (2015). *Social Accountability: What Does the Evidence Really Say?* World Development 72, 346-361

In this meta-analysis of 25 quantitative impact-evaluations of Social Accountability measure, Fox finds evidence that providing information to citizens alone is not enough to boost social accountability. Rather, the strategic approach, which combines such information with both efforts to boost state responsiveness to

citizens and by building capacity for advocacy and oversight through a ‘vertically accountable’ civil society. In other words, social accountability interventions need to build capacity of civil society and get it to interact with both citizens and government.

Dupuy et al (2015) *Who survived? Ethiopia’s regulatory crackdown on foreign-funded NGOs*. In Review of International Political Economy

Documents the consequences of the new and strict regulatory regime in Ethiopia. Highlights that the regime lead to the closure of both briefcase NGOs and legitimate, local human rights NGOs. The survivors were those that rebranded or found new niches. Shows that strong governments can control and constrain civil society’s focus.

Gauri (2013). *Redressing Grievances and Complaints Regarding Basic Service Delivery*. In World Development.

Article argues that civil society could potentially play key role in being an intermediate between citizens and government in processes of redressing grievances about basic service delivery, but that the current political and economic climate (both domestic and international) is not conducive to this.

Hayman (2016). *Unpacking civil society sustainability: looking back, broader, deeper, forward*. In Development in Practice.

Summary article of special issue containing seven articles and four opinion pieces on civil society sustainability. The articles highlight that the new situation with increasingly restrictive domestic settings and challenges in terms of relying on foreign funds are forcing NGOs to face their sustainability challenges, and that this should be done through reconnecting with the grassroots and rethinking capacity building rather than switching to becoming straight up service providers.

Murdie & Davies (2012) *Shaming and Blaming: Using Events Data to Assess the Impact of Human Rights INGOs*. In International Studies Quarterly.

Highlights that International NGOs shaming of state human rights abuse can be effective, but only when organisations doing so have a presence and third party allies (such as local NGOs) within the country in which it is critical of the government.

Mangu (2012) *African civil society and the promotion of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance*. In African Human Rights Law Journal

NGOs in Africa are not using the continent's own documents as points of reference when doing advocacy work, thus decreasing the legitimacy of local processes.

Way (2014). *Civil Society and Democratization*. In Journal of Democracy.

Based on developments in Ukraine, the author argues that in conflict prone societies, civil society's ability to act constructively in processes of democratization depends on its ability to be broad-based and not sectarian.

### A6.1.3 Foreign aid donors and civil society

#### Main conclusions from academic studies on foreign donors and civil society

The focus in the literature reviewed over the past ten years has been both on identifying when and why donors bypass the state and the effects of this type of aid (particularly with regards to democracy). The literature reviewed has a bias towards focusing on US support. Concerning bypassing the state, studies have highlighted that donors typically bypass the state when they have concerns about the governance in the host countries (Act et al. 2016; Dietrich 2014), but that this not necessarily mean that the focus of the aid bypassing the state is on bettering governance. Rather, civil society support seems to be more geared towards service delivery/direct development efforts (Dietrich 2014; Banks et al. 2015). The choice of whether to trust implementation to local NGOs or not is based on domestic political consideration in donors' home country (Bush 2016). With regards to the effect of civil society support, the literature on democracy promotion highlights that the results are relatively good in terms of building (state) institutions and preventing (violent) conflict (Dietrich & Wright 2015; Savun & Tirone 2011), but less so with regards to building counter movements, opposition parties and independent civil society (Bush 2015; Dietrich & Wright 2015; Jalali 2012). This is seen as both as a result of willed, but flawed donor tactics (Banks et al. 2015; Bush 2015; Jalali 2012), but also as a result of democracy promotion succeeding in building institutions that have been abused by incumbents to repress actors they were supposed to protect – leaving donors with no response (Bardall 2017).

Act, M., T.O. Mahmoud, R. Thiele. (2016). *Corrupt governments do not receive more state-to-state aid: Governance and the delivery of foreign aid through non-state actors*. Journal of Development Economics 114, 20-33.

Act et al. document that donors are likely to change funding channel and provide more support through non-state actors (civil society organisations) when the host government is not perceived to be acting in accordance with good governance principles. They also document that the effect is strongest in aid sectors where it is possible to bypass the state, such as health and governance.

Banks, N., D. Hulme, M. Edwards. (2015). *NGOs, States and Donors Revisited: Still Too Close for Comfort?* World Development 66, 707-718.

The authors revisit their concerns about the impact of foreign aid on NGOs and civil society more general twenty years after first fronting it. Argues that while civil society has been successful in service delivery, it has lost momentum with regards to playing a role as agents for public change. Civil society aid has contributed to this by focusing on professionalization over assisting in building organisations with solid grassroots foundations.



Dietrich, S. & J. Wright. (2015). *Foreign Aid Allocation Tactics and Democratic Change in Africa*. The Journal of Politics 77, 216-234.

By investigating the effect of different types of aid on different aspects of democracy, the authors find that neither economic aid or democracy and good governance promotion have been particularly effective in promoting civil society if it is understood as a viable and vibrant opposition to the government. Instead, it finds that democracy and good governance promotion has been more effective when targeting government conduct.

Barkan (2012). *Democracy Assistance: What Recipients Think*. In Journal of Democracy.

Presents findings of survey of over 1400 recipient NGOs that received democracy assistance through 14 different donor agencies. While recipients generally value support, they argue that donors need to increase their 1) entrust and empower their local partners more, 2) increase in-house country-specific contextual knowledge and 3) address issues of dependency on foreign funding.

Bush (2015) *The taming of democracy assistance*. Cambridge University Press and Bardall (2017) *Book review of The taming of democracy assistance*. In Democratization.

In her book, Bush argues that (American and UN-supported) democracy promotion efforts have become tame and non-confrontational as a result of the organisation's working on democracy promotion having to adapt to the political preferences of host governments in order to 'survive' and keep receiving funding. However, Bardall argues that democracy promotion has always been non-confrontational, and that the real reasons organisations fail today is that authoritarian regime have become better at using the institutions that democracy promoters have helped build to institutionalize non-democratic practices.

Bush (2016). *When and why is civil society support "made in America"? Delegation to non-state actors in American democracy promotion*. In The Review of International Organizations.

Domestic politics decide choice of implementing partner: American democracy promotion effort likely to be funded through American NGOs in countries that are salient for U.S. foreign policy, while it will be channelled through local NGOs in less political salient countries.

Dietrich (2014). *Bypass or Engage? Explaining Donor Delivery Tactics in Foreign Aid Allocation*. In International Studies Quarterly.

Article shows empirically that donors, concerned with aid achieving its intended outcome, bypass the state in settings where governance is a concern for aid efficiency. Civil society is thus used to deliver services.

Jalali (2012). *Financing Empowerment? How Foreign Aid to Southern NGOs and Social Movements Undermines Grass-Roots Mobilization*. In Sociology Compass.

Author argues that international aid and financial support tend to make local grassroots organisation and movements tamer by turning them into consensus movements using institutional, resource-dependent, non-confrontational strategies with few roots in the community.

Savun & Tirone (2011) *Foreign Aid, Democratization & Civil Conflict: How Does Democracy Aid Affect Civil Conflict?* In American Journal of Political Science

Finds that democracy promotion plays a positive role in preventing civil conflict during transitions, and that part of the reason for this is that democracy promotion builds up civil capacity outside the state.

## A6.2 EVALUATION REPORTS

In the following we have summarized a series of recent major evaluations on civil society support. The main emphasis has been on presenting findings from evaluations of support channelled through northern CSOs.

### A6.2.1 2015 Evaluation of the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations 2010-2014

**Commissioning agency:** Sida, Department for Partnerships and Innovations, Civil Society Unit

**Title:** *Evaluation of the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations 2010–2014, Final Synthesis Report, Sida Decentralised Evaluation 2015:36*

**Author:** Jethro Pettit, Rosemary McGee, Helen Dixon, Patta Scott-Villiers and Hugh Goyder

**Web:** [https://sidacivilsocietyeval.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_strategy\\_for\\_support\\_via\\_swedish\\_civil\\_society\\_organisations\\_2010-2014\\_final\\_synthesis\\_report.pdf](https://sidacivilsocietyeval.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/evaluation_of_the_strategy_for_support_via_swedish_civil_society_organisations_2010-2014_final_synthesis_report.pdf)

#### **Background and purpose**

This report shares findings from a two-year evaluation of the Strategy for Support via Swedish Civil Society Organisations 2010-2014 as implemented by selected Swedish civil society ‘framework organisations’ (SFOs)

and their national partners in three countries – Nicaragua, Pakistan and Uganda.

The purpose of the evaluation is “to find out if, how and why/why not the support to civil society actors in developing countries via Swedish CSOs (SFOs) has contributed to the overall objectives of the support by creating conditions to enable poor and discriminated people to improve their living conditions and quality of life. The focus of the evaluation should be on learning aspects.”

The evaluation used the Reality Check Approach to understand ‘from below’ the realities and perspectives of people living in poverty and marginalisation, combined with meso-level inquiries into the efforts of diverse actors – notably the SFOs and local partner organisations (LPOs) funded by Sida – to address these issues ‘from above’. These findings are used to analyse the *relevance, alignment and feasibility* of the Swedish CS strategy, as formally written and as practiced by SFOs and LPOs.

#### **Findings**

› Findings reflect the realities of *multiple dimensions of poverty and marginalisation*, many of which interact with each other. Against a backdrop of increasingly monetised livelihoods

and the privatisation of public services, paid employment and migration play a key role in livelihood strategies, yet neither comes easily or without costs. The realities of people living in poverty and marginalisation are marked by many forms of discrimination, on the grounds of gender, ethnicity, geographic region and disability, amongst others. The quality of education and access to it are both declining rather than improving; this leads people to perceive education as an ever-less promising strategy for overcoming discrimination.

- › Some cases were found where community organisations and CSOs were effectively combating these conditions and mobilising citizens to realise their rights, but also many others where community organising tended to reproduce existing patterns of dependency and discrimination.
- › People’s perceptions of change taking place in the enabling conditions needed to improve their living conditions were both positive and negative. Poverty is clearly cyclical and systemic as well as multidimensional. Small incremental improvements in enabling or living conditions were often wiped out by bigger negative tendencies. Some reported positive changes were attributed to CSO activities (in general), but others happened through luck.

- › Despite these perceptions of little positive change, *people's strategies for change* are multiple, carefully honed, and not without hope, combining hard work, caution, education, migration, and the formation and improvement of associations.
- › There is a clear difference between, on the one hand, people's *awareness* of their rights and how far they are fulfilled or denied, and on the other hand, their *expectations* of fulfilment. Particularly in Uganda and Pakistan, where discrimination emerged as a fact of life, non-discrimination is a distant ideal, or simply unimaginable. Participation, transparency and accountability are familiar ideas to those we interacted with and to the organisations that work with them – although meanings and practices vary widely – but many people in poverty see government decentralisation as something that has decentralised discrimination and *lack* of transparency and accountability, rather than having positively promoted human rights based approaches.
- › It was found, at least in Uganda and Pakistan, the overall conditions for CSOs (generally) contributing to positive change appear to be worsening rather than improving. Nonetheless, plausible contributions to positive changes in enabling conditions were identified in the areas of legal and policy changes, organisational strengthening, the building of organisational capacities, and direct improvements in living conditions.
- › Less positively, it was found that in some settings, promoting the voice of people in poverty and marginalisation could put them at risk; and that some of the deeper changes needed for sustained contextual transformation, as distinct from improvements to the welfare of individual people living in poverty, are not being addressed. This is usually for well-founded reasons, which are often political. Another widespread, less positive finding was that the scope of SFOs and LPOs for contributing to positive changes in enabling conditions is significantly constrained by the time requirements and opportunity costs of Sida's results-focused aid management system.
- › Although identifying *the plausible contributions of the Swedish Civil Society strategy's support for CSO capacity development and enhancement* is a complicated task, reasonable grounds were found for inferring a contribution in a number of cases. Sida's support has helped to increase the capacities and awareness needed for realising rights in Nicaragua and Uganda. Some SFOs have contributed significantly to developing leadership capacity in LPOs, including by working to embed in them the principles of participation, transparency, accountability and non-discrimination, and then giving the LPOs progressively more space to develop and lead their own strategies.
- › In Pakistan, implementation of the Swedish Civil Society strategy has contributed to strengthening the organisational and project-implementation capacities of community-based organisations (CBOs), though not always in transformative ways. Capacity strengthening that promotes political activism has at times had negative effects because of sensitivities of the context; and sometimes short-term capacity development inputs have fallen far short of the systemic or structural challenge they aim to address. It seems that some SFOs and LPOs are responding to restrictive or repressive political contexts by developing *capacity to satisfy needs* rather than tackling the more sensitive task of developing *capacity to realise rights*.
- › On *relevance*, it was found that the Swedish Civil Society strategy and the way it is interpreted and practised by SFOs and LPOs, is relevant to the priorities, perspectives and desired changes of people living in poverty and marginalisation. In some cases, the theories of change through which the

strategy's objectives are pursued are highly relevant and effective; in others, they appear too diffuse, too narrow or not attuned to local realities.

- › On *alignment*, it was found that local and grassroots CSOs are congruent at operational levels. Greater alignment was found at the level of strategic intent and understanding than at the level of operations and partnerships. Some LPOs are strongly aligned with the Swedish CS strategy and its expectations, and others less so. Some characteristics of results-based management also drive non-alignment, favouring a logic of vertical relationships, fragmentation, and low scope for synergy. Alignment is further complicated by the nature of Sida's civil society partnerships, which combine organisations emblematic of Sweden's domestic civil society, with international NGOs, which may be based in Sweden, but are international in identity, and pursue an international agenda.
- › In some contexts, it is unrealistic to expect that CSO services will be improved, rights enhanced and poverty reduced simply by building the capacity of citizens to claim their rights, or that democratisation will be encouraged by CSOs playing a mediating role between citizens and the state; building CSOs

does not necessarily lead to the realisation of rights. Also, feasibility appears to be reduced by the vertical characteristics of the system through which Swedish support to civil society is delivered. Sida, SFOs and LPOs need to strategise more closely about how to work effectively in unfavourable contexts; build stronger shared understandings of gender and power; revisit the focus on results and upwards accountability; expand the concepts of civil society and mobilising capacity.

## **A6.2.2 2014 Evaluation of Norwegian support through and to umbrella and network organisations in civil society**

**Commissioning agency:** *Norad Evaluation Department*

**Title:** *Added costs. Added value? Evaluation of Norwegian support through and to umbrella and network organisations in civil society, Evaluation Report 5/2014*

**Author:** *NIRAS in cooperation with Chr. Michelsen Institute*

**Web:** <https://www.norad.no/en/toolspublications/publications/2014/evaluation-of-norwegian-support-through-and-to-umbrella-and-network-organisations-in-civil-society/>

### ***Purpose and objectives***

The purpose of the evaluation was to provide guidance to future Norwegian support through and to umbrella and network organisations in civil society by assessing their effectiveness, efficiency and value added with regard to supporting civil society development.

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

- › Establish and assess the theory of change and the assumptions behind the Norwegian support through and to UNOs.

- › Assess the effectiveness and added value of the support given through and to the UNOs in Nepal and Tanzania from the perspective of the intended beneficiaries and other stakeholders.
- › Assess the effectiveness, efficiency and value added of the umbrella organisations as compared to alternative ways to channeling support to civil society development.

The evaluation team did not conclude on the specific work of any one of the UNOs under evaluation.

### **Major findings and conclusions**

- › **The main problem** of the umbrellas was and still is the ‘conflict of interest’ between the umbrella being an administrator of public funds and at the same time representing the interests of its members and network partner towards the same administration. Due to its success new umbrella organisations emerged in the 1990s with the active support from Norad.
- › **Organisational learning and capacity building:** The UNO members and partners overall were effective in building the organisational capacity of South partners. The value added of the UNOs as perceived by the UNOs themselves, i.e. networking, capacity development, advocacy and human rights based approaches, seemed overall applied. None of the UNOs or their North partners was engaged in serious steps towards measuring capacity-building impact on their organisations or projects. Also, the results framework applied for monitoring progress and measure achievements were insufficiently designed and used. Logical sequencing for change applying a theory of change method was entirely lacking. There appeared to be limited buy-in from the UNO secretariats to invest time and money, and build-up of a culture catering for effective performance management.
- › **Contextual understanding:** The relations between the North and South partner seemed overall to be based on trust and mutual respect. However, in several cases the North partner engaged in supporting local partners in projects that did not fit well with the local context and was often disputed by the end-beneficiaries. There was a lack of thorough contextual analyses limiting understanding of how to balance in practice between service delivery and rights based advocacy.
- › **Effective communication:** The communication the UNO secretariats’ claim they exercise in their daily practices did not fully comply. Likewise, while the UNOs claimed to have systems in place to tackle any serious project deviations, the data found in this evaluation did not fully support this claim. In countries where few of the end beneficiaries know English language, there is a serious danger of elite capture.
- › **Networking:** Networking, as a key value added of the UNOs, was an important mechanism used by the UNOs and their members and network partners to facilitate development of strong organisations in the South. However, we also conclude that it was a challenge and problematic to engage a broad membership in poor countries in advocacy work that it would take years or decades to accomplish.
- › **Partner selection:** Several of the UNO members and network partners have advocacy as their main purpose, but have teamed up with organisations whose membership expect (and need) service delivery. When projects subsequently focus on advocacy with slow or poor outcomes, it created conflicts between the members/intended beneficiaries and the CSO/UNO staff and leadership. South partners and end beneficiaries tend in some cases to be passive and not opposing a strategy or approach, developed, mainly, by the North, probably because of fear of losing

funding and the network. Smaller UNO members and network partners face organisational vulnerabilities, e.g. inexperienced project management, high staff turnover and a higher number of corruption cases reported as compared to the large UNOs.

- › **Cost-efficiency:** It was not possible from the available data to differentiate clearly between the administration of project funds and networking and advocacy activities. It was therefore difficult to analyse the cost-efficiency of the UNOs in managing Norad funds – even though the general data points to low cost-efficiency. It is likely that local funding mechanisms will be more cost-efficient than the North based, but one will have to carefully consider their capacities to manage funds. The more experienced the local CSOs/UNOs the more advantages they have in this regard. Overall the cost-efficiency analysis was inconclusive.
- › **Local versus UNO funding:** A certain number of relatively strong and well-established and professionally staffed CSOs/UNOs exist in partner countries and that this implies that local funding mechanisms through these may be more cost-efficient than the North based. However, making use of local funding modalities also entails their challenges. For example,

there is some evidence of civil society concern that the merging of donor priorities in a limited number of joint funds may reduce the sources of funding for many smaller CSOs.

### **A6.2.3 2015 DFID Evaluation of the Civil Society Challenge Fund**

**Commissioning agency:** *DFID Inclusive Societies Department*

**Title:** *DFID Civil Society Challenge Fund, Final Evaluation 2015*

**Author:** *Cowan Coventry, Sadie Watson, Naomi Blight (IOD PARC)*

**Web:** <http://www.oecd.org/derec/unitedkingdom/Evaluation-Civil-Society-Challenge-Fund.pdf>

#### **Background**

The Civil Society Challenge Fund (CSCF) has been one of DFID's longest running challenge funds. It was created in 2000 to support UK based CSOs to strengthen the capacity of Southern CSOs to empower poor and marginalised people to influence the policies and practices that affected their lives. A decision was taken in 2010 to close the CSCF for new applications and a final round of projects was agreed in 2011. The approach the evaluation adopted focuses

more on eliciting learning than assessing the accountability of CSCF performance. The evaluation drafted an intervention logic for the CSCF and sought to identify key learning on its four central 'pillars' i.e. how effective fund management.... supports Northern/Southern CSO Partnerships.... to deliver effective capacity development....that leads to civil society influencing policies, practices and services that impact on the poor and marginalised.

#### **Findings**

- › **Fund management:** The evaluation found the outsourced fund management arrangements for CSCF to be effective.
- › **The indirect funding of Southern CSOs:** Implementing partners, on the whole, valued their partnerships with UK grant holders, and their role in channelling CSCF funds, as long as they added value to the project. The value the grant holder added to the project was not easily discernible in CSCF reporting unless its contribution was included in the logframe e.g. as organisational development support to the partner. Nonetheless, the evaluation identified that CSCF grant holders played a role in project oversight, project start up and design, accessing funds and in building the capacity of the Implementing Partners. The issue of accessing funding, though obvious, is relevant.



› **Capacity development:** The main role grant holders played in capacity development was to provide support to Implementing Partners to ensure they had the competencies to meet CSCF monitoring and reporting guidance. Most project capacity development activities, however, were focused at the ‘point of delivery’ with target groups, involving collaborative Partners and community networks. This involved a wide range of formal and informal approaches. The evaluation found evidence of these leading to successful civil society engagement with decision-makers but that more guidance and support should be offered on appropriate methodologies to gather evidence of attitude and behaviour change as a result of capacity development.

Capacity development often consisted of a variety of approaches including formal training, peer learning, organisational development support, awareness raising, mentoring and ‘learning by doing’. Grant holders also provided training and support in other areas, particularly advocacy. It is difficult to assess the quality of this support unless it is included in the project logframe (which most often it was not). Capacity development activities were often successful in achieving civil society engagement with decision-makers. However, the evaluation

found that the use of indicators and sources of evidence to monitor the primary impact of capacity development activities on attitude and behaviour change was variable.

› **Contribution to sustainability of Southern CSOs:**

Implementing partners believed that the expertise and reputation they gained from managing a DFID-funded project increased the likelihood of their attracting further funding. However, the evidence of CSCF funding contributing to longer term financial sustainability is inconclusive.

› **Civil Society engagement with decision-makers:**

The evaluation found considerable evidence of CSCF capacity development leading to civil society engagement at local and national level with decision-makers, and in policy dialogue and development. A large number of projects contributed to successful policy adoption although there were fewer cases of following through on policy implementation (not surprisingly in a three-five year funding period). CSCF projects that demonstrated policy achievements had often been working on the policy issue for several years and/or already had relationships with local partners with good links with the targeted communities.

**Lessons learned**

- › Empowerment and advocacy still relevant.
- › Lasting impact within a defined ‘sphere of influence’.
- › Demonstrating capacity development as a change process.
- › Demonstrating the added value of the UK intermediary role.
- › Balancing donor policy priorities with partnership.
- › Open Calls favour smaller UK CSOs but need to avoid wasted effort.
- › Inception phase critical to project design and ownership.
- › A focus on improved reporting and performance.



#### **A6.2.4 2013 ICAI Evaluation of DFID Support for Civil Society Organisations through Programme Partnerships Arrangements**

**Commissioning agency:** UK Independent Commission for Aid Impact (ICAI)

**Title:** DFID's Support for Civil Society Organisations through Programme Partnerships Arrangements

**Author:** ICAI Report 22 – May 2013

**Web:** <https://icai.independent.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/ICAI-REPORT-DFIDs-Support-for-CSOs-through-PPAs.pdf>

#### **Background and purpose**

This report examines the Department for International Development's (DFID's) Programme Partnership Arrangements (PPAs) – one of the principal mechanisms through which it funds civil society organisations (CSOs). In the current funding round (2011-14), DFID will provide a total of £120 million a year to 41 organisations, with grants ranging from £151,000 to £11 million. In this review, no overall judgement on the merits of PPAs as a type of assistance was made, as it was not within the remit of the evaluation to make recommendations on policy. The purpose was to assess the delivery, effectiveness and impact of DFID's PPAs, with a view to improving

implementation of the current round and helping to shape any similar CSO funding instrument in the future.

Through the PPAs, DFID supports CSOs that share its objectives and have strong delivery capacity. It provides CSOs with 'unrestricted' funding, giving them the flexibility to follow agreed strategic priorities. The report assesses the effectiveness and value for money of the PPA instrument, looking at partner selection, reporting and accountability. Six case study CSOs have been focused on.

#### **Ratings used:**

**Green:** The programme performs well overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Some improvements are needed.

**Green-Amber:** The programme performs relatively well overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Improvements should be made.

**Amber-Red:** The programme performs relatively poorly overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Significant improvements should be made.

**Red:** The programme performs poorly overall against ICAI's criteria for effectiveness and value for money. Immediate and major changes need to be made.

#### **Overall Assessment: Green-Amber**

The evaluation recognised that a vibrant civil society sector is an essential part of the UK aid landscape. While it is too early to conclude on the overall impact of the current funding round, it was found that PPAs are helping to drive innovation in the recipient organisations. In particular, they are improving the quality of performance management and accountability for results. It is likely that these changes will lead to improved results for intended beneficiaries, not just from PPA funding, but across the CSOs' full range of activities. It was concluded that DFID would achieve more with its PPAs if it were to refocus on the added value they can provide as a strategic instrument, in particular when contrasted with the other CSO funding mechanisms that DFID uses.

#### **Objectives Assessment: Amber-Red**

Uncertainty on policy within DFID during implementation led to objectives being unclear for this round of the PPAs. DFID should have been more explicit about what it hoped to achieve with the PPA instrument and then more strategic with its selection of CSOs. First, it should have identified which corporate priorities it wanted the PPAs to support. It should then have used a competitive grant making process designed to maximise that contribution, with fair and transparent

competition. It is notable that DFID set funding levels based on an assessment of CSOs' capacity and not the expected contribution of each PPA to DFID's results.

#### **Delivery Assessment: Green-Amber**

DFID has placed a strong emphasis on making CSOs accountable for the delivery of PPAs, which has helped to improve their performance. DFID could have done more, however, to engage with CSOs on shared objectives. DFID failed to define what it hoped to gain from working with CSOs and, as a result, has gained less than it might have done. In particular, the CSOs' knowledge, influence and expertise could be adding further value to DFID's work.

#### **Impact Assessment: Green-Amber**

While it is too early to conclude on the impact of the current PPAs on intended beneficiaries and linking of strategic flexible funding with improved impact is difficult to verify at this stage, the prospects appear to be good.

The CSOs we examined appear to be on track to deliver their expected results. This round of PPAs has helped to bring about a major and positive shift in the way that CSOs focus on results. The PPAs are also enabling improvements to CSOs' governance, financial management and delivery.

#### **Learning Assessment: Amber-Red**

DFID's approach to monitoring and evaluation has been overly complex and poorly adapted to the strategic nature of the PPAs. Scrutiny has at times been disproportionate and CSO monitoring could usefully involve beneficiaries more. DFID is not obtaining best value from the contractor appointed to evaluate PPA performance. On the other hand, the Learning Partnership has proved highly effective at promoting joint learning and innovation, to the benefit of both PPA holders and the wider community of development CSOs.

#### **A6.2.5 2013 DANIDA Evaluation of Danish Support to Civil Society**

**Commissioning agency:** *Evaluation Department, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

**Title:** *Evaluation of Danish Support to Civil Society, Evaluation 2013.01*

**Author:** *INTRAC, TANA and INDEVELOP*

**Web:** [https://www.oecd.org/derec/denmark/CS\\_strategien\\_web\\_DANIDA.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/derec/denmark/CS_strategien_web_DANIDA.pdf)

#### **Background and methodology**

Danida's current Civil Society Strategy, first developed in 2000 and updated in 2008, was the product of close collaboration with Danish development CSOs. It sets out a series of strategic goals to guide Danish support to Southern civil society across Danida's cooperation modalities, including Danish non-governmental organisations (NGOs), embassies and multi-donor funds. Danida commissioned this evaluation to review how well the strategy was operationalised from 2008 onwards and how it might be more effectively implemented, monitored and evaluated in the future.

No operational framework was produced for the Strategy with explicit methods or indicators with which to monitor progress. The evaluation, therefore, developed a draft intervention logic and impact framework from the content of the Strategy. This was supplemented by an evaluation framework based on the DAC evaluation criteria. A mixed methods approach gathered evidence from a variety of sources including two country studies, two 'at distance' country reviews; interviews with key stakeholders and a variety of desk reviews. The evaluation also conducted an online survey of 1,000 Southern CSOs partners in 11 countries and an analysis was drawn from 273 'clean' responses.

## Key findings

### > **Relevance**

Although knowledge of the Civil Society Strategy was limited, local CSOs affirmed the continuing relevance to the local context of the first three strategic goals of the strategy – vibrant, open debate; independent, locally based civil society; and the importance of capacity development, advocacy and networking. These were seen to be particularly relevant to the objectives of governance, democracy and human rights programmes.

However, country studies indicated that civil society gains at local or district level may not be reflected by pro-poor policy or practice changes at national level. This highlights an important assumption in the strategy i.e. the link between a strong, vocal civil society and pro-poor governance and development.

Local stakeholders perceive Danish support to civil society as very relevant in terms of target populations, thematic focus and diversity of cooperation modalities. Danida supports a wide range of civil society actors, from district to national level, but it was not possible to draw any definitive conclusions about the relevance of the partner portfolios of different modalities. Each modality has different mechanisms to

ensure it is targeting the right populations and partners in line with programme objectives.

Both embassies and Danish NGOs would benefit from a more explicit, dynamic analysis of civil society.

### > **Effectiveness**

*Open, vibrant debate*

Danida support to civil society contributes to open, vibrant debate on development issues in partner countries, in Denmark and at international level.

Danish support in Nepal and Uganda has increased civil society public debate despite legal and regulatory frameworks that enable governments to inhibit debate, if necessary. For example, Danish support to CSOs in Nepal has significantly increased space for public debate and citizen participation in local governance, particularly at micro-and meso-levels. CSO representatives in Uganda also credit Denmark with a distinctive role among the donor community in supporting civil society advocacy on good governance and human rights. In both cases, however, an increased civil society voice has yet to lead to improved operating conditions for civil society and pro-poor outcomes at a national level.

*Independent, representative, locally based civil society*

Support to improve the transparency and accountability of CSOs was a key aspect of the Danish support to civil society across modalities. This can take several forms – by taking representativeness and diversity into account in the choice of strategic partners (Human Rights and Good Governance Advisory Unit (HUGOU) in Nepal); helping CSOs improve their internal governance including elected, representative Boards (Democratic Governance Facility (DGF) in Uganda); support to NGO networks in Nepal and Uganda to establish Codes of Conduct for the sector; strengthening the internal democracy of a trade union movement (Danish Federation of Trade Unions and the Danish Confederation of Salaried Employees and Civil Servants Council in Zanzibar); or, more generally, increasing the awareness of rights holders and duty-bearers about democratic processes and the importance of inclusion.

Southern CSOs generally considered that Danish support had enhanced a sense of local ownership, with some qualifications. The strategic partnership model in both Uganda and Nepal was thought to strengthen local ownership by providing multi-annual core

funding to the strategic programmes of partners and by helping to strengthen their internal governance. Project-based support, whether provided by a pooled fund or NGO, tended to be seen as not as conducive to local ownership if project priorities are determined by the donors. Some CSO partners criticised the perceived ‘conditionality’ of Danish NGO programme funding – although this can also be explained in terms of their tougher accountability demands of partners.

Respondents believed the ‘indigenisation’ of some support mechanisms in recent years, such as the Independent Development Fund in Uganda and the Foundation for Civil Society in Tanzania had strengthened local ownership. The membership of some Danish NGOs of international confederations and federations with Southern members or affiliates was seen by some respondents as strengthening locally-based civil society; others viewed it as competing with local NGOs/CSOs access to Southern funding.

Supporting a strong, diverse civil society presents a challenge in balancing the principles of effectiveness and diversity. Although specific funding windows also exist for smaller CSOs, the trend is for Danish support modalities to work directly with fewer, ‘strategic’ partners to

maximise impact, demonstrate results, reduce transaction costs and minimise risk. To continue to be relevant to the complex, changing environments in which it works Danida support must be able to identify and support new, emerging civic actors. It needs to avoid ‘institutionalising’ its partner profile – by supporting today’s civil society actors on the basis of yesterday’s performance rather than investing in tomorrow’s drivers for change.

#### *Capacity development, advocacy and networking*

CSOs reported a high level of satisfaction with the support provided to their capacity development though all modalities. CSO partners value capacity development support not only in terms of funding or training, but through on-going monitoring, advice and support. Danish NGOs play an important role in supporting the organisational development of partners; capacity development in their areas of technical competence; and through people-to-people initiatives. There is need, however, for Danish NGOs to more systematically monitor and report the effectiveness of these efforts at outcome level.

Both country studies reported examples of CSO advocacy in both ‘invited’ and ‘claimed’ spaces. Danish support to CSO advocacy in Nepal has

contributed to positive changes for poor and marginalised people at local and district level despite a difficult political environment. The Uganda country study documented examples of CSOs advocacy in ‘claimed spaces’ – e.g. in relation to anti-corruption. The experience of Danish NGO/ CSO’s work with partners – e.g. in the forestry sector, on child labour issues and trade unions – indicates that successful coalition building for advocacy may take years of effort.

Danish support to networking is particularly evident at a local and national level, although less so with regard to cross-sectoral and international networking. The Nepal country study highlighted the support provided by the Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund and Danish NGOs to networking at a local and district level. Similarly, Danish support, including that of Danish NGOs, in Uganda has been instrumental in creating and strengthening issue-based national and district networks.

#### **> Efficiency**

The evaluation was unable to make any authoritative comparison of the efficiency of different cooperation modalities since this requires an analysis of both the costs, outputs and/or outcomes of comparable entities. The current system for monitoring, evaluating and

reporting on Danish support to civil society is not robust enough to provide this information. There is a tendency to view multi-donor funding arrangements as cost-efficient since administrative costs are shared and potential impact increased by pooling resources. However, initial transaction costs may be high and on-going costs are dependent on the management arrangements adopted and the 'value-added' offered to grantees. Calls for proposals can also involve high transactions costs for both funders and particularly for applicants. Strategic partnerships are seen as cost-efficient by investing in a fewer number of partners over a longer period of time. In comparison, project funding – particularly short-term grants – is perceived as more resource intensive.

#### › **Sustainability**

Local NGOs/CSOs in the countries under review have a high level of financial dependence on foreign donors, especially those engaged in advocacy work. Survey responses indicate that CSO partners of pooled funds are more reliant on that source of funding than CSOs partners of other modalities. The strategic partnership/framework funding model is seen by some to enable CSOs to establish a greater level of sustainability through longer-term funding. Investment in the organisational sustainability

of partners, by supporting their improved organisational efficiency including ability to meet donor requirements, was common across modalities. There is less evidence of specific strategies to encourage financial sustainability. There was some criticism of Danida's reluctance to allow funds to be invested e.g. in endowment funds. There are few income generating and local fund-raising opportunities available to CSOs in most partner countries, but they merit more investigation and support. In the meantime, diversifying sources of funding is a realistic strategy for CSOs to manage the risk of financial dependency. In this regard, some Southern CSOs were concerned that large multi-donor funds tended to create 'funding monopolies' that might reduce the fundraising opportunities available in the sector.

#### › **Cooperation modalities**

A mix of cooperation modalities in support of civil society enables Danida to support a wide range of civil society actors and to reach marginalised areas and populations in partner countries.

Danida is committed to providing more direct funding to Southern civil society. The evaluation found that the existence of dedicated programme management units to support Governance and Democracy programmes in

Uganda and Nepal enabled Danida to read and respond effectively to the changing local context. Local Grant Authorities potentially are flexible funding mechanisms that could support timely, innovative civil society initiatives or new civil society actors, but are under-utilised. CSOs often play an effective service delivery or capacity development role in sector programmes (usually through earmarked components), but the connection with the rights-based approach of the Civil Society Strategy is less obvious. It is likely that civil society contributes less to the planning and monitoring of sector programmes than anticipated in the Civil Society Strategy.

Danida support to civil society through multi-donor funding arrangements is expected to increase.

Danish NGOs/CSOs retain an important role in Danish support to civil society in the South. The long-term commitment, local knowledge and specialised expertise of Danish framework NGOs remain valuable assets for Danish support to Southern civil society. The evaluation also found numerous positive examples of Danish/Southern links and development projects supported through pooled funds in Denmark. A number of factors, however, such as the evolving maturity of Southern CSOs; the

increase in funding windows in the South; and the growth of international NGO confederations and federations; suggest it is time for a constructive, collaborative reappraisal of the added value of channelling Danida support to Southern civil society via Danish NGOs/CSOs, and how it can be measured and maximised.

### **Annex M: Study on other donor civil society policies**

#### **> Trends in ODA**

By 2009, considerable proportions of some donors' bilateral ODA was channelled to and through NGOs<sup>1</sup>, ranging from 30% of the Netherlands' considerable ODA budget, 37% of Irish Aid's smaller ODA budget, to 11% of Danida and CIDA's bilateral aid. Most donors seem to be in various stages of taking stock on different aspects of their ODA in preparation for the post 2015 world.

#### **> Changing civil society support**

The most recent strategy papers relating to civil society – especially those from the Scandinavian donors – focus on the need for strengthening Southern civil society in its own right – both for service delivery and in holding governments to account. The question is, as 2015 approaches, what implications the likely new thinking about development assistance will

have on donor thinking about support for civil society – both national northern-based INGOs and Southern civil society itself.

Discussions about the post 2015 framework for ODA are informed by a variety of issues: the learning from the MDG approach has been important. In addition, the changing global context, the rise of the BRIC countries and the G20 world suggest declining influence of the traditional western donors in the longer run. More immediate is the discussion around the movement of countries from Low Income to Middle Income status, and the changing patterns of poverty in the world.

Many discussions focus on the fact that since the year 2000, 26 low-income countries (LICs) have graduated to the middle-income country (MIC) status and the implications this has for traditional approaches to ODA. It is recognised that several of these emerging economies still have large pockets of poverty, but that other forms of assistance will be more appropriate in such countries.

While it is generally thought that work through CSOs in fragile and weak states will continue to be a focus, the future role of support to CSOs in MICs is more open to debate. In keeping with the above, however, there is

evidence of interest amongst donors to support a wider range of actors who can be involved in the delivery of development outcomes. DfID, AusAID, and the Netherlands all speak of support to civil society as part of a more general approach that involves a range of other actors such as the private sector, philanthropic groups and the state itself. A number of donors are certainly expanding their work with the private sector and encouraging greater collaboration between CSOs and other sectors.

#### *Increased emphasis on Southern CSOs*

Historically, a significant percentage of donor support to civil society has been channelled through their own national NGOs. In recent years, however, donors have been stating more clearly an end objective of strengthening Southern civil society in its own right. Of those donors which currently have a strategy or policy to guide their work with civil society, most use the language of supporting vibrant, diverse and independent civil society in the South. The Netherlands states that its overall aim is to “*help build a strong and diverse civil society tailored to the local situation. In this connection, strengthening the capacity of local CSOs is an aim in and of itself*”. Norad aims to “*enable Southern civil society actors to take the lead in partnership between Norwegian actors and*



themselves". Sweden's overarching objective is a "vibrant and pluralistic civil society in developing countries". This emphasis has been given further impetus by the Aid Effectiveness Agenda with its strong emphasis on local ownership.

Of the donors examined, only AusAID and the EU have produced very recent documentation that re-iterates these objectives. The recent Communication from the EU entitled *The roots of democracy and sustainable development: Europe's engagement with civil society in external relations* states that "the Commission proposes an enhanced and more strategic approach in its engagement with local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs)...the EU gives value to a dynamic, pluralistic and competent civil society and recognises the importance of constructive relations between states and CSOs. AusAID, however, admits that its new framework for engaging with civil society, whilst talking of the importance of civil society in its own right, does not really focus on how to achieve this objective and is more concerned with processes relating to funding to and through Australian NGOs.

Most current policies and strategies talk of the need to strengthen civil society in the south. However, this is not necessarily matched

yet by funding mechanism and modalities. In 2009, the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members continued to provide around five times more aid to NGOs based in their own countries than to other international NGOs or to local NGOs in developing countries. Funding, however, is becoming increasingly decentralised and channelled through donor country offices in the south. Around 50% of AusAid and 47% of DfID funding goes through country offices.

A recent study for Sida clearly shows a steady increase in country level funding for CSOs since 2007. Most of this funding, however, is channelled to support "through" CSOs as a means to reach various sector and thematic objectives. Only 11% of the funding is going to initiatives that have civil society strengthening as a main objective in its own right.

Sida has required its Framework NGOs to focus their programming around supporting Southern CSOs and want to see more provision of core funding grants to Southern partners. Norad has gone farthest in questioning the role of Northern NGOs. In a recent discussion paper, it states that it "is a goal for Norad to make civil society support more demand driven with the northern based CSOs remaining in the background to a greater extent". The paper challenges whether Norad is supporting the

right partners. It acknowledges that Norway tends to cooperate with more 'modern' local organisations and asks whether it should be more actively considering working with religious movements, traditional organisations, labour associations, ethnic groups and social movements as partners in social change. The paper describes civil society in many countries in the South as becoming more influenced by forces deeply rooted in national traditions. It suggests that the traditional partnership model is changing and that perhaps the number of northern-based intermediary organisations and coordination mechanisms should be reduced. The paper is intended as a reference document for the on-going dialogue between Norwegian stakeholders in civil society, and is not a policy position.

#### › **Pooled funds**

One of the mechanisms that donors are using to provide more funding in country for national NGOs is through multi donor pooled funds. The general feeling is that there has been a growth of these funds over the last 10 – 15 years ago, albeit from a very low base. However, it is difficult to find statistics at individual donor level. There have been few evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of pooled funds as a mechanism compared to others, although individual funds have been evaluated. Whilst



the general assumption is that pooled funds should reduce transaction costs for the donors concerned, evidence seems to be that transaction costs may be high initially. Most donors acknowledge that there are other benefits, whereby harmonised support to Southern based funds can develop into institutions that then can perform a function in support of their local civil society. However, discussions within Sida and Irish Aid suggest that there may be need for a rethink about the supposed advantages of pooled funds – specifically the need to be aware of issues of quality and the need for clarity of purpose and focus of such funds.

› **Introduction of due diligence processes**

Whilst AusAID has required Australian NGOs to undertake an accreditation process since 1974, this is a new departure for the other donors. Accreditation has been a requirement for Australian NGOs to access AusAID funding and is an attractive proposition for Australian NGOs since, once accredited, they receive organisational (non-ear-marked) funding for a period of five years.<sup>32</sup> After the change of government in UK in 2010, DfID's Civil Society Department introduced pre-contract due diligence procedures as a requirement for the PPA grants.

› **Focus on efficiency and effectiveness**

All of the selected donors are focusing more on provision of evidence of results, or management for results. DfID funding is primarily about the delivery of 'tangible' outcomes, and this has been focussed on achievement of the MDGs. <sup>35</sup> This emphasis is continuing and is evident in the processes involved in the funding application processes. All DfID PPA applicants have been asked to outline their Theory of Change and Theory of Action in addition to providing log frames with targets and milestones. Comic Relief, which is funded under DfID PPA, and is a mechanism for funding a huge variety of CSO projects, also requires projects to develop a theory of change. Similarly, AusAID requires all grantees to develop a theory of change (this replaced the log-frame), and country level offices are required, as part of their Situation Analysis, to think through their theory of change and strategy for delivery.

› **Monitoring and Evaluation**

AusAID has piloted a new M&E and Learning Framework over the past year and the pilot is currently being reviewed. The system was developed in conjunction with the Australian NGOs and is constructed around 50 indicators based on the DAC codes. The aim is for all NGOs to use this one system. A web-based on

line sharing system is being developed which will enable different ways of grouping and analysing the data which is being generated through the NGO reports. AusAID itself will undertake the aggregation of results, 'rolling up' the results against the 40 indicators to enable them to report against AusAID's five strategic goals. AusAID also conducts annual thematic evaluations and Meta Evaluations of NGOs' own evaluations and impact assessments.

**A6.2.6 2015 Evaluation of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program**

**Commissioning agency:** *The Office of Development Effectiveness, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade*

**Title:** *Evaluation of the Australian NGO Cooperation Program, Final Report, Commonwealth of Australia 2015*

**Author:** *Coffey International Development and the Office of Development Effectiveness*

**Web:** <https://dfat.gov.au/aid/how-we-measure-performance/ode/Documents/ode-evaluation-australian-ngo-cooperation-program-final-report.pdf>

### **The programme**

The ANCP is an annual grants program that provides matched funding to accredited Australian NGOs to support their work in developing countries. Funding supports projects across a range of sectors including education, health, water and sanitation, governance and economic development. Established in 1974, the ANCP is DFAT's (and formerly AusAID's) longest running NGO programme. It also represents the largest programme for Australian NGOs, with a 2014–15 allocation of \$134 million constituting approximately one-fifth of all funding provided to NGOs and 2.7 per cent of Australia's Official Development Assistance budget.

### **Purpose and objectives for the evaluation**

Assessing the impact of the ANCP on individuals and communities in developing countries across the globe is well beyond the scope of this evaluation. Rather the approach this evaluation takes is to assess the effectiveness of the ANCP mechanism to assist NGOs to reduce poverty and support sustainable development.

The evaluation's objectives are to:

- › Assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the ANCP
- › Assess the results of delivering aid through the ANCP
- › Make recommendations for improvements to the management of the ANCP

The original evaluation questions are structured around the areas of relevance, implementation, institutional arrangements, monitoring and evaluation, and results.

### **› Relevance**

The evaluation concludes that the ANCP is a partnership approach to development that respects the organisational autonomy of NGOs, adheres to the principles of development effectiveness and addresses crosscutting issues such as gender and disability. The accreditation process identifies effective organisations with public support and provides them with flexible funding to contribute to their efforts to tackle poverty.

ANCP NGOs are contributing to partner-government development priorities particularly in terms of service delivery. Evaluation fieldwork in Bangladesh and Papua New Guinea found that NGOs are held in high regard by partner-country governments who recognise that the front-line services provided by NGOs are critical to the wellbeing of their citizens. The ANCP helps NGOs effectively bridge the two roles of working in partnership with government on the one hand and challenging it on the other.

### **› Effectiveness and efficiency**

The accreditation process is an effective means of identifying strong partners, leading to management efficiencies for DFAT and contributing to the organisational development of NGOs. The accreditation criteria target organisational characteristics that influence an agency's ability to be effective and deliver results. The use of Recognised Development Expenditure (RDE) as both a measure of support from the Australian public and the basis of funds allocation between agencies is a long-standing and well-accepted practice.

### **› Results and value for money**

DFAT's aggregate development results provide a measure of aid programme results for beneficiaries in a range of key human development areas. Based on ADR figures alone, ANCP is one of DFAT's best-performing programs: in 2013–14, ANCP represented around 2.7 per cent of the aid budget and delivered 18.2 per cent of the department's output-level aggregate development results. In comparative terms, the ANCP reported the largest number of aggregate development results of any program in DFAT while being the eighth largest program by value.

From a management perspective, the checks and balances imposed on NGOs through accreditation go a long way to demonstrating that ANCP is delivering on this aspect of value for money. However, NGOs should also show how they make informed investment decisions that consider relative costs and development benefits, and how they manage operational and project costs for efficiency.

ANCP is leveraged to gain support from the Australian public, the private sector and other donors. A key principle of ANCP is that NGOs are able to demonstrate and harness financial support from the Australian community for their development activities. Many NGOs raise well in excess of the minimum matching funds required by the ANCP. NGOs have demonstrated that ANCP funding is leveraged to access funding from other parts of their organisations, from the private sector and from other donors. A significant factor in the ability of NGOs to access funding from other sources is their accreditation status.

#### › **Monitoring and evaluation**

The ANCP Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Framework (MELF) has positively influenced the M&E systems of many organisations. The reporting framework presents a clear and consistent way of reporting program

outputs (facilitated through the online grant-management system), though there were some issues identified with the strength of data.

The MELF effectively captures the outputs of ANCP funding, but does not adequately capture development outcomes. While the MELF has undergone significant enhancements, there is still a way to go in order to maximise its utility and reflect the actual impact of ANCP.

While the MELF has undergone significant enhancements, there is still a way to go in order to maximise its utility and reflect the actual impact of ANCP. The MELF is considered appropriate for reporting of headline indicators (largely at output level), including range and scope of the programme. However, beyond the thematic studies, there is limited reporting on development outcomes across the portfolio.

#### **Overall conclusion**

This evaluation found that there are aspects of the ANCP that have room for improvement. However, it also identified in the ANCP a successful and highly valued program with some strong features that could usefully inform a number of the Australian Government's other development partnerships. Good progress is being made against the program's objective: *'To support accredited ANGOs to implement their*

*own programs and strategic directions consistent with the Australian aid program's strategic goals and objectives of poverty alleviation and sustainable development.'*

#### **A6.2.7 2016 Evaluation of the Programme Based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations**

**Commissioning agency:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Finland

**Title:** Evaluation on Programme-based Support through Finnish Civil Society Organizations, Report 2016/4

**Author:** Ole Stage, Emery Brusset, Merja Mäkelä and Tania de la Rosa (NIRAS Finland)

**Web:** <http://formin.finland.fi/public/default.aspx?contentid=352816&nodeid=49728&contentlan=2&culture=en-US>

#### **Background and purpose**

This report is the synthesis of evaluations of the development cooperation programmes of the six Finnish Civil Society Organizations receiving multiannual programme-based support.

The purpose of the evaluation is to provide evidence-based information and guidance on how to:

- › Improve the results-based management approach of the programme-based support to Civil Society, and
- › Enhance the achievement of results from Finnish support to civil society.

The evaluation undertook meta-analyses of external evaluations from the six CSO programmes and conducted field studies of a representative sample of their projects.

### **Findings and conclusions**

The overall conclusion of the evaluation of the six CSO programmes is that they have achieved valuable results. However, recent MFA budget cuts have forced the CSOs to reduce or abandon projects, thus reducing the positive results of their programmes.

- › **Relevance:** The programmes of the six CSOs are in line with their overall strategies: focusing on areas where they have established comparative advantages. The programmes, which are generally coherent with declared national policies, respond to the needs and priorities of stakeholders and beneficiaries; addressing a number of their specific rights.

The programmes are well aligned with Finnish Development policy priorities. However, the objectives for Finland's policy for support to

civil society are not reflected in the objectives for all the CSO programmes. Capacity development of partner organizations or of other CSOs in partner countries only appears as an objective in some programmes. The creation of an enabling environment for civil society does not appear as an objective in any of the programmes.

- › **Efficiency:** The Civil Society Unit of MFA is involved at the strategic level and leaves the management of the programmes to the Finnish CSOs and their local partners. Trust is a key component of the partnership modality and due to this, decisions can be taken flexibly and rapidly. It is concluded that governance and management at instrument level is efficient.

The programmes of the CSOs are widely spread geographically. The evaluation considered whether the MFA would achieve greater efficiency by grouping the interventions and concentrating national resources in specific regions or on specific themes. Finnish CSOs provide support to the implementing CSOs in the partner countries. Operational management is undertaken by skilled and dedicated project managers in the partner countries to whom adequate power for decision-making has been delegated. It is concluded that management at programme and project levels is efficient. The

field studies found that the quality of the M&E systems of the CSOs varied widely. It is concluded that although the M&E systems of the CSOs were generally inefficient they are now being upgraded.

- › **Effectiveness:** A large part of the diverse outcomes from the programmes can be categorised as empowerment of beneficiaries or rights holders. The stakeholders interviewed all expressed positive assessments of the value of outcomes. In some cases, little capacity development has been achieved. The project funding from Finnish CSOs leaves little opportunity for their partners to invest in organisational development. Small value and short-term contracts for implementers lead to limited organisational capacity building. The best results have been achieved in the cases where there was a long-term engagement with a local CSO; treated as a partner with the ability to set its own priorities. None of the Finnish CSOs have provided core funding for their CSO partners: though core funding is recognised as an effective means for supporting civil society development. It is concluded that capacity building of CSO partners could be improved.

The CSOs in partner countries generally regard support from the Finnish CSOs as more than merely financial. They point out that their

Finnish partners have provided various kinds of technical assistance, introduced new concepts and have facilitated access to local and international networks. It is concluded that there is a value added from channelling funds to Southern CSOs through Finnish CSOs.

› **Impact:** Based on a number of indications and some evidence it is concluded that the programmes have shown signs of a positive impact although this impact has not been systematically monitored, measured or reported. It is concluded that the CSO programmes are likely to have a positive impact in the long-term.

› **Sustainability:** CSOs in the partner countries are in the driver's seat and have a strong sense of ownership of the projects. They have ensured that results are in accordance with the local social and cultural context. However, although some of them are financially sustainable, in many cases long-term funding is still a weak point. It is therefore concluded that overall sustainability of the result of the programme is reasonable.

› **Complementarity, Coordination and Coherence:** The Finnish CSOs and their partners are generally successful in coordinating, networking and sharing information with other development

partners: although there is still scope for improvement. It is therefore concluded that the coordination is generally good. There is generally little or no complementarity among the CSO programmes and other Finnish interventions. Partly this is because there is no mechanism for effective communication in the partner countries where Finnish development interventions are concentrated.

The evaluation has not found any case where CSOs have been able to contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for civil society: mainly because they lack leverage, in part because of their small size. In a few cases, other aid instruments with more leverage have contributed to this objective.

### **Findings, conclusions and recommendations from Component 2**

The specific study of RBM in the 22 CSOs found that they are all in the process of establishing RBM systems that support the achievement of results after the Civil Society Unit of MFA emphasised the importance of RBM. The implementation of RBM is in line with the modality of the partnership programme in that CSOs are allowed to select their own systems, some of which are bottom up and with a potential to establish a culture oriented at results within the Finnish CSOs and their

partners. Aggregation of data from the different M&E systems of the CSOs will be challenging. However, evaluation studies can supplement reporting from the CSOs. A joint programme for evaluation comprising evaluations of projects and programmes, as well as thematic evaluations commissioned by the CSOs as well as by the MFA would ensure more systematic information from evaluations.

It is concluded that MFA has contributed to the groundwork for results-based management of the CSOs but that the aggregation of results at the overall instrument level will be a challenge.

However, systematic evaluations could provide stakeholders with credible information that will enable them to learn the lessons of implementation.

The annual consultations that are a primary mechanism for dialogue between MFA and the CSOs are conducted 3-4 months after the CSOs have prepared their annual plans. It is concluded that the timing of these consultations should be linked to the planning cycles of the CSOs.

## A6.2.8 2012 IOB Study of Civil society, aid and development

**Commissioning agency:** *Policy and Operations Evaluation Department, Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

**Title:** *Civil society, aid and development: a cross-country analysis, IOB Study 2012*

**Author:** *Irene van Staveren and Ellen Webbink, International Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University, Rotterdam*

**Web:** [https://repub.eur.nl/pub/38494/Met-is\\_183380.pdf](https://repub.eur.nl/pub/38494/Met-is_183380.pdf)

### **Purpose of the study**

The current paper ‘Civil Society, Aid and Development’ has been commissioned by the Policy and Operations Evaluation Department (IOB) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs to enable the professional discussions regarding the different pathways for strengthening civil society in developing countries. The study explores the relationships between development aid, civil society and development outcomes. It hopes to contribute to the debate on aid effectiveness, in particular about the less tangible social dimensions of development. The key asset of this study is a rich database of multidimensional social

development indicators, hosted by the Institute of Social Studies. The Indices of Social Development database (ISD) offers a source for development policy research, because it stresses dimensions of development that have hitherto been under-valued and/or were often not measured at all.

The six indices in the database are multidimensional measures for civil society and track social development over time for a large number of countries. The indices allow the analysis of relationships between aid and civil society on the one hand and between civil society and development outcomes on the other hand. Both relationships will be tested in this study, for aid receiving countries for the period 1990-2010.

### **Outline of the study**

Rigorous evaluations of programs and projects executed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are generally scarce and tend to be limited to the analysis of perceived effects at local level. Far less attention is usually devoted to the aggregate effect of development aid on global civil society strength and performance. This is, however, considered of utmost importance given the overarching aim of strengthening the role of civil society in the development process.

The database Indices of Social Development (ISD) hosted by the Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of the Erasmus University Rotterdam offers an opportunity to further analyse the relationships between civil society development and development aid (ODA) over a 20-years period, making use of cross-country data of multidimensional indicators related to civic activism, intergroup cohesion and club membership.

Such analysis requires a careful appraisal of the direction of causality and needs to give due attention to endogeneity issues, including several control variables to account for other relevant factors.

The study provides an overview of the literature regarding the influence of foreign aid on civil society, drawing extensively on theories of social capital, social inclusion and social norms. Hereafter, the empirical approach used for the operationalization of civil society measurement and development outcomes is outlined. Finally, several estimates for the determinants of civil society development strength are specified and used in subsequent estimates of their effects on poverty reduction, democratization and human rights.



The main findings of the study suggest that aid exhibits an ambivalent relation with civil society development. Most profound positive effects are registered for civic action and club membership. Clear interactions with the prevailing rule of law conditions are found, pointing at complementarities between formal and informal institutions. Whereas aid contributes to poverty alleviation, direct effects of civil society parameters on poverty reduction are at best modest. Effects on democratization are difficult to trace. Otherwise, quite significant albeit contradictory effects are found for the effects on human rights, with a positive sign for intergroup cohesion (bridging social capital) but a negative sign for club membership (bonding social capital).

#### **A6.2.9 2012 DANIDA Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue**

**Commissioning agency:** Evaluation Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Denmark on behalf of the Donor Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness. Specifically it was commissioned by three agencies: ADC/Austria, Danida/Denmark and Sida/Sweden

**Title:** Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue, Evaluation Report 2012

**Author:** ITAD and COWI

**Web:** [https://www.oecd.org/derec/denmark/CSO\\_indhold\\_web.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/derec/denmark/CSO_indhold_web.pdf)

#### **Background and purpose**

This evaluation, the ‘Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue’ was initiated by the Donor Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness. The purpose of this evaluation is lesson learning, to help DPs gain a better understanding of how best to support Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the area of policy dialogue.

The findings will also have direct relevance to the CSOs in the three countries and the wider CSO community, as well as the Governments and local authorities interacting with Civil Society representatives. The evaluation focuses on:

- (a) How CSOs engage in policy dialogue and the relevance and effectiveness of their policy work;
- (b) the enabling environment, that is the enablers and barriers to CSO engagement; and
- (c) how different DP support strategies may influence CSOs’ ability to engage in policy dialogue, and how best the DPs might support CSO policy dialogue in the future.

#### **Main findings**

##### **> The enabling environment for CSO policy engagement**

A fundamental question for the evaluation was to identify and analyse the enablers and barriers to CSO engagement in policy dialogue so that lessons can be learned on how CSOs and DPs can adapt to current conditions and influence the enabling environment.

All three countries had provisions within the constitution or in law for freedom of association and expression and facilities for registration of NGOs/CSOs. However, a country’s political leaders (rather than its policies per se) shape the realities of the enabling environment, so the situation facing CSOs may in practice be very different from the legal provisions. However, invited space has been offered for CSO



engagement to varying degrees, and where Governments have a shared interest in the policy (e.g. improving primary education) invited spaces are more likely to be provided. Where invited spaces are limited, CSOs resort to, or actively use claimed spaces such as demonstrations or use of the media.

Registration of CSOs was seen as a particular issue, not just because of the bureaucratic and burdensome requirements, but more because of the often implied threat that if CSOs were perceived as being critical of Government they would not be re-registered. There is evidence that in Bangladesh and Uganda, the Governments' view was shifting from being largely hostile to one where CSOs' contribution to service delivery and policy development was being recognised. The availability of CSO funds is also a relevant factor in the enabling environment. Funding comes mainly from DPs, from CSOs' own resources, with little evidence of funding from Government. DPs are under pressure to demonstrate value for money, which is often difficult in the case of policy engagement. It was concluded DPs do provide a range of measures to improve the enabling environment, including promoting the establishment of invited spaces. However, enhancing the enabling environment remains a high priority for donor support and DP

strategies need to seriously tackle the regulatory environment and support CSOs to claim space in order to enhance the supply-side aspects of policy engagement.

#### › **Relevance of CSOs engagement**

The evaluation of relevance (defined as a CSO's responsiveness to the needs of its constituency and its accountability), found some CSOs working effectively on key national matters, but without a constituency, to examples of more grass roots organisations clearly in touch with their members. Opinions are mixed as to whether CSOs do need a genuine constituency to be effective and whether in some sectors (e.g. climate change) it was not specifically needed. The evaluation found that short-term action (usually in claimed spaces) does not seem to necessarily benefit from being constituency-based, while for long-term engagements where CSOs participate in invited spaces and involve themselves in sustained monitoring of implementation of policy change, they do benefit from having a clearly-identified constituency.

#### › **Analysis of CSO strategies**

CSOs have adopted a wide variety of policy engagement methods, although their advocacy activities are rarely articulated in detailed strategic plans and are often responsive and

ad hoc. Different approaches run sequentially and in parallel which make it difficult to compare approaches in and between different organisations. However, the evaluation found that advocacy and campaigning backed-up by evidence-based research is a well-established feature of CSO strategy.

CSOs when staffed with experienced, professionally qualified experts are capable of producing research material of high quality that is then used effectively in a range of advocacy processes. DPs are, of course, well aware of the potential for enhancing the effectiveness of these approaches. The majority of the research documents used to support advocacy processes, campaigns or to monitor the outcomes of policies or programmes were funded with DP money.

In Uganda, CSOs regularly monitor implementation of government policies. Elsewhere, it is less well developed, although in these cases, the evaluation provided early evidence of CSO-facilitated watchdog groups and other community-based groups taking on this role. But CSOs need to develop this further.

#### › **Use of claimed spaces by CSOs**

This is crucial where Government is unwilling to engage formally and where CSOs purposely

intend to create public interest in their cause. The use of claimed spaces may be part of a deliberate strategy, or may be resorted to where there is no other way. CSOs retain control in these spaces and avoid pitfalls of manipulation or co-option that are features of invited spaces. Lobbying is an important but underrated strategy, which often goes unrecorded. Activism, such as public demonstrations is a visible and familiar form of policy engagement. Importantly spontaneous demonstrations will of course include CS, but may not include CSOs, with social media playing an important role in mobilising instant responses. From the DP perspective, because of the risk and unstructured nature of claimed space work, it is less easy for DPs to support.

#### › **Networks and coalitions**

CSOs have established networks and coalitions in a number of sectors, often benefitting from DP support, which were found to play an effective role in many of the policy process case studies. However, considerable time and effort is required to make these alliances work sustainably over the long term, and less formal networking arrangements may sometimes be more effective.

#### › **Effectiveness and outcomes**

The policy process case studies were purposely selected to analyse effectiveness across diverse policy engagement situations, in terms of different levels of outcomes; process, intermediate, policy change and long-term goals. The case studies provided examples of process outcomes, where CSOs (as in the education sector in Bangladesh) had built up such a level of mutual trust that they worked together with Government as 'partners'. Three of the case studies resulted in policy change outcomes (new legislation). Compliance monitoring was evident, but less well developed.

#### › **CSOs contribution to change**

There are difficulties in measuring policy influence directly, although this evaluation has attempted to assess CSO contribution to outcomes for the nine case studies. However, there is an urgent need DPs to refine their methods and to develop a robust monitoring framework to measure outcomes. An increasingly important role for Community-Based Organisations: Importantly CSOs are facilitating the empowerment of citizens and community-based organisations to play a key role in policy engagement, typically lobbying or demonstrating at local level or acting as policy watchdogs. This shift in approach in CS strategy is seen as vital in ensuring long-term outcomes.

For example, the halting of the destruction of the Mabira Forest in Uganda is attributed, inter alia, to the organised mass protests of CS and community based groups. This has now evolved into a sustainable network of local community groups determined to achieve forestry management reform.

Policy dialogue and influence may run over many decades: In both Mozambique and Uganda CSOs have been working to introduce and in turn ensure proper implementation of improved gender-related legislation. In Mozambique, the process has taken some 15 years and in Uganda some 50 years. In Bangladesh, pressure for a new education policy has been exerted for more than two decades. There are clear lessons here for revisions to the time horizons and accommodation of unpredictability in DP support strategies.

#### › **Development partners support to CSOs**

The assessment covered DP support strategies, channels of support, relevance of support, how well they met the challenges of the operating context and their contribution to planned outcomes. The evaluation, which aimed to review the policy themes holistically, rather than by intervention of the six participating DPs, did not seek to make a direct link between DP support and the assessment of CSO effectiveness. It is

recognised that as DPs have adopted their own approaches to support, some of the statements will apply only to some DPs while others will be have more general application.

All the commissioning DPs endorse the principle of active participation of CS in development and support the Accra Agenda on Action for Aid Effectiveness (2008) pledge of support. With regard to the four key accountabilities of: (1) social, (2) transparency and financial, (3) legal accountability and the rule of law, and (4) political accountability, the evaluation found that DP strategies address all the above to a greater or lesser extent. Despite this common understanding, DP strategies differ according to their own country context, support given by the countries, domestic political climate and priorities.

The country case studies point to a need for a better understanding of CSO needs and despite the language of harmonisation there remains gaps in mutual understanding. While the imperatives of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness have led to the common assumption that CSOs should themselves adapt to the harmonisation process, the evaluation has identified cases where their independence and own sphere of influence may be compromised as a result.

DPs have made some very positive and encouraging changes to their strategies. These include adopting a more pluralistic approach to CSOs, by increasing recognition and support beyond the traditional CSOs to include, for example, activist groups, faith-based groups and professional associations; genuine efforts to introduce and test out different funding modalities, and; recognition of the need to work on both sides of the CS-State engagement processes.

#### **A6.2.10 2011 Norad Evaluation of Results of Development Cooperation through Norwegian NGOs in East Africa**

**Commissioning agency:** NORAD Evaluation Department

**Title:** *Results of Development Cooperation through Norwegian NGOs in East Africa, Evaluation Report 1/2011*

**Author:** Ternström Consulting

**Web:** <https://www.norad.no/en/toolspublications/publications/2011/results-of-development-cooperation-through-norwegian-ngos-in-east-africa/>

This evaluation of the results of development cooperation through Norwegian NGOs in East Africa was commissioned by Norad's evaluation department.

The objective of the evaluation was to document and assess the

- › Results brought about by projects supported by Norwegian NGOs and the
- › Processes behind the changes.

The evaluation consists of a main report and 15 case studies containing supportive information. The case studies are rapid assessments based on document reviews, project visits and key stakeholder interviews, not regular in-depth and rigorous project evaluations.

#### **Major findings**

- › The funding system lacks transparency. Allocated funds need to pass six to nine administrative levels on their way from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the affected people for which they are intended. Different administrative levels budget and report in different ways; some have a programmatic approach, some focus on themes or projects.

- › Field level expenses in the host country were, in general, clear but transparency decreased through the levels. It was not possible to identify how much the different administrative levels cost and such information was.
- › Overall, the projects were knowledgeable about local conditions and had adapted to opportunities and constraints. They were also in line with host government stated priorities and kept local authorities well informed on their activities.
- › Most projects did not use RBM systematically. Basic understanding of the methodology was there and projects had defined overall and more immediate objectives. Documented baseline data was lacking in most projects, as was an appropriately operationalised strategic plan.
- › This implies that any attempt to systematically measure progress towards the intended results failed for lack of a starting point for comparison.
- › Some NGOs understood what Strengthening Civil Society meant but none could give a clear definition of what it comprised. This was the case even when project activities clearly contributed to such strengthening. There were multiple examples where such strengthening took place.
- › The overall field level cost-effectiveness, taking side effects into account, is assessed to be high on average. It varies markedly across the different projects however. There were significant economies of scale. Projects with small target groups had higher, or very much higher, costs per beneficiary. Most projects reached less than 25 % of their target population. This was in general a result of ill-defined target populations or unrealistic targets. The “NGO channel”, did not scale up and/or replicate best practice to the extent possible.

### **Conclusions**

- › The projects’ objectives were in line with Norwegian priorities
- › The projects achieved their intended results to a high extent
- › Preparation and documentation was often of poor quality
- › The system failed to replicate.
- › There are gaps in the system for prioritisation of resources and scale up successful activities

### **A6.2.11 2012 Norad Tracking impact: An explorative study of the wider effects of Norwegian civil society support to countries in the South**

**Commissioning agency:** NORAD

**Title:** *Tracking impact: An explorative study of the wider effects of Norwegian civil society support to countries in the South, March 2012*

**Author:** *Norad’s Civil Society Panel (Agnes Abuom, Kidist Alemu, Ivar Evensmo, Emmy Hafild, Stein-Erik Kruse and Roger C Riddell)*

**Web:** <https://www.norad.no/globalassets/import-2162015-80434-am/www.norad.no-ny/filarkiv/vedlegg-til-publikasjoner/tracking-impact-an-exploratory-study-of-the-wider-effects-of-norwegian-civil-society-support-to-countries-in-the-south.pdf>

### **Background and purpose**

The demand for more information about the wider effects provides the backdrop for creating the Civil Society (CS) Panel. The purpose was to establish a Panel with members from the North and the South – comprising people with in-depth knowledge of and experience working within and with CSOs - that could break new ground in assessing the wider and long-term effects of civil society interventions.

The Panel has performed the following tasks:

- › Synthesised what we know about results based on a rapid review of existing studies and evaluations, and identified gaps in data and information.
- › Explored and discussed the wider effects of Norwegian civil society interventions in the four case-study countries.
- › Reflected on the lessons learnt and made a series of recommendations to Norad and the CSOs on the wider and longer-term impact of CSO interventions.

### **Major findings**

#### **› Improved quality of life for individuals and communities**

Significant and tangible results of projects funded by Norwegian CSOs are documented at the individual and community level. Broadly speaking, the Panel's review of documents and its discussion with key staff confirm that projects are implemented according to the plans drawn up, and the projects' short-term objectives are overwhelmingly achieved.

However, the data are weak in terms of the numbers of people assisted by the projects. It was not possible to judge precisely *how many*

people benefit from the projects, because it has not been a priority for the organisations to gather such data in a robust form. The numbers assisted are not particularly large: for most projects we are talking of a few hundred people (sometimes fewer), not tens of thousands of direct beneficiaries.

#### **› Efficient use of financial resources, but transactions costs are often high**

Norwegian CSOs and their partners are committed to and driven by values of solidarity and justice. The Panel was not able to undertake a rigorous cost-effectiveness assessment. However, from it was found that the majority of Norwegian CSOs and their partners are prudent and use available funds efficiently and resourcefully.

Nonetheless, their transaction costs are often high, partly because of several “administrative layers” between the receipt of funds from Norad by the Norwegian CSO in Norway, passing through the CSO's “country office”, on to the local partner, and then on to the ultimate beneficiaries. It is still an open question whether there are better and more cost-effective alternatives to the current partnership.

#### **› Corruption is a challenge, but not a large systemic problem**

In developing countries, corruption is often a national countrywide problem. An increasing number of specific instances have been brought to light in the activities supported by Norwegian CSOs and their partners. However, the Panel concluded that within the CSOs incidents of corruption remain very low compared to total funds outlaid, with only a small number of serious cases recorded over a number of years.

#### **› Projects reach the poor, but not necessarily the poorest of the poor**

The majority of projects are explicitly targeted to poor regions and poor people. Norwegian CSOs provide support to marginal and hard-to-reach areas and to vulnerable populations, including women and children, people with disabilities, marginalised minorities, members of different ethnic groups and small farmers. Health (including HIV/AIDS) and education are the two prominent sectors; micro-credit and agriculture are targeted by a few specialised Norwegian CSOs. However, the Panel found little evidence to suggest that Norwegian projects are successful in reaching and assisting the very “poorest of the poor”, and few CSOs conduct rigorous socio-economic surveys to pinpoint who are the most vulnerable within the particular communities they work with, and target them.

› **Complex initiatives are riskier and require more time to make a lasting impact**

Broadly speaking, Norwegian CSOs understand and welcome the emphasis now placed on impact and results. However, there is concern about what is often perceived as an over-emphasis placed on *short-term* results. A number of projects funded are attempting to achieve complex processes of change, and some (like stopping female genital mutilation in Ethiopia, addressing domestic violence in Vietnam, or violence prevention/peace-building in western Nepal) challenge long-held and deeply-held beliefs. These projects are unlikely to achieve tangible and sustainable impacts in the short-term, and some may not have an impact for a number of years.

› **Ample evidence of wider effects**

In spite of the lack of robust and easily accessible documentation on wider effects, the Panel was able to find plenty of examples of the wider effects that some projects were having, and this evidence was found in every one of the four case-study countries. Specific examples of wider effects encompassed each of the following areas: (a) replicated, scaled-up and innovative initiatives; (b) the monitoring of government programmes in order to hold the government accountable; and (c) influencing legislation and changing policy processes.

Importantly, too, as noted above, CSOs continue to have a wider impact through the significant contribution they make to the overall provision of especially health and educational services in many countries.

Despite examples of innovation and replication, *the innovative profile was relatively weak*: most projects used well-known approaches and technologies and what was perceived as innovative had often been tried out elsewhere. The nature of impact is broadly consistent with the recent CIVICUS survey, namely that civil society achieves the highest level of impact in the social sector, but less political impact, including influence on policy making.

› **Increased interest in results and impact, but the perspective is narrow**

The Panel confirmed the growing interest in assessing, measuring and documenting results and in shifting the focus from outputs to outcomes. This more intense focus on results is part of a global trend driven by donors, leading to new reporting practices and requirements that have shifted from Norad to Norwegian CSOs and down to local partners. However, these changes have been focused almost exclusively on changes at the project level. CSOs have devoted very little time, and

donors have not particularly urged them, to look beyond the project or beyond the more immediate short-term results.

Very little attention is given to the wider (horizontal or vertical) or long-term effects of projects or to framing decisions and making choices about interventions from a wider perspective.

› **Increased focus on political advocacy**

Most of the larger Norwegian CSOs have articulated a rights-based approach to their development work: they combine service delivery with capacity building and advocacy work, and argue that the three approaches are both complementary and necessary. However, the extent to which the focus on advocacy issues and processes is concretised in practice varies from country to country and from agency to agency.

› **Higher tensions between governments and civil society**

The interaction between governments and civil society determines both the operating space for civil society and its potential for creating a wider impact. The interaction between governments and civil society has become increasingly tense and challenging in all four countries, though there are sharp and important



differences between the countries in relation to what they are able to do and how they can do it.

› **Weak coordination and aid effectiveness**

The issue of enhanced effectiveness comprises a number of different dimensions. The overall coordination between international and national CSOs and their integration in national frameworks is variable, but generally weak. Norwegian embassies meet with Norwegian CSOs for information sharing, but do not play any active role in strategic planning and coordination. Some embassies (such as in Nepal) appear to be keener on trying to create synergy and consistency between their activities, local CSOs and the activities of Norwegian CSOs funded by Norad, without challenging the independent decisions made by individual Norwegian CSOs. Others are far less pro-active.

› **The value of international partnerships**

The belief that partnerships with Norwegian CSOs are highly appreciated. The relationships are described as flexible and friendly and they are reinforced by the manner in which Norad historically has supported them: predictably and within a long-term framework. Most southern CSOs we met, clearly valued their relationship with Norwegian CSOs for reasons other than access to financial resources. The additional

benefits include: (a) access to support for enhancing skills and building their own capacity; (b) opportunities for international exposure, networking and dialogue; (c) access to specific competencies and information; (d) bonds of solidarity; (e) moral and political support; and (f) the benefits of stability that long-term and durable partnerships bring. However, it is also widely acknowledged that the nature of the partnership, built as it is on a flow of funds from North to South, results in a partnership under-pinned by a degree of dependence and sometimes overdependence that necessarily colours the relationship.

› **Collaboration with existing local CSOs/CBOs**

Most partnerships are based on “like-mindedness” – meaning that Norwegian CSOs select partners based on shared thematic interests and religious/ideological frameworks and beliefs, although this does not restrict or limit their approach to development.

› **Strengthened capacities, but for what purpose?**

Recent years have seen not only an increasing focus on capacity building, but more funds channelled into capacity building efforts. This has helped individual organisations respond better to the growing demands placed on them by Norwegian CSOs and by Norad in terms of specifying their plans more clearly and

responding to new reporting requirements. Indeed, most support for capacity development has been focused on building capacity to respond better to these new and more taxing demands. Whether it has helped strengthen their overall capacity in parts of civil society are included, while various traditional and more informal organisations are excluded.

› **The lack of a strategic framework for country support**

There is no strategic framework for Norwegian civil society support at country level – nor any overall assessment of needs and opportunities as a basis for making strategic choices and securing optimal impact. The civil society portfolio in each country is highly fragmented between the respective Norwegian CSOs and between the CSOs and the embassies, as already discussed. The whole is the sum of all the independent and often isolated parts.

› **The challenges of “strengthening civil society”**

To the extent that Norwegian CSOs have helped to build the capacities of local organisations, they have contributed to a “strengthening of civil society”. However, the Panel found that few if any Norwegian CSOs undertake their capacity building (or in some cases their institutional strengthening) efforts within the context of contributing to a broader aim of “strengthening



civil society”. At best, it could be argued that they hope that by strengthening their particular local partners they contribute to the wider objective.

› **CSOs organisationally stronger, but financial sustainability still weak**

Norad’s funding arrangements compare favourably with other donor programmes in that a larger share of funding to Norwegian CSOs is provided on a multi-annual basis, and this, in turn, allows Norwegian CSOs to commit funds to local partners for periods longer than a year.

### **A6.2.12 2015 DFID Review of Different Funding Mechanisms for Supporting Civil Society**

**Commissioning agency:** *Department for International Development, Inclusive Societies Department*

**Title:** *Value for Money. Review of Different Funding Mechanisms for Supporting Civil Society Final Report, 2015*

**Author:** *Coffey International Development*

**Web:** <http://www.gsdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/IDEVFARR15017GB-Final-Report-VFM-Review.pdf>

#### **Background and purpose**

Coffey International was contracted by the Department for International Development (DFID) Inclusive Societies Department (ISD) to identify the different types of funding mechanisms that donors use to fund Civil Society Organisations and learning the extent to which there is evidence that these different types of funding mechanisms represent good Value for Money (VfM).

The recommendations are not presented in the report given the narrow scope of the review and its dependency on limited documentary evidence. Instead, methods that appear to have successfully contributed to the VfM assessment

of different funding mechanisms have been identified in addition to the relative advantages and disadvantages of these mechanisms.

#### **Findings**

› The review identified six different arrangements by which donors typically provide funding: unrestricted (core) funding; project / restricted funding (single donor); project / restricted funding (multi donor or ‘pooled funding’)’ matched funding; and commercial contracts. None of the secondary evidence across the six different funding arrangements that was identified provided the necessary depth of analysis to robustly establish the VfM of these arrangements.

- › The review found some broadly generalizable strengths and weaknesses of different funding arrangements that are presented in the table to the right.
- › It is important to note that even if donors select the ‘optimal’ funding arrangement in light of their respective needs and objectives; this does not necessarily mean that it will deliver good VfM in light of other influencing factors and context. Funding arrangements may work better in different locations depending on the baseline presence, activity and abilities of the CSOs they are engaging with. One mechanism might be more suitable when the objective is building capacity from a low base, whereas another might be better for disbursing funds to a well-established, well-functioning civil society sector.
- › The overarching opinion presented in this review is that the ways in which VfM of specific funding mechanisms are assessed should be informed by principles of proportionality and the specific mechanism’s risk profile relating to its value, operating environment and objectives. The range of experiences of individual funding mechanisms highlights the multiple options by which VfM could be assessed. The review cannot offer conclusive guidance as what methods are most appropriate for each type of funding arrangement since it appears

**TABLE A6.1 / STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF DIFFERENT FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS**

Funding arrangement	Relative VfM strengths for donors	Relative VfM weaknesses for donors
Unrestricted (core) funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Allow sector leaders to respond to their diagnosed strategic priorities</li> <li>› Supports relationship between donors and CSOs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Time and resource intensive for donor staff</li> <li>› Limited to known organisations with longer-term donor relationship</li> </ul>
Project/restricted funding – single donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ensures donor control of how funding is used and with what results</li> <li>› Stronger levels of results attribution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Use of outsourced challenge funds are perceived as resource intensive and costly</li> </ul>
Project/restricted funding – multi-donor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Ensures donor control of how funding is used and with what results</li> <li>› Reduces transaction costs/avoids duplication for donors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Different donor priorities and capacities to manage funding</li> <li>› Multi donor nature affects decision-making (cedes control of oversight)</li> </ul>
Matched funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Leverage other financial resources and knowledge networks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Scale of results may be larger, but does not necessarily affect quality</li> </ul>
Payment by results funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Outsources risk to contracted organisations</li> <li>› Ensures donor control of how funding is used and with what results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Potentially skew results by lowering levels of ambition</li> <li>› Does not encourage delivery of results that are not predictable (e.g. innovation, advocacy)</li> </ul>
Commercial contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Suppliers act as agents, or extension of donors, increasing reach</li> <li>› Responds to defined. Contextual needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>› Can be flexible</li> <li>› Not always subject against strategic objectives</li> </ul>

that a mix of options are relevant. Some of the most helpful approaches include VfM audits, evidencing different funding options (e.g. options analysis) and explicitly explaining and examining the role of funding mechanisms as part of Theories of Change and final assessments.

### **A6.2.13 2015 EBA study: Rethinking Civil Society and Support for Democracy**

**Commissioning agency:** *Expertgruppen för bistandsanalys (EBA), Sweden*

**Title:** *Rethinking Civil Society and Support for Democracy. EBA Report 01/2015*

**Author:** *Richard Youngs*

**Web:** [http://eba.se/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Rapport-2015-01-med-framsida\\_f%C3%B6r\\_web.pdf](http://eba.se/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Rapport-2015-01-med-framsida_f%C3%B6r_web.pdf)

#### **The challenge**

The challenge is that civil society is changing. Recent years have witnessed the emergence of new social movements, engaged in innovative types of protest. Analysts and activists debate how far the patterns of civil society activity are indeed changing. Moreover, they express different views on whether these new social and protest movements are good or bad for democracy. At the same time, governments

around the world are making it more difficult for civil society organisations to function and to receive funding.

#### **Purpose of the report**

In this context, donors need to rethink the way they support civil society in developing states. They can take advantage of new opportunities presented by new civic movements; but also need to temper the downsides of these protest movements and think about how to push back against the new restrictions being placed on nongovernmental organisations (NGOs).

This report contains an assessment of how donors should respond. It does not consider all elements of civil society support, but rather those elements most directly related to fostering democratic reforms. An overview of the way that civil society is changing is presented. It points to the way that political protest has become driven by loosely organised social movements. It highlights the extent to which such activism is focused on a changing set of issues, and how it differs from more 'traditional' forms of civic organisation.

The report stresses how this embodies a more active citizenship. It looks at the related analytical debates about the relationship between democracy and these new civil society

trends – including the way that this differs across regions. It points out that evolving forms of civic organisation show great advantages and the potential to contribute to democratic deepening – but that they also exhibit clear shortcomings.

The challenge will be to harness their positive potential, while designing strategies that can mitigate their less welcome features. The report then examines whether donors are beginning to react to the new challenges in an effective way. It looks at European Union (EU) programmes as an illustrative example of new thinking. It uncovers several new EU initiatives that do seek to reflect the changing shape of global protests and civil society. It also stresses, however, that in more general terms donors need to do a lot more to respond to the scale of change afoot within civil society movements across different regions.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **> New actors and bridge-building actors:**

Sweden and other donors should use a balanced approach vis-a-vis civil society support and engage with a broad range of civil society actors. Donors will need to embrace two perspectives on the role of civil society at the same time, i.e. to combine support for more confrontational social movements representing

a check against the state, with support for actors that have a bridge-building function in relation to state authorities.

› **New actors and new models?** Donors need to experiment with new civil society actors, and to adopt an explorative approach in relation to the established understanding of civil society and different models of democracy. When engaging with a broader spectrum of actors, including new protest movements and customary organisations, there is a need for donors to review and reflect upon what constitutes ‘good democracy’, and the role to be played by these different groups, including their potential for strengthening democratic development. Rather than only focusing on tactical questions on how and where to support, donors will need to explore and consider the possibilities of different models of democracy.

› **Re-opening closing spaces:** In recent years, over 50 regimes have introduced legal restrictions on support for civil society organisations. More subtle restrictive techniques include closing civil society organisations on technical grounds. Donors should take the challenge of these ‘closing spaces’ seriously and need to adopt a more systematic and better organised strategy for re-opening the narrowing space that now restricts civil society in many

countries. Dealing with the backlash must be part of a broader strategy, but it should not be overly defensive since that may engender counter-productive repression. It is important for donors to respond to the changes in a political way, and to ensure coherence between civil society support and other aspects of foreign policies. Innovative measures and flexible funding mechanisms are also important in meeting and circumventing the backlash.

› **Support for information and communications technology:** Donors need a more balanced and nuanced approach to supporting information and communications technology (ICT) within civil society, if this is to fulfil its pro-democracy potential. A general critique of European support is that it is too oriented to training individuals, and not sufficiently focused on the ‘enabling environment’ for ICT to have a political impact.

› **Linking civil society, beyond protest:** Sweden and other donors should do far more to link together civil society actors across borders, preferably in cooperation with non-traditional democratic donors. The purpose would be to encourage mutual learning between social movements that have participated in major protests in recent years, but also search for positive alternatives beyond simply protesting.

Such an initiative would respond to the need for donors to move from focusing on capacity building for individual organisations to ensuring that civil society activities channel into representative bodies and real change.

#### **A6.2.14 2013 INTRAC Support to Civil Society. Emerging Evaluation Lessons**

**Commissioning agency:** *Network on Development Evaluation of the OECD Development Assistance Committee (DAC)*

**Title:** *Support to Civil Society, Emerging Evaluation Lessons. Evaluation Insights No 8, 2013*

**Author:** *International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC)*

**Web:** <https://www.oecd.org/dac/evaluation/Evaluation%20Insight%20Civil%20Society%20FINAL%20for%20print%20and%20WEB%2020131004.pdf>

#### **Background and purpose of report**

A number of civil society policies have been reviewed to advance the aid effectiveness agenda and respond to changes in the evolution of civil society in developing countries. Several evaluations and studies have been conducted as part of this process that have explored the following key questions:

- › How effective have CSOs been in contributing to development outcomes?
- › How can civil society contribute to changes in government policies and practices that benefit the poor and marginalised?
- › How can support to CSOs be most (cost) effectively channelled?

This Insight provides a summary of current trends in support to civil society, synthesises emerging lessons from recent research and evaluations on civil society support, and highlights some implications for policy makers and civil society partners.

#### › **Support to civil society – trends in funding**

Funding support to civil society in developed and developing countries has steadily increased in the last decade through three main channels - Official Development Assistance (ODA) to and through CSOs, public donations to Northern CSOs, and the entry into the sector of major new corporate philanthropic donors. DAC attributes most of the growth in ODA to CSOs to an increase in earmarked funding for service delivery e.g. in health, education and water and sanitation, to help meet the MDGs. Just over two-thirds of DAC members allocated more than 20% of their bilateral funding to or through CSOs in 2011 and just more than a fifth allocated 4% or less.

Northern CSOs continue to be a preferred channel for ODA support to civil society in developing countries, but there is evidence this may be on the decline. In 2009, DAC members provided around five times more aid to CSOs based in their countries than to international and local CSOs in developing countries. In 2011 this had been reduced to twice as much.

#### › **Roles of civil society in development cooperation**

Support to a strong, independent civil society in developing countries is justified in different ways in donor civil society policies and strategies:

- a) As development and/or humanitarian actors directly contributing to development or humanitarian outcomes e.g. in delivering services;
- b) As change agents indirectly contributing to development or humanitarian outcomes by supporting informed and active citizens to make governments more effective and accountable, to stimulate public debate, influence laws, and promote democratic processes, accountability and good governance;

- c) As a crucial component of the well-being of society with intrinsic merit, for example, by building more connected communities and enhancing social inclusion.

More than half of DAC members' report their first reason for supporting CSOs to implement aid programmes linked to service delivery. Evaluations note that there is often a tension between these different roles for civil society support.

#### › **Demonstrating CSO impact**

There is ample evidence that CSOs play a key role in reducing poverty, marginalisation and vulnerability. CSO projects typically provide support to hard-to-reach areas and vulnerable populations, including women and children and marginalised minorities. The majority of CSO activities are at project or programme level. CSOs tend to focus on the immediate effects of their activities and evidence points to a shortfall in CSO capacity to monitor results at outcome and impact level.

Thus, while there is considerable evidence of CSO activities delivering results at micro- and meso- levels, there is less systematic evidence on the contribution of CSOs to longer-term development outcomes, or their wider impact through for example replication or contribution to policy or practice change.

### › **Engagement in policy processes**

Northern and Southern CSOs are increasingly involved in advocacy work in order to scale-up impact by influencing policies and practices or improving government services that affect the poor and marginalised. There are many examples of fruitful North/South collaborations on advocacy, though studies, which suggest that more could still be done to ensure that these are equal partnerships in which southern CSOs have their own voice in international debates rather than being instrumentalised in northern-led campaigns.

Civil society is often seen to play an important role in strengthening democratic processes and good governance. There is considerable evidence of CSOs supporting citizen participation in local governance and contributing to public debate on national issues such as corruption.

A number of evaluations highlight the need for donors to do more to support an enabling environment for CSOs e.g. by reminding signatory governments of their responsibility to international agreement such as the Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation.

Recent reviews have highlighted some of the limitations in measuring the impact of CSO engagement in policy processes. While there is evidence of CSO advocacy contributing to new laws or policies, it is not always possible to directly attribute these changes to the work of the CSOs, and to document to what extent these changes have resulted in improvements in the lives of ordinary people.

### › **The distinctive contribution of northern CSOs**

Most donors continue to rely on domestic CSOs as a major channel for providing support to southern CSOs. They recognise their domestic role in public fundraising, development education, and public awareness work on development issues. Partnerships between northern and southern CSOs are seen as an effective means of helping to strengthen CSO capacity in developing countries and achieving development outcomes. Horizontal partnerships contribute to skills transfer and, as they are based not only on a resource transfer but a common identity or interest, offer potentially interesting ways of strengthening global civil society links into the future.

Civil society evaluations have highlighted in recent years that southern CSOs value, in their relationships with northern CSOs, their capacity development support, international networking,

access to specific technical competencies, and the long-term stability that durable partnerships bring. At the same time, evaluations consistently highlight the need for greater rigour in assessing and reporting the “added value” of these activities and, in particular, of capacity development efforts. Northern CSO capacity development activities too often focus on helping partners comply better with their own or donor reporting requirements than developing their organisational capacities more broadly.

It has also been noted that the tendency for northern CSOs to select partners who share their thematic focus and/or religious/ideological frameworks and beliefs can inadvertently exclude traditional and more informal organisations.

### › **Direct funding of southern CSOs**

Support to civil society in developing countries through ODA is increasingly decentralised and channelled through donor country offices. A number of evaluations have suggested that donor support to civil society in the South through direct funding of southern CSOs, northern CSOs, and bilateral or sector programmes, should be better coordinated at country level to identify programme synergies and share learning.



There is a need for more research on multi donor funds to look at how their different practices and approaches have been more or less successful in managing some of these tensions and in supporting the development and capacity strengthening of a wide range of civil society actors.

### **A6.2.15 2015 INTRAC, Multi-Donor Funds for Civil Society: Choices and Dilemmas**

**Commissioning agency:** INTRAC

**Title:** *Multi-Donor Funds for Civil Society: Choices and Dilemmas, 2015 Report*

**Author:** Cowan Coventry and Clare Moberly

**Web:** [https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SOCS2015\\_ESSAY4\\_MultiDonorFundsForCivilSociety.pdf](https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/SOCS2015_ESSAY4_MultiDonorFundsForCivilSociety.pdf)

#### **Background**

This paper is based on a study conducted by INTRAC ([www.intrac.org](http://www.intrac.org)) for Danida, Denmark's development agency, in 2014 on multi donor funds, and a subsequent discussion paper produced for Fagligt Fokus, an initiative of the NGO Forum, Denmark.

#### **Findings**

##### **› Official aid to civil society is moving to the global south**

Official aid support to civil society in both global north and global south countries has steadily increased in the last decade. Global north CSOs continue to be a preferred channel for ODA support to civil society in global south countries, but there is evidence this is in decline.

##### **› Joint donor funds for civil society have increased**

Over the last decade, there has been growing interest among donors, in line with the Aid Effectiveness Agenda, to channel support to CSOs in countries of the global south through MDFs. This is driven by a desire to harmonise approaches, reach out to more CSOs MDFs can take a variety of forms, depending on how explicit the aim of national ownership is, ranging from donor-controlled funds through to government-aligned funds and independent foundations.

##### **› There may be constraints on the future growth of MDFs**

There are no reliable figures on the proportion of ODA that is being channelled through MDFs in developing countries. There was clearly an

increase in these funds over the last decade, but fewer have been set up recently, and it is difficult to track whether the proportion of funding being channelled to them is continuing to grow.

While donors have both a principled and strong pragmatic interest in supporting MDFs as a conduit for funding civil society, there may be some constraints on their future growth. Setting up and managing joint donor funds involves high initial transaction costs.

There remains little primary research on what the long-term effect of MDFs have been on civil society development in the countries where they have been operating. The review that INTRAC conducted for DANIDA in 2014 showed that experiences vary. For example, in some countries, funds have clearly democratised funding, extending it out beyond capital cities and to a much wider group of CSOs than had access previously. In other cases, the high entry requirements of funds have benefited more established and elite CSOs and have narrowed funding opportunities. There is a tendency within civil society funds to look for and fund the parts of civil society that they recognise: professionalised development and advocacy CSOs.



› **Capacity development – are we getting the focus right?**

Most funds offer capacity development support in addition to funding. There are a number of challenges around what this support focuses on and how it is delivered. These are not necessarily unique to MDFs, but can be exacerbated because of their scale and size.

The support offered to grantees by MDFs is most frequently focused on the ‘compliance needs’ of donors, in terms of applying project cycles and financial management, or on the basics of organisational systems and procedures. Yet there are other aspects of capacity that may be equally, if not more, important in building effective CSOs, such as leadership, passion, integrity and the ability to connect genuinely with and support the voice of communities. There is often little space in civil society funds for thinking more innovatively about the content of capacity development.

**A6.2.16 2017 Danish Support to Civil Society: A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to Demonstrate Results**

**Commissioning Agency:** *Evaluation Department, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Danida*

**Title:** *Danish Support to Civil Society: A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework to Demonstrate Results, 2017 Evaluation Report*

**Author:** *Intrac and Tana Copenhagen*

**Web:** [http://um.dk/en/danida-en/results/eval/Eval\\_reports/publicationdisplaypage/?publicationID=A3F95711-3878-43E0-B935-FD5A23A98B12](http://um.dk/en/danida-en/results/eval/Eval_reports/publicationdisplaypage/?publicationID=A3F95711-3878-43E0-B935-FD5A23A98B12)

This evaluation report synthesizes recommendations from an evaluation process initiated as a follow-up to the Evaluation of Danish Support to Civil Society, published in 2013.

The primary objective of the process was to follow-up on the recommendations from the 2013 evaluation, specifically addressing the need for documenting the results of Danish support to civil society in developing countries. As such, the evaluation process has focused on facilitating, documenting and sharing learning through on how the effectiveness of Danish support can be better monitored, evaluated

and reported on, thereby providing a more robust and systematic basis for assessing the results of Danish support to civil society in developing countries.

The evaluation process included three learning workshops with Danish CSOs to share learning on how to monitor and evaluate on results of civil society support. Moreover, the evaluation produced seven short papers on how to monitor and evaluate Danish CSO contributions to the overall strategic goals of Danish civil society support as outlined in strategies and policies. The synthesis report summarizes the learning from the process and provides recommendations on how the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as CSO partners effectively can document results of civil society support across the entire portfolio of engagements.

The evaluation finds that Danish CSOs have made good progress in recent years in improving their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks and the quality of their results reporting. The evaluation highlighted the following areas for future learning and improvement:

› **Partnership:** Ensure partnership objectives and indicators are included in results frameworks where appropriate; monitor and track changes in the partnership relationship; share learning on innovation in partnership from the issues identified in the evaluation; and explore how their added value in the relationship contributes to end results.

› **Advocacy:** Describe and report on advocacy changes in results frameworks in terms of the stages of the policy cycle; specify the contribution Danish CSOs and/or their partners to advocacy achievements; and demonstrate how change at the level of organisations, communities or target groups contributes to wider systemic change.

› **Capacity development:** Adopt a systematic approach to capacity development and the evaluation of its outcomes, outputs and activities; document feedback of different stakeholders about changes achieved; trace impact of individual capacity change on organisations; explore systemic impact by monitoring the evolution of network capacity; and through multi-stakeholder learning on broader social change.

The evaluation highlights the need for an ongoing context and/or conflict analysis; regular review of theory/ies of change to assess risk and adapt M&E frameworks; the use of disaggregated indicators; strong investment in the skills and capacities of national staff and partners in M&E; and the need to explore new ways of collecting and triangulating data where access is difficult including ensuring that data gathering is quick, safe and practical.

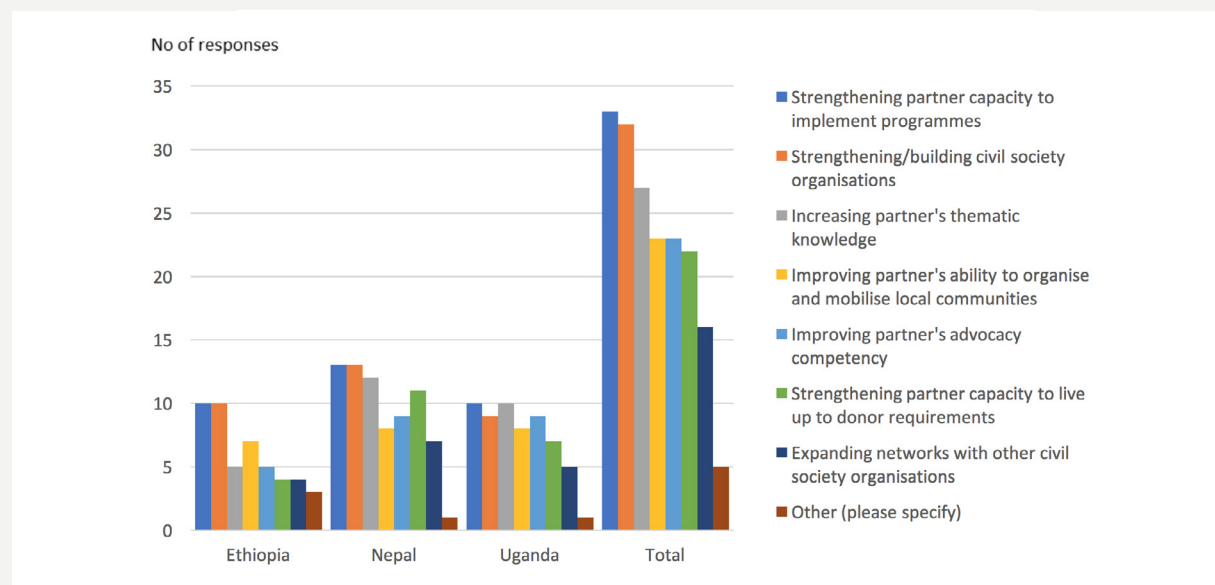
# Annex 7: Survey to Norwegian CSOs with programmes in case countries

An internet-based survey was sent to all Norwegian CSOs with programmes in case countries in 2013 or later. The survey was sent to 47 individuals from 45 different CSOs<sup>60</sup> that had been identified by the organisations' Norad contact persons as having good knowledge about their respective organisation's local partners in one or more of the case countries. The total response rate was 90 per cent, four organisations did not answer the survey. 61% of respondents were female, 75% were over 40 years old. 46 % of the respondents had been working in the organisation for more than ten years, 29% between 5 to 10 years; 46 % were programme officers, advisors or similar, 52 % of the respondents had a managerial position (23% were directors).

12 of the respondents answered the questions about partners in Ethiopia, 16 about partners in Nepal and 14 about partners in Uganda.

<sup>60</sup> One organisation fitted the criteria but did not respond to our request about participation in the survey.

**FIGURE 1:** WHAT IS THE MAIN PURPOSE OF YOUR SUPPORT TO YOUR PARTNERS IN THE COUNTRY? (MARK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)



## A7.1 OBJECTIVE

Asked about the purpose of the support to partners, the most frequent answers were strengthening partner capacity to implement programmes (33), closely followed by

strengthening or building civil society organisations (32) and increasing partners' thematic knowledge (27). 22 respondents stated that a main objective was to strengthen partners to live up to donor requirements.<sup>61</sup>

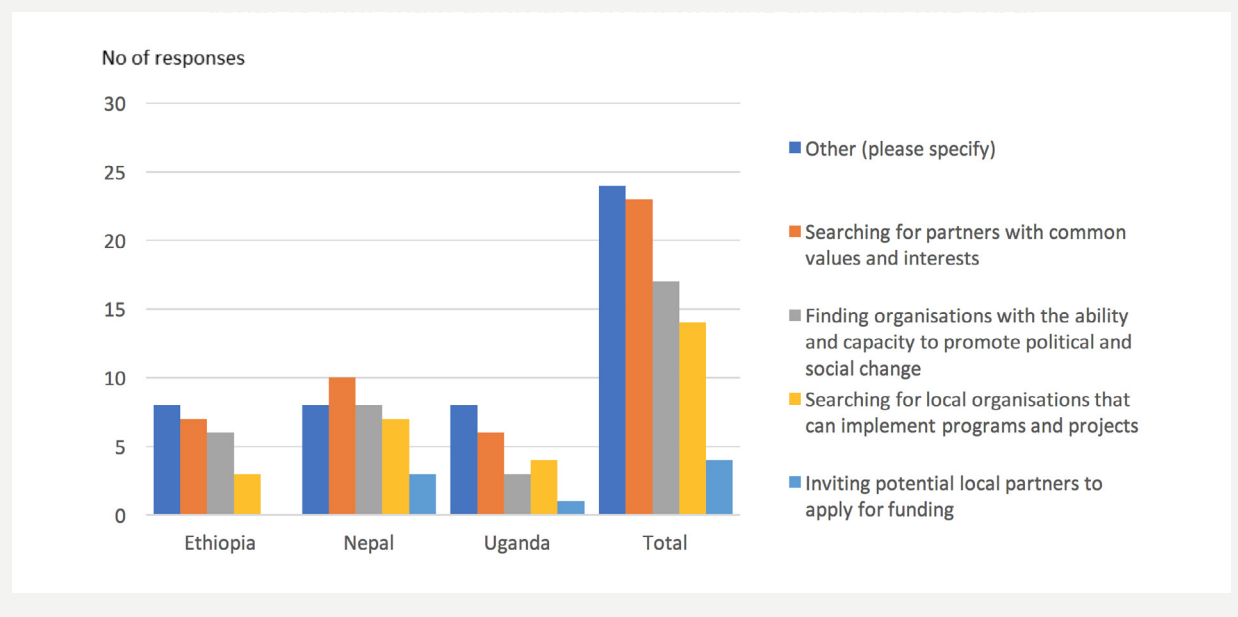
<sup>61</sup> The respondents were asked to mark all relevant options.

## A7.2 PARTNER SELECTION

The question asking about the Norwegian CSOs' main approaches for identifying and selecting partners received the following distribution of answers (see figure 2).

Judging by the number of respondents who marked the "Other" option, the predefined answers did not capture the approaches used very well. Among explanations of what other approaches that were used, the predominant one is basically that they do not select partners. The majority state that they have one or a few long-term partners, that their local partner selects implementing partners or that partners are not selected but given because they are affiliated to a network, interest organisation or organisation.

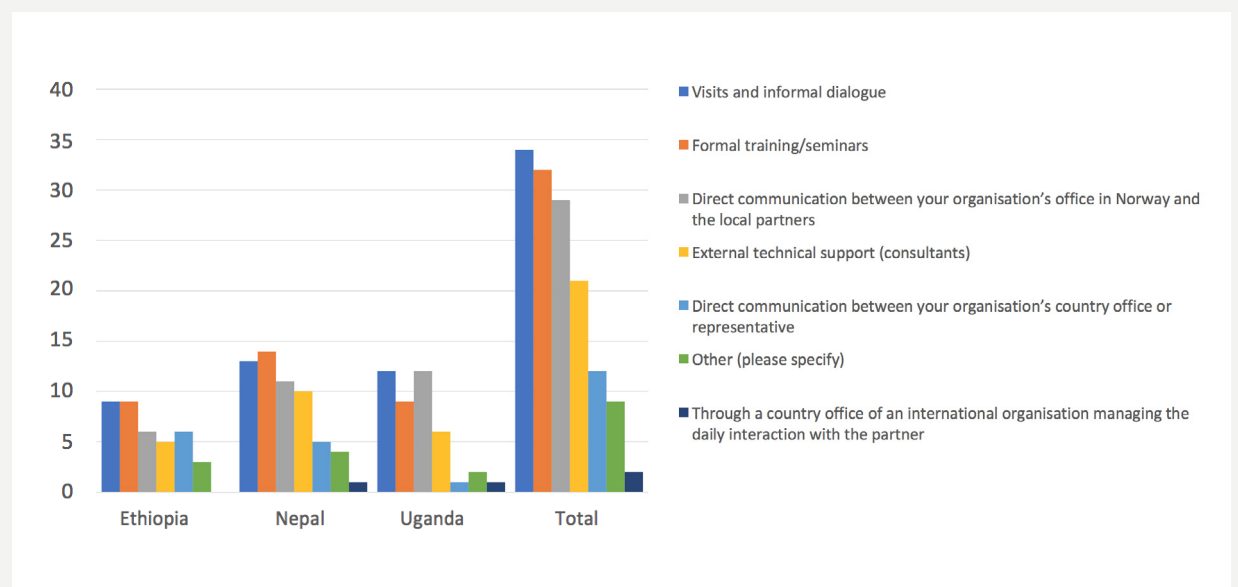
**FIGURE 2:** WHAT IS YOUR MAIN APPROACH TO IDENTIFYING AND SELECTING LOCAL PARTNERS IN THE COUNTRY? (MARK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)



### A7.3 MEANS OF SUPPORT

The main quoted answer is visits and informal dialogue. This differs from the findings from case partnerships, which have a higher representation of Norwegian CSOs that work via large, multinational organisations. In the survey the smaller organisations are also included.

**FIGURE 3: WHAT ARE THE MAIN INSTRUMENTS AND CHANNELS USED FOR SUPPORTING YOUR PARTNERS IN THE COUNTRY BEYOND DIRECT FINANCIAL SUPPORT? (MARK ALL RELEVANT OPTIONS)**

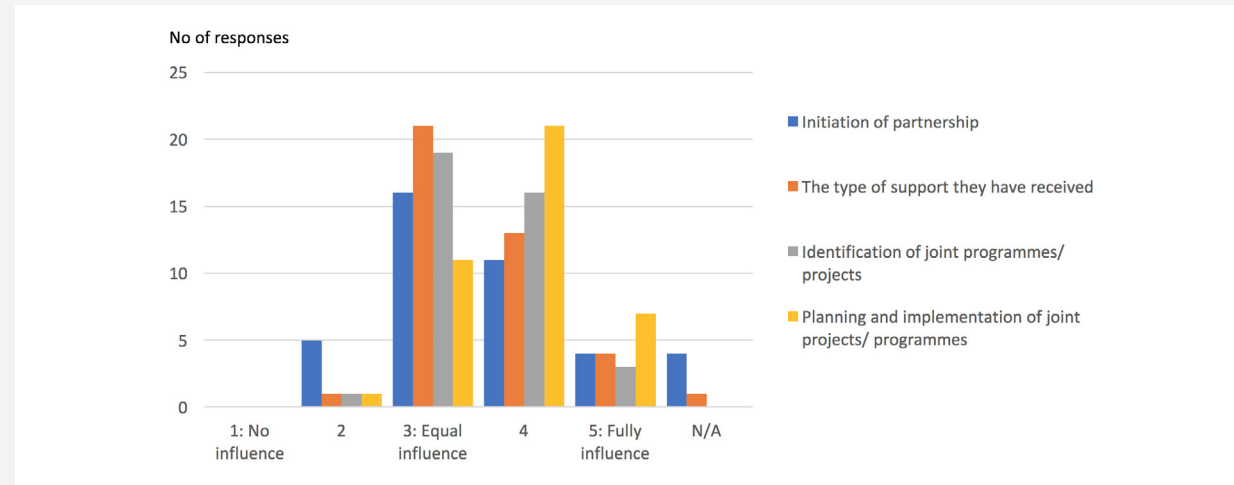


#### A7.4 PARTNER ORGANISATION'S INFLUENCE

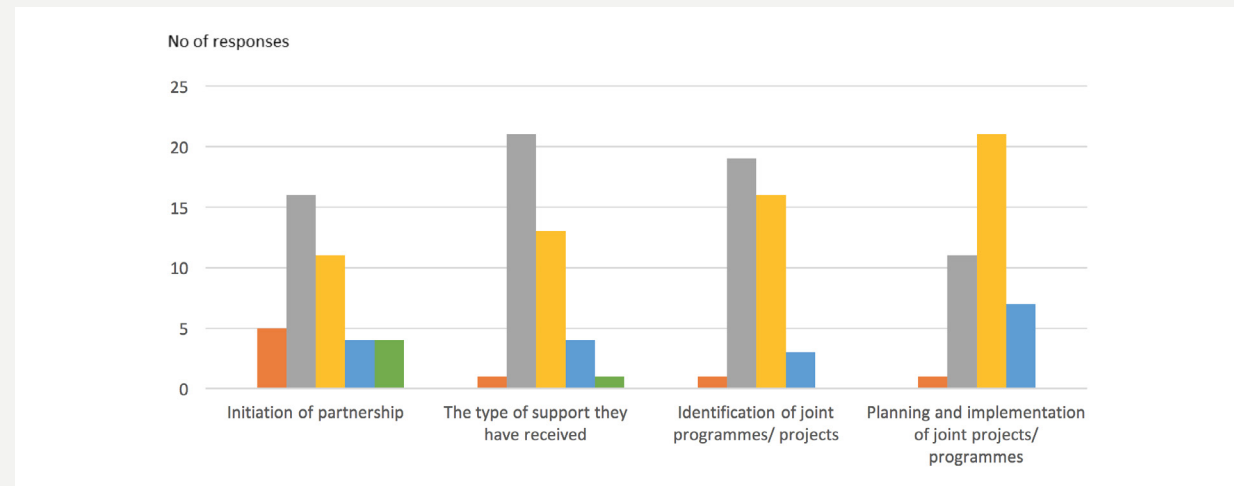
The extent of partner influence over different aspects is limited. The respondents were asked to what extent partner organisations had influenced initiation of the partnership, the type of support received, identification of joint programmes, and planning and implementation of joint programmes. They were asked to rate this on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 was defined as No influence from partner organisation, 3 as Equal influence by Norwegian and partner organisations and 5 as Fully influenced by partner organisation. There were no major differences between countries. The first table is sorted on the extent of partner influence. It shows that the most common response was a 3 (equal influence) or 4 (between equal and full influence), indicating that the respondents think that partners' influence is quite large.

The second table shows the percentage distribution of different degrees of influence over the various aspects of partnership. From this table we see that the respondents think partners have most influence over planning and implementation, followed by identification of joint programmes (larger blue and purple areas).

**FIGURE 4: TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOUR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS HAVE INFLUENCED?**



**FIGURE 5: TO WHAT EXTENT WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOUR PARTNER ORGANISATIONS HAVE INFLUENCED?**



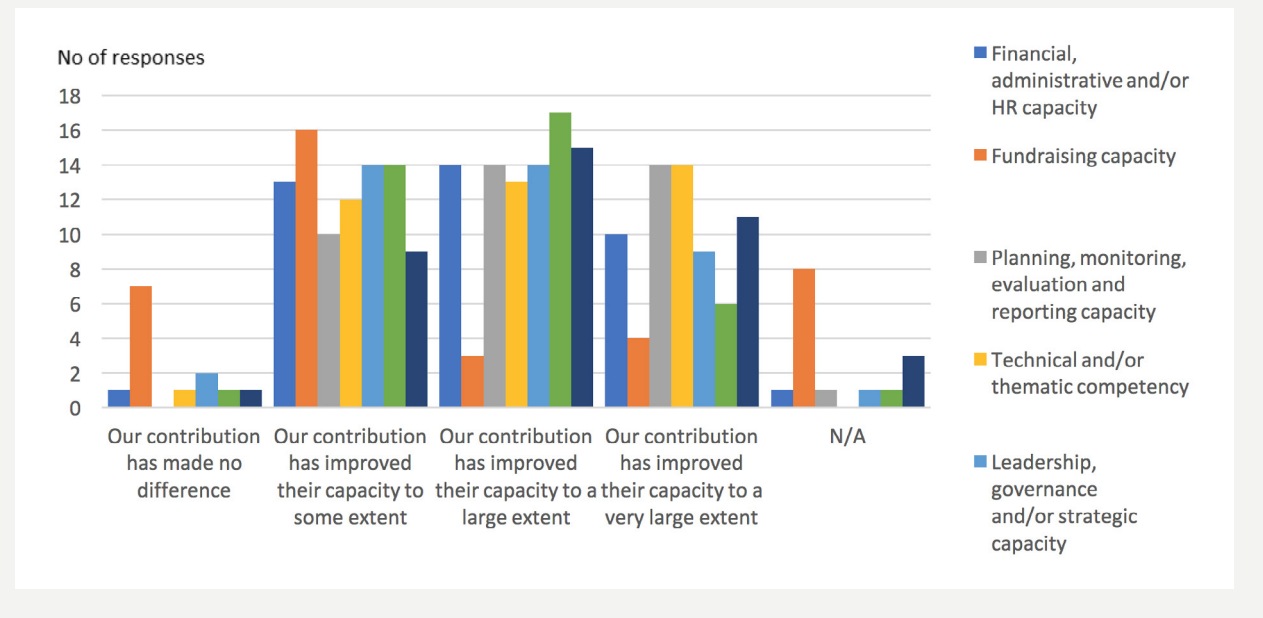
## A7.5 EFFECTS ON ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

The question asking to what extent the Norwegian CSO's support to local partners has resulted in improving their organisational capacity in terms of various aspects received the following comment from one of the respondents:

*“Knowledge transfer from Norway to Nepal is not everything. A lot of the capacity that has been built over the years is due to trust, encouragement and nurturing of a gradual capacity growth in all of the above-mentioned areas. A critical factor has been the understanding that capacities are built step by step, that taking on ever greater challenges is necessary to improve capacities, and that trying and failing is one of the most educational parts of any form of learning.”<sup>62</sup>*

The total influence, across the three countries, is assessed by the Norwegian CSO respondents as rather high (see figure 6).

**FIGURE 6:** TO WHAT EXTENT HAS YOUR SUPPORT TO YOUR LOCAL PARTNERS RESULTED IN IMPROVING THEIR ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY?

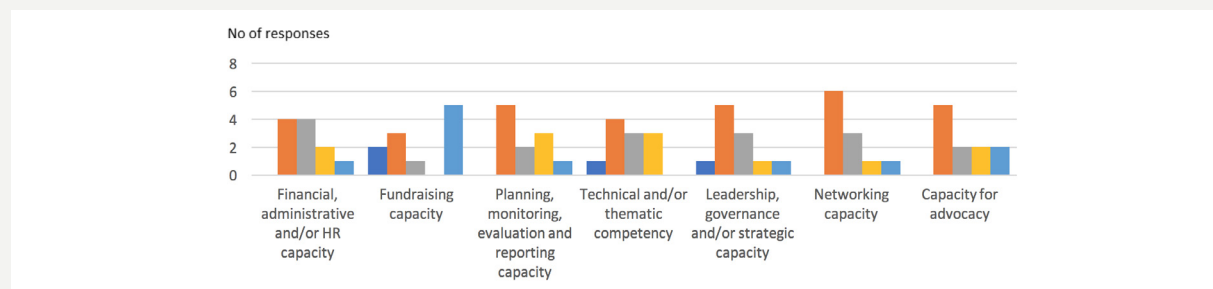


<sup>62</sup> Comment to the question asking: To what extent has your support to your local partners resulted in improving their organisational capacity?

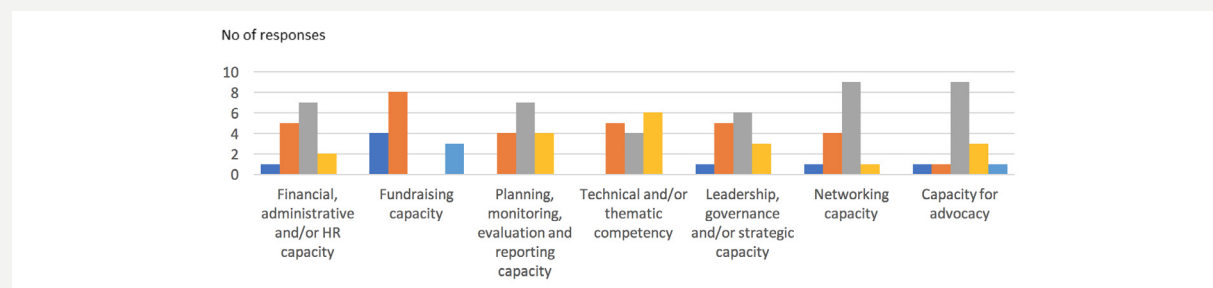


The tables below show the responses to the same question (To what extent has your support to your local partners resulted in improving their organisational capacity?) for each country, illustrating that there is some variation in answers across countries:

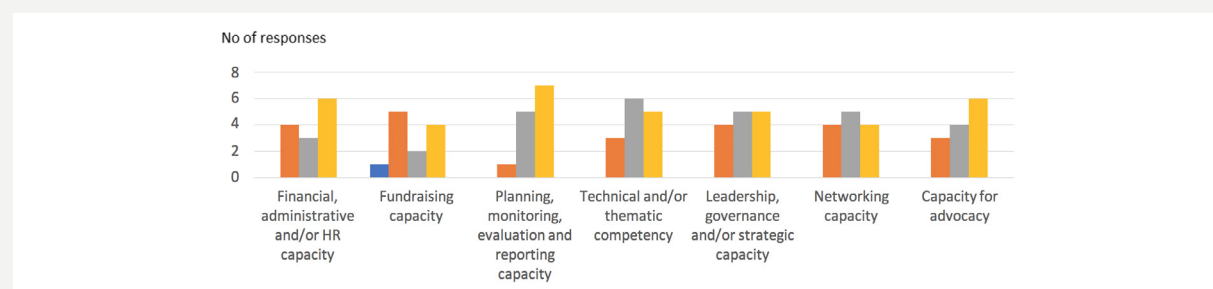
**FIGURE 7: ETHIOPIA**



**FIGURE 8: NEPAL**



**FIGURE 9: UGANDA**



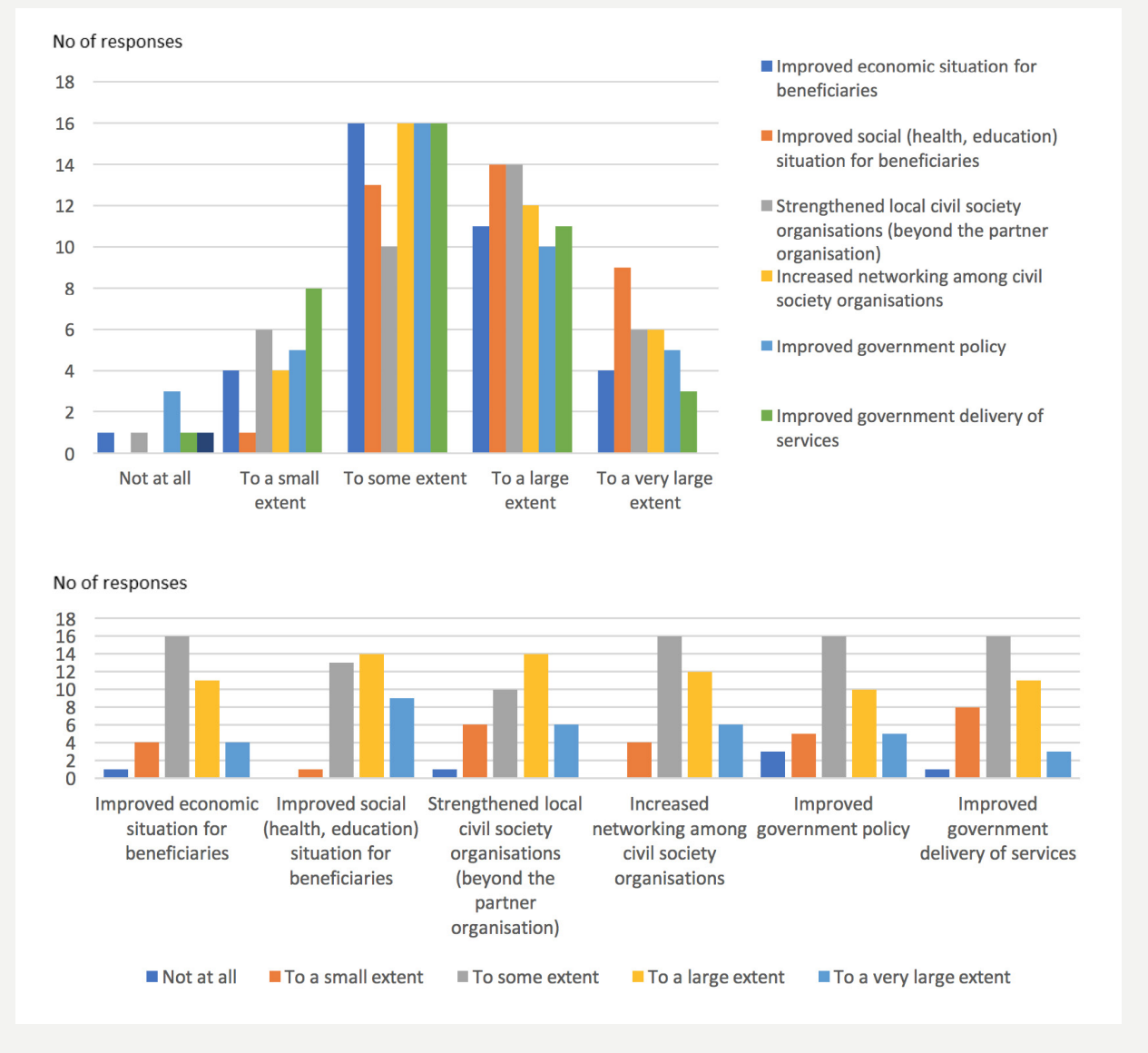
■ Our contribution has made no difference  
■ Our contribution has improved their capacity to some extent  
■ Our contribution has improved their capacity to a large extent  
■ Our contribution has improved their capacity to a very large extent  
■ N/A

## A7.6 EFFECTS ON CIVIL SOCIETY

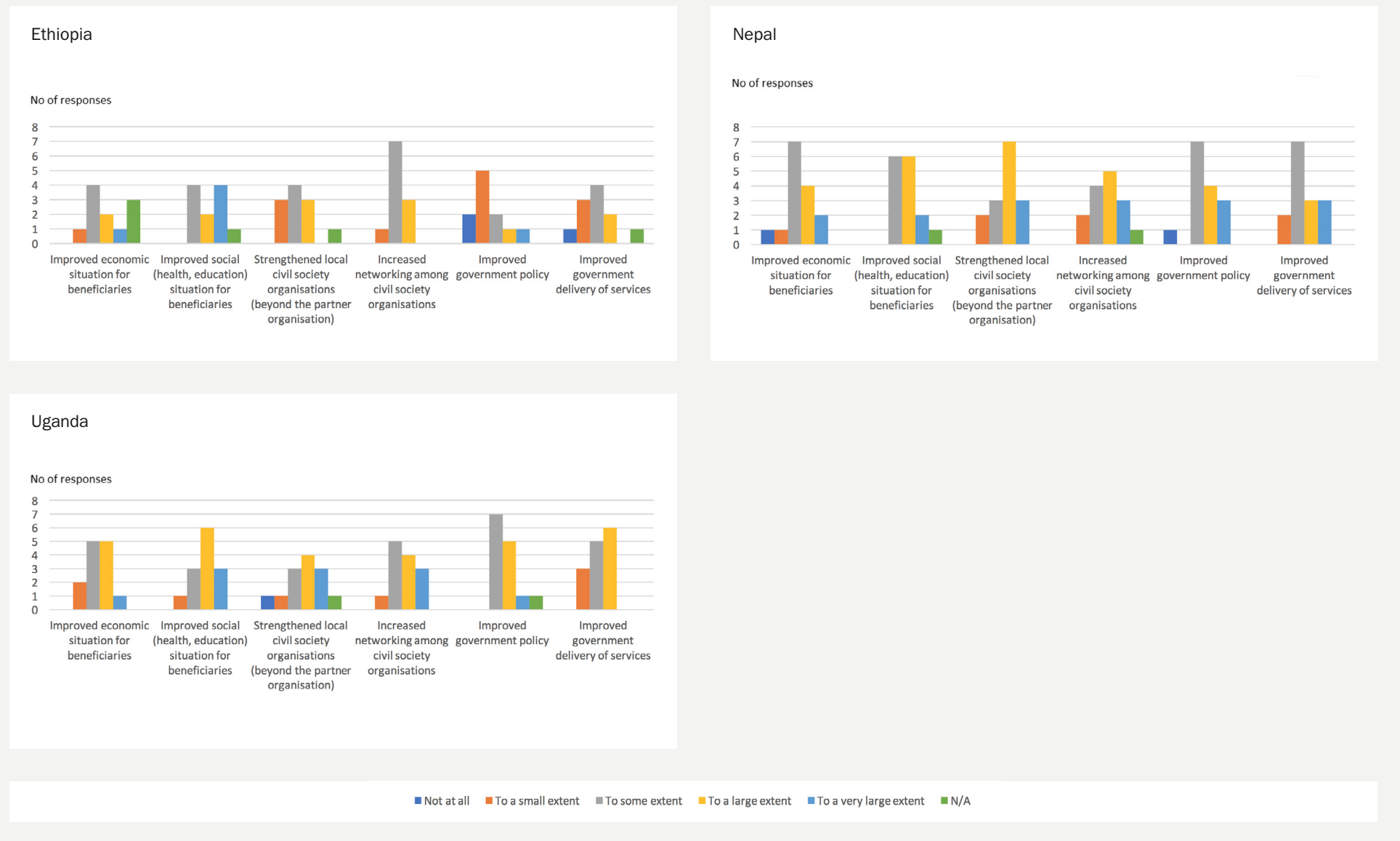
The respondents have a positive view about the extent to which the programmes they have supported have contributed to strengthening civil society in the three countries. As above, we show the respondents' answers first sorted on the extent to which they have stated that they have had an effect, then on the different types of effects. Further below are tables comparing the answers for the three countries.

From the first two diagrams it is obvious from the answers that the respondents think that the programmes implemented have had a rather significant effect on civil society in the three case countries. The country-wise diagrams show that there are some differences across countries as regards to what they think has been affected.

**FIGURE 10/11:** TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE THE PROJECTS/PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED IN COLLABORATION WITH YOUR PARTNERS RESULTED IN STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY?



**FIGURE 12/13/14:** TO WHAT EXTENT HAVE THE PROJECTS/PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED IN COLLABORATION WITH YOUR PARTNERS RESULTED IN STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY?



# Annex 8: Interview guide Norwegian CSOs

## **Headings and text in italics refer to evaluation questions.**

*This guide is intended to be used as a guide for interviewers, not a strict questionnaires.*

*In questions with multiple answer options (e, b, etc.) these are intended to be used as a checklist or examples of possible answers and areas to discuss.*

*Interview data will be seen in conjunction with data from documents – in some cases there is a need to fill gaps, in other cases the answer may be available in document and cross-checked in the interview.*

## **EQ 1: MAP NORWEGIAN SUPPORT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING, PARTNERSHIP APPROACHES AND THEORY OF CHANGE**

### **1a) Overview of support**

*Provide an overview of Norwegian support to strengthen civil society in developing countries through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners (by organisation, local partners, countries, themes).*

1. Please give an overview of the programmes and partners your organisation support in Ethiopia, Uganda and Nepal through Norad's civil society grant.
2. Do you receive other funding – from Norwegian and other sources - for projects in these countries? Would any of this funding be for the same partners? Please specify (from and to what)

### **1b) Partnership approach and Theory of Change**

*Outline the different approaches for partnership collaboration as applied by the Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners hereunder a description of the ToC underlying these approaches.*

3. How does your organisation address the goal of strengthening civil society in the South? (E.g. strengthening partners, service delivery (e.g. health, education, agriculture, etc), increased knowledge/awareness, advocacy.)

4. At what level does your organisation address the goal of strengthening civil society in the South? (E.g. individual, community, national, regional or global level.)
5. Is the selection of partners and programmes informed by assessments of needs to strengthen civil society in the country?
6. Is strengthening civil society a goal in itself (globally or in country programmes, depending on respondent)?
7. Is strengthening partner organisations a goal in itself (globally or in country programmes, depending on respondent)?
8. What types of partners and partnerships do you have? For example:
  - a. Shared values/interests
  - b. Common thematic/professional focus?
  - c. Common geographical focus?
  - d. Long-term or shorter partnerships? Are partnerships spanning over several contract periods?

- e. Funding modality (a. Providing core support, b. providing programme support, c. financing specific projects, d. strategic partner with no funding involved).
9. To what extent would you characterize your role in partnerships with Southern CSOs as:
- Institutional supporter* – providing core support to an organisation
  - Programme supporter* – providing programme support
  - Project funder* – financing specific projects
  - Development ally* – or strategic partner for achieving a common objective (and not necessarily with funding involved)
10. To what extent would you say that your organisation has influenced:
- Initiation of partnership (how was the partner identified/selected? Did you find them, or did they come to you?)
  - Selection of thematic areas of support (how was the focus for partnership and areas to be supported identified)
  - Selection of geographical areas of support
  - Selection of joint programmes/projects
  - Setting targets for joint projects/programmes
  - Development of detailed project/programme plans
11. What is your approach to strengthening of the institutional capacity of your partner?:
- An objective in its own right - with separate activities?
  - An objective included in all projects implemented by you partner – with separate activities?
  - A spin-off from projects (not separate objective and activities for capacity strengthening)
  - Other
12. How do you assess partner needs and capacities?
- Separate exercise using specific models/tools
  - Included in overall planning/project planning
  - Identified by the partners
13. What is the main purpose of your capacity support:
- Strengthening your partner(s) capacity to implement programmes/projects
  - Strengthening your partner(s) to attract other donors
  - Strengthening your partner(s) to live up to requirements in your agreement with them
  - Contributing to building civil society (beyond the individual partner through e.g. networking)
  - Other
14. In addition to funding, to what extent has your support to partners consisted of:
- Thematic/Technical competence
  - Financial/administrative/HR competence
  - Leadership/Governance/Strategic competence
  - Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting competence
  - Access to national/regional/international networks
15. What are your main tools/instruments for supporting your partners?
- Visits and informal dialogue (how often?)
  - Formal training/seminars
  - External technical support (use of consultants)
  - Other
- EQ 2: RELEVANCE**
- Is Norwegian support consistent with local needs, priorities and possibilities including the needs, priorities and possibilities of local partners?*
16. To what extent are needs and opportunities for programmes and projects defined
- By the Norwegian organisation
  - By partner organisations
  - Jointly by Norwegian and partner organisation

### **EQ 3: EFFECTS RELATING TO STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY**

*What are the effects at output/outcome level, for instance through tangible improvements for the target population and in the capacity and competence of the local partner organisations (e.g. strengthened human resource capacities and competence in leadership, planning, project management, financial management, reporting, resource mobilization, ability to mobilise target groups and represent local communities)*

17. To what extent do you consider that your organisation's support to strengthening your partners in Ethiopia/Nepal/Uganda capacity has been successful? Examples may include:
- Thematic/Technical capacity
  - Financial/administrative/HR capacity
  - Leadership/Governance/Strategic capacity
  - Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting capacity
  - Active participation in national/regional/international networks
  - Capacity to mobilise financial and other resources
  - Ability to mobilise and represent target groups/local communities
18. How have these improvements affected the local partners' implementation capacity?

19. Has there been any indirect or unintended effects of these improvements?

20. Can you give examples of how civil society has been strengthened through your partners? (e.g. via services, strengthening their local partners, advocacy, awareness and knowledge, networking)

- What have been main causes for these results?
- What are the main obstacles?
- In what way has the Norwegian support contributed to the partners' civil society strengthening?
- Can you give example of unexpected effects on civil society strengthening? Any negative effects?

### **EQ 4: HOW SUSTAINABLE IS THE NORWEGIAN ASSISTANCE?**

*(a) To what degree is the Norwegian support sustainable? Do local partners have the competencies and capacities to mobilise resources to maintain the benefits of the interventions when support through Norwegian civil society organisation is withdrawn?*

*(b) Is the Norwegian support influencing national ownership/processes to strengthen civil society in the country?*

21. Are exit strategies discussed with your partners? How and to what extent have they impacted on your long-term engagement with your partner? Do you consider them to be feasible?

22. To what extent do you assess that your partners have the capacity to continue to function when the partnership ends, in terms of:

- Institutional capacity (systems and procedures)
- Professional capacity and competence (size and competence of staff)
- Financial capacity required to sustain current programmes and projects (have or able to mobilise funds)

23. In cases where support has ended, how was the decision made?

- By the Norwegian partner organisation
- By the partner organisation
- Jointly by Norwegian and partner organisation
- By donor/funding agency

24. What has the effect been,

- On the partner organisation,
- On the activities?

25. How and to what extent are authorities in the concerned country engaged with your civil society partner and in implementation of activities? How do government policy frameworks affect the work of your partner? (Project/programme selection, planning and management?)



# Annex 9: Format for country partnership report

## **I MAPPING: OVERVIEW OF NORWEGIAN SUPPORT**

- › Name of Norwegian CSO:
- › Norwegian partnership approach: Summary of overall partnership policy (from policy documents and interviews in Norway)  
+ organisational model (bilateral, country, multilateral)
- › Overview of partners and projects in the country (name/location/thematic focus/budget):

*In case for several partnerships for one Norwegian CSO the information above will be identical and you can copy/paste*

- › Brief intro to selected partner and project studied:
  - › Name
  - › Project
  - › Type of CSO
  - › Scope/size
  - › Focus/orientation

## **II NORWEGIAN APPROACH TO THE PARTNERSHIP**

### **(1, 2) Initiation**

- › Who initiated the partnership
- › History of relations
- › Duration of partnership
- › Relative financial importance of Norwegian partner support (vis-à-vis other Norwegian funding and other donors)

### (1) Partnership characteristics

- › Shared values/interests
- › Common professional/thematic focus
- › Type of funding (core/programmatic/project)
- › Any administrative support
- › Strategic (core) long-term partner/programme-/project partner (implementing Norwegian CSO programmes)

### (3) Added value (support beyond financial transfers)

- › Type and level of support (table)

Type of support	Level of support*				
Financial/administrative	0	1	2	3	4
Fundraising					
M&E/reporting					
Technical/programmatic					
Organisational (governance/staff/relations)					
Strategic development					
Networking					

\*0= NONE, 1= SOME, 2= MODERATE, 3= REGULAR/IMPORTANT, 4= SIGNIFICANT

#### Comments/examples:

- › Tools/instruments used by Norwegian partner:
  - › Visits (once/twice a year) and informal dialogue
  - › Formal training/seminars
  - › External technical support (consultants)
  - › Other:

Comments/examples:

#### (4) Quality of partnership

- › Level of interaction (how often)?
- › What is the extent of mutual dialogue? Are you able to have a say in the partnership?
- › Needs assessment carried out by whom?
- › What is the focus of Norwegian partner (support your organisation/strengthen civil society/implementation of projects)?
- › What is your contribution to Norwegian partner?
- › Any controversies/serious disagreements?

Quality	Perceptions				
	0	1	2	3	4
Are your needs/priorities included/reflected in project plans?					
Norwegian partner is mainly interested in project implementation					
Norwegian partner is mainly interested in organisational development					
Norwegian partner is mainly interested in civil society in the country					

\*0= NONE, 1= SOME, 2= MODERATE, 3= REGULAR/IMPORTANT, 4= SIGNIFICANT

Comments/examples:

### III RELEVANCE

#### (5) Relevance

Relevance of activities	Perceptions				
	0	1	2	3	4
Relevance of activities for the organisation?					
Could there be a better use of the same resources?					
Have your priorities changed because of the partnership?					
To what extent are your needs/opportunities been defined/ influenced by Norwegian partner?					
Have thematic priorities advocated by the Norwegian partner (e.g. gender/ human rights) affected/influenced your planning/programming?					

\*0= NONE, 1= SOME, 2= MODERATE, 3= REGULAR/IMPORTANT, 4= SIGNIFICANT

Comments/examples:

#### (6) Role in/of civil society

- › Main challenges/opportunities for civil society in the country?
- › Is your work/role contested/constrained by government policies/practices?
- › How do you support/strengthen civil society?
- › Is it a focus or a by-product of other activities?
- › Do you participate in civil society networks?

## IV RESULTS

### (8) Organisational Capacity results

To what extent has the Norwegian partner contributed to strengthen:	Effects/results				
	0	1	2	3	4
Financial/administrative capacity					
Fundraising capacity					
M&E/reporting					
Technical/programmatic capacity					
Organisational capacity (governance/staff/relations)					
Strategic development					
Networking capacity					
Capacity for advocacy					

\*0= NONE, 1= SOME, 2= MODERATE, 3= REGULAR/IMPORTANT, 4= SIGNIFICANT

Comments/examples:

### (9) Relative importance of Norwegian support?

- › In what areas did the Norwegian partner contribute most?
- › How important is the Norwegian partner compared to others?

Relative importance of Norwegian partner:	0	1	2	3	4

\*0= NONE, 1= SOME, 2= MODERATE, 3= REGULAR/IMPORTANT, 4= SIGNIFICANT

Comments/examples:

### (10) What are the end-results of partner funded projects in communities and for beneficiaries?

Results for communities/beneficiaries	0	1	2	3	4
Improved capacity to mobilise and represent local communities					
Improved situation for local communities					
Improved government policy					
Improved government delivery of services					

\*0= NONE, 1= SOME, 2= MODERATE, 3= REGULAR/IMPORTANT, 4= SIGNIFICANT

### (10) Are there other effects of the Norwegian support (effects not planned for)?

## V SUSTAINABILITY

**(11) To what extent has an end to financial support from the Norwegian partner been addressed?**

**Is there a plan and an implementation schedule in place?**

**(11,12,13) How will an end to Norwegian financial support to you organization affect your capacities?**

**Overall assessments by country team**

### **Summary of partnership characteristics**

Instrumental approach			Intrinsic approach	
1	2	3	4	5
> Partners seen as means to implement pre-set objectives			> Strong partners are recognized as end in itself	
> Power monopolized by one partner			> Power shared between partners	
> Sub-contracting			> Autonomous partners cooperating	
> Capacity building goes down only			> Capacity building goes in both directions	
> Accountability goes up only			> Accountability goes in both direction	

### **Reflections on key issues**

- > What have been the most important contribution by the Norwegian partner in addition to financial support?
- > Has the partnership contributed to strengthening civil society in the country
- > What are the main weaknesses?

### **Annexes:**

People met (name, position, organization, sex)

Documents consulted



# Annex 10: Interview guide local partners

## **EXPLAIN PURPOSE OF EVALUATION**

*A significant share of the official Norwegian development aid budget is channelled to civil society organisations in developing countries – through Norwegian CSOs, through international NGOs and directly to CSOs in developing countries. This evaluation shall assess the long-term aid channelled through Norwegian CSOs for the purpose of strengthening civil society in developing countries. The country case studies for the study are Ethiopia, Nepal and Uganda. The team will review selected partnerships between Norwegian and local civil society organisations in these countries.*

*The objective is to assess and document effects on civil society, and of using Norwegian CSOs as intermediaries. We are in particular keen to assess the contribution by Norwegian CSOs to your organisation and activities beyond the financial contribution and to hear about your views and lessons from working with your Norwegian partner.*

*Mention the partnership we are examining/ why we wanted to talk to you.*

## **I OVERVIEW OF THE NORWEGIAN SUPPORT**

### **1: What are the origins of the support from your Norwegian partners? What does it contain?**

*Explore history of relations with Norwegian partner*

Who initiated the partnership (they or you?)

What was the purpose of starting the cooperation?

How long has the partnership lasted?

Do you have common values/interests?

Is there a common professional/ thematic focus?

What funding do you receive? Do you receive core funding, programme funding or project funding?

Do you get funding for projects/activities only or also for administrative support/ organisational activities?

### **2: Do you receive funding from other Norwegian partners or other foreign partners?**

Please specify (from which source and for what purpose?)

Approximately how large is the share of funding from the Norwegian partner to total funding (to your organisation, and to the programme(s) supported by the Norwegian partner)?

## **II THE NORWEGIAN PARTNERSHIP APPROACH**

*Collect information about their experiences in working with the Norwegian partner. Take note of any differences in engagement between different types of Norwegian CSOs (e.g. between those engaging bilaterally, through country offices, or through multilateral offices) and between similar types (different approaches e.g. between Plan and Save the Children).*

Then we also want to find out as much as possible about what the South partner's role

has been in the partnership. Has it been primarily as an implementer of activities (service provider) for the Norwegian partner? or is the South partner a long-term partner able to influence the nature and purpose of cooperation, or the way the Norwegian partner operate?

### **3: What does the partnership contain beyond financial support?**

*Ask the South partner to specify as much as possible to what the extent the support has addressed:*

- › Professional support for programme/project development and implementation?
- › Professional support for strengthening your organisation
  - › In reporting on finance and results (M&E)?
  - › In financial administration and fundraising
  - › In governance, staff management, relations with members
  - › Strategic development and orientation
  - › Thematic/technical competence
  - › Networking in your country, regionally, globally
- › What are the main tools/instruments used by the Norwegian partner for supporting your organisation?
  - › Visits and informal dialogue

- › Formal training/seminars
- › External technical support (use of consultants)
- › Other

- › Has the Norwegian partner been a source of political and moral support? An alliance partner?

### **4: How do you assess the quality of the partnership?**

How often do you interact with the Norwegian partner (visits, mail, phone)?

What is the extent of mutual dialogue?

Do you have a say in the partnership)

How are needs assessment and areas of support conducted? (by you?, by Norwegian partner?)

To what extent would you say that your needs and priorities are taken into consideration when support programs and funding applications are submitted to donors by the Norwegian partner?

What do you consider is your Norwegian partner's primary focus: To support your organisation? To strengthen civil society in your country? Or to ensure that activities are implemented? Or a combination?

Are you able to contribute to your Norwegian partner? Please specify/give examples.

What do you consider to have been the most important contribution by the Norwegian partner? Specify.

Have there been any controversies or serious disagreements?

Have you made any contribution to the Norwegian partner?

### **III HOW RELEVANT IS THE NORWEGIAN SUPPORT?**

We seek to get answer to two questions: in relation to needs and priorities of the South partner, and in relation to the needs in the country concerned

#### **5: How relevant has the Norwegian partner been for you?**

Is the support from the Norwegian partner provided to the most relevant activities of your organisation? Could there be a better use of the support?

Has your view on strategy and priorities changed as result of the partnership and dialogue with your partner?

To what extent are needs and opportunities for programmes and projects defined by the Norwegian organisation? By your organisation? Jointly by you and the Norwegian organisation?

How were needs assessed? Was there a separate exercise to identify areas where your organisation needed strengthening?

Has thematic priorities of the Norwegian partners (e.g. related to gender or human rights) affected your planning and programming? If so has this increased or decreased the relevance of your work? Give examples.

**6: How do you consider your own role in relation to civil society in your country?**

Is strengthening of civil society – e.g. through organisation and mobilisation of communities or advocacy - a main focus of your work, or a by-product of your other activities?

Do you contribute/participate in civil society networks? Specify

Is your organisation's role contested? Is it affected by the external political framework? How do you consider your own role in relation to the authorities and government policies?

**7: How relevant is the Norwegian partner support for addressing development challenges in your country?**

How well do you consider the Norwegian support to be relevant for the country/local area? Would you have preferred activities to have been channelled to other programmes/ areas? Specify.

How was the programme developed and designed? Did context analysis/baseline data inform the process?

Do you consider the Norwegian supported projects/programmes to be well adapted to local possibilities and limitations?

How does the programme relate to government priorities and other civil society interventions?

Has your partnership and implementation of partner-funded activities decreased or increased the relevance of your work? Give examples

Is the partnership addressing the important questions for civil society in your country/local area? why/why not?

**IV: WHAT ARE THE RESULTS AND EFFECTS OF THE NORWEGIAN SUPPORT?**

We seek to get data on results of support to capacity building and in relation to programme implementation. It will be important to collect and process findings from any review documents available.

**8: To what extent and how has the Norwegian partner contributed to strengthening the capacity of your organisation?**

*Refer to the answers to question 6 above and get as much response and examples as possible:*

Technical insights and capacity, including advocacy

Financial/administrative/HR capacity.

Leadership/governance/strategic capacity.

Planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting capacity.

Participation in national/regional/international networks.

Capacity to mobilise financial and other resources.

Others?

**9: Are you able to assess the relative importance of the Norwegian partner's contribution to strengthening capacity of your organisation?**

How important is it compared to support from others and from relying on you own skills and resources?

**10: What are the partnership-funded programme/projects' results in relation to beneficiaries in local communities and other target groups, including government policies?**

*Refer to programme objectives and ask questions related to sub questions below. Mark the respondent's answer where relevant as "nothing", "little", "much", "very much". Follow up A, B and C with questions to get concrete examples of how this has affected local communities/target groups or had wider effects. Also ask for contributing/hindering factors for achieving the results.*

A: Has the ability to mobilise and represent local communities (including strengthening community associations/partners) improved?

B: Has the situation for local communities been improved as a result of the programme interventions?

C: Has government policies and service delivery been improved or changes as a result of your advocacy or other interventions? What has been your contribution to this?

D: What do you consider to be your most important contribution and results achieved?

E: To what extent do the results depend on the support from the Norwegian partner – how important is it compared to support from others?

- › Please specify how the support from the Norwegian partner contributed to the results?
- › What else may have contributed to these results?

F: Are there effects of the Norwegian support not planned for in project documents? Any unintended effects (positive or negative)?

**V: HOW SUSTAINABLE IS THE NORWEGIAN ASSISTANCE?**

**11: How and to what extent have you and your Norwegian partner prepared for an end of Norwegian financial support? What are the long-term vision and strategy for the partnership?**

Has this led to the preparation of exit strategy for reducing and ending the financial support? How realistic is the plan?

**12: Are there any other aspects of the Norwegian organisation's support, apart from funding, that will make it difficult for your organisation to function without them as a partner?**

Please specify

**13: Are there other initiatives that can be initiated by your and/or your Norwegian partner to strengthen civil society in your country?**

What do you consider to be the main strength of the partnership with the Norwegian organisation?

And what are the main weaknesses?

# Annex 11: Terms of reference

## **STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES – A COLLABORATION BETWEEN NORWEGIAN CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND LOCAL PARTNERS**

With this, the Evaluation Department in Norad issues a request for proposals from researchers/consultants interested in designing and conducting an evaluation of Norwegian development support to strengthen civil society in developing countries.

### **INTRODUCTION**

This evaluation will look into *long-term development* support aimed at strengthening civil society in developing countries through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners.<sup>63</sup> This support is administered by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) in accordance with the *Grant scheme rules for support to civil society and democratisation*.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Norwegian national budget chapter 160/post 70.

<sup>64</sup> <https://www.norad.no/globalassets/filer-2015/sivsa/2016/grant-scheme-rules-for-support-to-civil-society-and-democratisation.pdf>

During the period 2006-2015, more than 13 billion Norwegian kroner have been allocated to Norwegian civil society organisations through this scheme. Norwegian civil society organisations apply for these funds on an annual basis; however, support is mainly granted through multi-year agreements of a duration of 3-5 years. An important prerequisite for receiving funds is that the Norwegian civil society organisation collaborates with one or more local partners.

The main objective of the scheme is to contribute to a stronger civil society in developing countries with the ability and capacity to promote democratisation, realisation of human rights and poverty reduction.<sup>65</sup> The scheme is also expected to contribute to the achievement of objectives in prioritised thematic areas as set annually in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Proposition No. 1 to the Storting and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' letter of allocation to Norad. Furthermore, the scheme is expected to

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

contribute to strengthening the competence and capacities of the local partner organisations in order for these to develop into independent and sustainable development actors in their communities.<sup>66</sup>

During the period 2006-2015 Norwegian Church Aid, Digni, Save the Children Norway, Norwegian Peoples Aid and the Atlas Alliance were the Norwegian civil society organisations receiving the highest amount of funds for long-term development programmes.<sup>67 68</sup>

The justification for the use of Norwegian organisations as an intermediary is that they are assumed have relevant thematic and technical expertise as well as solid financial management and quality assurance systems in place for the follow-up of projects and partners. In addition, it is expected that these

<sup>66</sup> See Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Proposition No. 1 to the Storting 2016/2017, pages 197-199

<sup>67</sup> The Atlas Alliance works for the fulfilment of the human rights of persons with disabilities in poor countries and for the improvement of their living conditions

<sup>68</sup> Digni is an umbrella organisation for 20 Norwegian mission societies and churches engaged in long-term development cooperation.

organisations are capable of strengthening the competence and capacity of their local partners.

The benefit of using Norwegian or international organisations as intermediaries to strengthen civil society in developing countries is debated; and the voices from civil society organisations in developing countries demanding more power and direct funding is getting stronger.

### **GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION**

More than half of Norwegian aid to strengthening civil society in developing countries has gone to Africa and Asia over the last ten years. A smaller portion went to the Middle East, America and Europe.

Uganda, Ethiopia, Mali, Zambia and Tanzania were the largest recipients of Norwegian civil society aid in Africa during the period 2006-2015, while Nepal, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Indonesia and Bangladesh were the largest recipient of Norwegian civil society aid in Asia during the period.

### **PURPOSE**

The main purpose of this evaluation is to:

- › Provide Norad and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) with information that can

be used to improve future efforts to strengthening civil society in developing countries

- › The evaluation will have a major focus of identifying the views/perspective of the local partners/civil society organisations in developing countries.

The main users of the evaluation will be Norad and the MFA. The MFA refers to its political leadership, its officials and the Norwegian Embassies Other users of the evaluation include civil society organisations both in Norway and in developing countries.

Other stakeholders who have a direct or indirect interest in this evaluation include individuals, communities, and relevant local and national institutions and policy makers that benefit directly or indirectly from the interventions in the partner countries.

### **OBJECTIVES**

The evaluation will assess and document effect of Norwegian aid through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners in strengthening civil society in developing countries including the effects of using Norwegian civil society organisation as an intermediary.

The evaluation will:

- › Provide an overview of Norwegian support to strengthen civil society in developing countries through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners (by organisation, local partners, countries, themes).
- › Outline the different approaches for **partnership** collaboration as applied by the Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners hereunder a description of the theory of change underlying these approaches.
- › Assess intended and unintended **effects** of Norwegian support to strengthening civil society in developing countries through the Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners.
- › Identify possible **lessons learnt** that can be used to improve planning, organisation and implementation of future support to strengthen civil society in development countries. The findings and lessons learnt should be translated into recommendations to the MFA and Norad.

## SCOPE

- › This evaluation covers support provided during the period 2006 to date.
- › The evaluation will cover aid allocated for long-term development through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners (Chapter 160/post 70 of the Norwegian government's White Paper Prop. 1S).
- › The evaluation uses Norads definition of *civil society*. Civil society is seen as an arena that is separate from the family, state and market, where individuals voluntarily work together to promote interests and rights on their own and others' behalf.<sup>69</sup> A strong civil society is to be understood as a civil society with the ability and capacity to promote democratisation, realise human rights and reduce poverty. A strong civil society is characterised by people having a greater ability to participate and influence in matters affecting them, and thus having greater protection of their rights.<sup>70</sup>
- › Local partners are to be understood as organisations based in recipient countries. Local partners represent target groups and are actors driving change in the country in

69 Principles for Norads support to Civil Society in the South, Oslo, May 2009.

70 Ref. Gant-scheme-rules-for-support-to-civil-society-and-democratisation pages (page 1-2).

which the project/programme will be implemented and should as such be able to influence and participate in the development of society.<sup>71</sup>

- › The evaluation will assess intended and unintended effects of Norwegian support by in-depth studies of selected projects/programmes in three case countries (Nepal, Ethiopia and Uganda) in order to analyse effects in different contextual settings. Effects will be understood as intended or unintended change at output and outcome level due directly or indirectly to the project/programmes looked into
- › The evaluation will assess *relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of Norway's assistance*. Relevance will be assessed by looking into whether Norwegian support is consistent with local needs, priorities and possibilities including the needs, priorities and possibilities of local partners. Effectiveness will be assessed by documenting effects at output/outcome level, for instance by emphasising tangible improvements for the target population and in the capacity and competence of the local partner organisations (e.g. strengthened human resource capacities and competence

71 Ibid (page 3).

in leadership, planning, project management, financial management, reporting, resource mobilization, ability to mobilise target groups and represent local communities). Sustainability may, amongst others, be assessed by looking into whether or not the Norwegian support is influencing national ownership/processes to strengthen civil society in the country.

- › The analysis should focus on three case countries i.e. Nepal, Uganda and Ethiopia. The countries are selected based on a long standing Norwegian support in the country, the volume of Norwegian aid to strengthening civil society provided during the evaluation period as well as the number of Norwegian civil society organisations working in these countries.

The following questions will guide the evaluation:

- › To what degree do the local partner organisations consider the Norwegian support through Norwegian civil society organisations relevant in light of local needs, priorities and possibilities?
- › To what degree has Norwegian support through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners led to the intended effects of strengthening civil society in the



target areas for the interventions including strengthening of capacities and competencies of local partner organisations? Contributing factors for the achievement of intended effects, or the lack thereof, should be discussed.

- › To what degree has Norwegian support through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners led to unintended effects, positive or negative?
- › To what degree is Norwegian support to strengthen civil society through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners in line with thematic priorities of Norwegian development cooperation<sup>72</sup>, including gender equality and human rights issues, and how do these correspond with the priorities and needs of local partners/local communities?
- › To what degree is the Norwegian support sustainable? Do local partners have the competencies and capacities to mobilise resources to maintain the benefits of the interventions when support through Norwegian civil society organisations is withdrawn?

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<sup>72</sup> The priorities within the scheme are set annually in the Storting's approval of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Proposition No. 1 to the Storting and in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' letter of allocation to Norad and relevant grant scheme rules

## **METHODOLOGY/APPROACH**

During the inception phase, the consultant shall propose a sample of projects/programmes in each of the proposed countries for an in depth study. The samples should be selected amongst others based on aiming at getting a portfolio that covers a diversity of Norwegian civil society organisations and local partners, duration (time) and volume (financial) of the support. The final selection of the sample is to be concluded in dialogue with the Evaluation department and stakeholders during the finalisation of the inception report.

The nature of the evaluation objectives poses some challenges with regard to methodology. First, strengthening civil society is a long-term goal; hence, the time span for the evaluation may be too short to expect that lasting results have materialised. Second, it will be challenging to find measurements of improvements when it comes to areas like poverty reduction, in particular measurements that can be used across contexts. Third, attribution of Norwegian assistance to identified improvements may not be viable due to, among others, the many contextual factors involved.

The evaluation team will propose an outline of a methodological approach that optimises the possibility of producing robust, evidence-

based assessments within the limitations of the mentioned challenges, explicitly addressing the issue of contribution/attribution. The approach should rely on a cross-section of data sources and using mixed methods to ensure triangulation of information through a variety of means. The approach should be synthesised in an evaluation matrix, which should be used as the key organising tool for the evaluation.

The evaluation shall be carried out according to OECD DAC's evaluation quality standards and criteria as well as recognised academic and ethical principles.

The approach may include the components below:

- › Reconstructing the intervention logic/theory of change behind Norway's assistance to strengthen civil society in developing countries through Norwegian civil society organisations and their local partners at country and project/programme level, identifying key assumptions to be tested.
- › Assessing how local needs including needs of partner organisations, are taken into account in the planning, design, implementation and results documentation including how

the interventions/programmes/activities have taken into account national contexts.

- › Review of existing literature on support to civil society in developing countries including relevant evaluations,<sup>73</sup> document reviews, surveys, interviews, discussions or other consultations with stakeholders including Norwegian civil society organisations, local partner organisations and communities that benefit directly or indirectly from the interventions, government representatives, representatives from international civil society organisation as well as representatives from the Norwegian embassies, the MFA and Norad.

#### **Data availability**

Data collection is the responsibility of the evaluation team. Access to archives in MFA and Norad will be facilitated by the MFA/Norad. Statistics regarding budget chapter 160/post 70, is available on [www.norad.no](http://www.norad.no)<sup>74</sup> Data collection in Oslo and case countries should be avoided from end June-end July due to holiday season.

<sup>73</sup> Evaluations of support to civil society in developing countries are for example done by Dfid (2015) AusAid (2012), Danida (2013), Norad (2009)

<sup>74</sup> <https://www.norad.no/en/front/toolspublications/norwegian-aid-statistics/access-to-microdata>

Validation and feedback workshops shall be held in the case countries before departure, involving relevant stakeholders.

#### **EVALUATION TEAM AND ORGANISATION**

The Evaluation department in Norad will manage the evaluation. The evaluation team will report to the Evaluation department through the team leader. The team leader shall be in charge of all deliverables and will report to the Evaluation department on the team's progress, including any problems that may jeopardise the assignment. The Evaluation department and the team shall emphasise transparent and open communication with the stakeholders. All decisions concerning the interpretation of these Terms of Reference, and all deliverables are subject to the approval of the Evaluation department.

The team should consult widely with stakeholders pertinent to the assignment. Stakeholders will be asked to comment on the draft inception report and the draft final report. In addition, experts or other relevant parties may be invited to comment upon reports or specific issues during the process. The evaluation team shall take note of all comments received from all stakeholders. Where there are significant divergence of views between the evaluation team and stakeholders,

this shall be reflected in the final report. The institution delivering the consultancy services prior to the submission of all deliverables shall provide quality assurance.

#### **BUDGET AND DELIVERABLES**

The project is ***budgeted*** with an input of 50 consultant weeks including data collection in three case countries.

The tenderer shall quote a total price for the assignment including costs related to data collection in the case countries (e.g. work time, travels, subsistence allowance, and fees for local consultants etc.).

The team leader is expected to budget for and participate in the following three meetings in Oslo: a contract-signing meeting; a seminar to present findings and to discuss possible recommendations for follow up with stakeholder representatives from the MFA, Norad and civil society organisations before the report is finalised; and a meeting to present the final report. The consultant may be requested to make additional presentations, in which case Norad will cover the costs outside the tender budget.

The team should budget for field studies in three countries.

Further specifications regarding the budget is given in annex 1.1 (Price)

The **deliverables** in the consultancy consist of the following:

- › **Inception Report** not exceeding 20 pages to be commented by stakeholders before final approval by the Evaluation Department.
- › One **seminar in Oslo** to present findings and to discuss possible recommendations for follow up with stakeholder representatives from Norwegian civil society organisations, their local partners, the MFA and Norad.
- › **Draft Final Report** for preliminary approval by the Evaluation Department. The draft will be sent to stakeholders inviting them to comment on facts, findings and conclusions.
- › **Final Evaluation Report**
- › **Evaluation brief** not exceeding 2 pages
- › **Seminar for dissemination** of the final report in Oslo.

Data, presentations, reports (to be prepared in accordance with the Evaluation Department's guidelines given in Annex 1.2 of this document) are to be submitted electronically in accordance with the deadlines set in the progress plan specified in section 7.2 of the tender document. Norad's Evaluation Department retains the sole rights with respect to all **distribution, dissemination and publication** of the deliverables.