Filling Gaps and Making Spaces:

Strengthening Civil Society in Unstable Situations

Edited by **John Twigg**

Foreword by **Sir Crispin Tickell**

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Sir Crispin Tickell, GCMG KCVO is Chancellor of the University of Kent. Most of his career was in the Diplomatic Service including as Ambassador to Mexico (1981-83), Permanent Secretary of the Overseas Development Administration (1984-87) and the British Permanent Representative to the United Nations (1987-90).

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Summary

What are the challenges, and opportunities, to civil society organisations working in uncertain or unstable environments; and how can they, and their supporters, address these? Little seems to have been written on the subject, yet it is an important issue for all kinds of development organisation, in view of the instability that affects so many developing countries.

In this book, local and international civil society organisations working in unstable situations share their experiences and reflect on the lessons that can be drawn from them. They highlight the huge everyday challenges to civil society's effective working in fragile states with weak or unsympathetic governments, poor infrastructure and facilities, and particularly in those torn by conflict.

Civil society's relationship with government lies at the heart of the matter. Civil society organisations have to position themselves in relation to government policies, structures and actions. Every project interacts with government at one level or another, whatever the nature of the work on the ground. Yet in many developing countries, national and local government are weakened by lack of capacities, resources or understanding of issues. Unstable situations, or rapid change, can create or accentuate such weaknesses, placing a greater burden on NGOs and community groups to fill gaps in thinking and implementation.

As well as filling gaps, civil society organisations have to create spaces. In an ordered society, there are defined spaces or spheres of operation or responsibility for government and civil society, as well as the private sector and the family. Problems arise when these spaces are ill-defined or contested, which is particularly likely where there is conflict or under authoritarian regimes, and where states are emerging from prolonged periods of conflict or authoritarian rule.

Advocacy to change policies and structures that harm poor and marginalized people is generally seen as essential, but it can easily create friction and conflict between civil society and government, because it challenges the status quo and asserts the rights of those to whom they are denied. This can present real threats – including physical danger – to the institutions and individuals involved. Acute instability and conflict are even more threatening: by creating more confrontational political environments, they cut away the 'middle ground' needed for negotiation.

Agencies' ability to influence changes, or at least to mitigate their effects, varies according to circumstances but the experiences of the organisations contributing to this book show that they can be highly effective. Even in volatile situations, it is possible to support vulnerable groups and community development through example, negotiation and persistence.

Acknowledgements

The organisation of the workshop and seminar upon which this book is based, and the publication of the book itself, owe a great deal to a number of individuals and organisations.

Representatives of partner agencies – local and international – funded by the Baring Foundation's International Programme provided a wealth of case study material and ideas that fed into some lively discussions: much, but by no means all, of this is reproduced in this book. The other participants in the 20th January 2005 seminar, from funding agencies and elsewhere, were a sympathetic yet critical audience with whom to share experiences and debate the lessons to be drawn from them.

David Cutler, the Director of the Baring Foundation, and the Foundation's other staff – Barbara Allerhand, Valerie Cadoret, Zoë Kaye, Diana McKinley and Terry Skelhorn – have made a huge contribution throughout, in planning and organizing the workshop and seminar, and preparing this book for press; David Cutler's guidance and enthusiasm have been the linchpin of the whole process. ING Bank kindly provided their first-rate facilities for the two events.

Credit for coming up with the idea of events and publication belongs to Nicholas Baring. The achievements of the International Programme in supporting scores of indigenous organisations in Africa and Latin America, and through them enriching the lives of thousands of poor and vulnerable people, owes much to his thoughtful stewardship as Chairman of the International Committee over many years, and to his unshakeable conviction to this cause.

John Twigg
London, August 2005

Foreword: development in an unstable world[1]

Sir Crispin Tickell

You have given me a challenging theme. I do not have to tell you that we all live in an unstable world. Those at this conference know it better than most. Later you will be going into three specific aspects: building capacity when civil society has broken down; the role of NGOs when government is weak; international advocacy or engagement at the grassroots. I can do little better than look at the background.

First, what does development mean? Or better still sustainable development? The best known definition comes from the Brundtland Commission of 1987:

> Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

But that begs as many questions as it answers. I have a suggestion of my own:

> Durable change for the better while protecting the earth we inherit and the earth we bequeath.

Or a sound bite from Robert Gray:

> Treating the world as if we intended to stay.

We should also be clear what it does not mean: following the methods of industrialisation espoused in the West in countries all in totally different geographical circumstances. Instead it should mean something specific to each country or region's resources and culture.

This is of course easier said than done. The fundamental question is why we should promote change at all. In short what has gone wrong? If we and future generations are indeed to stay, we must look first at the condition of the Earth. A periodical visitor from space would find more change in its surface in the last two hundred years than in the preceding two thousand, and more change in the last twenty years than in the preceding two hundred. As was suggested in the title of a recent book, there *is* something new under the sun.

[1] Keynote address to the seminar on 20 January 2001.

There are six main problems:

(1) The incredible increase in human numbers due to our success as an animal species.
(2) Deterioration of soils, depletion of resources, and accumulation of wastes.
(3) Demand for fresh water, and pollution of both fresh and salt water.
(4) Destruction of biodiversity; species extinctions; and the unknowable effects.

There is a telling quotation from the World Wide Fund for Nature:

> All species are doing a job, even if we don't know what the job is. Removing a species from the ecosystem is like removing a rivet from an aeroplane without knowing its function. Nobody would want to fly in that aeroplane, but that is what we are doing to our environment.

(5) Changes in atmospheric chemistry: ozone depletion and ultraviolet radiation; climate change with its devastating potential effects, including global dimming; and sea level rise.
(6) Impacts of technology. As the Astronomer Royal has said recently, the chances of civilisation surviving the century should only be rated at 50% due to inadvertence, weapons, criminality, nanotechnology, and undue dependencies on technology in particular information technology.

All these whether alone or together constitute threats to the resilience of societies. It is not a cheerful picture, above all in the countries in which many of you are working.

In his new book *Collapse*, Jared Diamond has undertaken some fascinating case studies on why in the past some societies have collapsed and others have succeeded.[2] He underlines that there is no determinism or inevitability. To the factors I have mentioned, he adds conflicts between nations, tribes and communities; trade issues and interdependencies; and ability to recognise problems, keep the long term in view, and take the necessary action in time. The human factor is well illustrated by the differences between what has happened to Haiti and the Dominican Republic, on the same island of Hispaniola.

What then are we trying to achieve? In general terms the Millennium Development Goals of 2000 are useful. These are to:

(1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
(2) improve maternal health
(3) achieve universal primary education
(4) combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
(5) promote gender equality
(6) ensure environmental sustainability
(7) reduce child mortality
(8) develop a global partnership for development

[2] Jared Diamond, *Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Survive* (London: Allen Lane, 2005).

But for those working on the ground, something a lot more specific is required. From my experience as Permanent Secretary of what is now the British Department for International Development, certain grassroots priorities always stood out: the need to:

- help people to help themselves, finding out what they wanted, making the best of local circumstances;
- adopt a bottom-up rather than top-down approach, and work with local methods and cultures;
- build capacity so that people can find out things for themselves, above all in the fields of science and technology;
- encourage the growth of civil society in all its aspects, including the settlement of ethnic and religious conflicts within communities.

This general approach from outside is of course fraught with difficulties, and you will all have experienced them. But I have found, for example, that such micro-enterprises as Seeds for Africa; Send a Cow/Heifer International; the elimination of school fees and uniforms; insecticide-treated bednets for children; local water improvement schemes; and micro-credit schemes (e.g. the Grameen Bank) are more popular and effective than many macro-aid schemes, which can all too easily be disguised export promotion from industrialised countries, whereby money can get into the wrong hands.

Of course increased aid from industrial countries is welcome but money is not the only issue. We also need partnership schemes of the kind discussed at the Johannesburg Summit in 2002. The international response to the December 2004 tsunami disaster shows what can be done. Now we have the Millennium Project report on world poverty under the chairmanship of Jeff Sachs: among other things, this called for better coordination of aid efforts, more discrimination in favour of the poor, a great deal more aid, lowering of trade barriers by industrial countries, support for public investment, particularly in infrastructure, and more transparent government.[3]

There should also be wider recognition of the threats to world wellbeing of the kind I mentioned at the beginning. How aid is promised and delivered – if it is – is another major issue: I am suspicious of talk about debt relief and new Marshall plans until I can see the small print.

A final word on one of the themes of this seminar: refugees and displaced people. Let me refer to the work done on this issue in 1995 and spelled out in a book entitled *Environmental Exodus* by Norman Myers and Jennifer Kent, published by the Climate Institute of Washington DC. The central requirement from nearly all points of view is to help create conditions in which refugees can return or stay at home. This in turn raises demographic problems. We must not be shy about promoting population restraint. The key factors are the status of women; education; care in old age; and availability of contraception. All are well demonstrated in what has happened in Bangladesh. At present there are accompanying problems of widening gaps between age structures in different parts of the world, and between rich and poor within and between countries.

[3] *Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals* (UN Millennium Project, New York, 2005, www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/fullreport.htm).

Strengthening civil society in unstable situations: an introduction and overview

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1. Introduction

On 18 and 20 January 2005 the Baring Foundation hosted two one-day discussions on the subject of 'building capacity in unstable situations'. The first was a workshop for representatives of the 13 NGOs funded by the Baring Foundation International Programme since 2001, their local partners in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America, and staff and trustees of the two foundations.[4] It was an opportunity to share experiences and discuss relevant issues in a relatively informal setting. The second event was a more formal seminar for the same participants and representatives of other public and private funding organisations. The presentations given at that seminar have been edited for publication in this volume.

The choice of subject originated in the work of the projects funded by the International Programme.

The programme aims to 'improve the capacity and enhance the effectiveness of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America'. 'Capacity building' is not easily captured by a single definition. The term has been used very widely, to convey a range of meanings, which has caused some confusion.[5] The NGO Concern Worldwide adopts a common approach by defining it quite broadly, in this case as:

> an approach to programming which emphasizes enabling and strengthening individuals, groups, organisations, networks and institutions to increase their ability to cope with crises and to contribute long-term to the elimination of poverty[6]

Rather than viewing capacity building as a single concept, it is perhaps more practical to regard it as a range or spectrum of approaches, reflecting the many different dimensions of development. For this reason our International Programme does not specify particular types of activity for support, recognizing that capacity-building initiatives take many different forms. What is more important in selecting proposals for funding is evidence that the proposed work is coherent, takes account of its context, responds in practical and focused ways to problems and opportunities identified by communities and their organisations,

[4] Details of the 13 partner organisations and their projects are given in the Appendix. The current International Programme was launched by the Baring Foundation in 2001, replacing an earlier small grants initiative with a more strategic approach, making grants of up to £240,000 over three years. The John Ellerman Foundation became a partner in the scheme in 2004.
[5] For further discussion, see John Twigg, 'Capacity Building and its Challenges: a review of the Baring Foundation's International Grants Programme 1997-00' (London: The Baring Foundation, 2001, www.baringfoundation.org.uk/internationalreview.pdf)
[6] 'Policy on Capacity Building in Overseas Work' (Dublin: Concern Worldwide, 2001), p.1.

develops or extends genuine partnerships with them, leads to beneficiaries having more control over decision making and the management of initiatives, addresses the needs of vulnerable groups, and introduces long-term benefits.

Applications to the International Programme for capacity building work must be linked to its current theme: 'Problems arising from long-term migration and displacement of people, particularly that caused by political, economic and environmental circumstances'. As with capacity building, the programme adopts a broad view of its theme (for example, it has refused to get caught up in debates over the distinction between 'forced' or 'voluntary' migration), leaving it to applicant agencies to come forward with suggestions.

The topic of 'building capacity in unstable situations' was seen as an important issue not only for the programme and its partners but for many development organisations working in similar conditions. Little seemed to have been written on the subject, and there was added interest and value in allowing partner organisations to speak from their own project experiences.

The subject was also thought to be highly relevant to international development as a whole, and the discussions to be timely. Problems arising from long-term migration and displacement are clearly an important area deserving attention from policy makers and aid agencies. In a recent speech, Britain's International Development Secretary, Hilary Benn, observed that humanitarian agencies currently deliver assistance and protection to 100 million people in 100 countries; there are 10 million refugees and 25 million internally displaced people worldwide; and 175 million people – 2.9% of the world's population – are international migrants.[7]

The 216 applications received by the International Programme between 2001 and 2004 reveal something of the diversity of migrants and displaced people. Seven groups of people stood out in the applications:

(1) Displaced people and refugees: the main group, especially those displaced by long-running conflicts (e.g. Sudan, Angola, Colombia), for whom displacement has become a semi-permanent condition.
(2) A variety of groups who were affected by economic migration of diverse kinds: these included migrants themselves (e.g. children who move into towns and cities to work as domestic servants, women migrant factory workers in export processing zones) and those left behind (e.g. households headed by women and older people as the result of men migrating in search of work).
(3) People displaced or forced to migrate as a result of government policies, especially those leading to restriction or denial of access to land (e.g. farming communities removed to make way for other forms of economic and agricultural development; coastal fishing communities displaced by commercial shrimp farming).
(4) People returning to rebuild their homes and livelihoods following cessation of conflict (notably in Sierra Leone and Sudan). There are signs that NGOs are taking more interest in such people and their problems as some long-running conflicts come to an end.

[7] Hilary Benn, 'Reform of the international humanitarian system'. Speech at the Overseas Development Institute, London, 15 December 2004.

(5) Street children, particularly in Latin America.
(6) Forest peoples, particularly in Central Africa where indigenous communities have been displaced or have lost rights of access to their traditional lands as a result of conservation, conflict and commercial exploitation.
(7) Pastoralists in East Africa and the Horn, whose traditional nomadic lifestyle has been disrupted by conflict, privatization of previously common lands and other social, economic and political forces.

However, we should not forget that migration can play a positive role in socio-economic development. For instance, formal and informal remittances from migrant workers worldwide amount to an estimated $300 billion per year, and play an increasingly important role in the economies of many developing countries.[8] On a much smaller scale African diaspora organisations form a rapidly expanding and dynamic group within the international NGO sector.[9]

Migration and displacement are often the result of political weakness and instability, including conflict, which have profound implications for development. Much of the work funded by the International Programme since 2001 is in so-called 'fragile states' – those where 'government cannot or will not deliver core functions to the majority of its people, including the poor'. These deserve more attention from international development agencies, because poverty there tends to be widespread, they are a long way off track from achieving the Millennium Development Goals, their instability can have a destabilizing effect on their region, and the costs of late response to crisis are high.[10]

Other forces affecting migration and displacement include globalization and environmental and demographic pressures, all of which are fixed firmly on the international policy agenda for the foreseeable future. Sir Crispin Tickell's foreword to this book surveys some of these issues and their implications for the way we approach development. Globalization – economic, technological, cultural and political – and its consequences are much debated in today's intellectual and policy circles, though seemingly with more division than consensus of views.[11]

2. Key themes from the discussions

The presentations and discussions at the workshop and seminar focused on three themes that the International Programme's experiences indicated were particularly relevant to building capacity in unstable situations:
(1) Building capacity where civil society has broken down.
(2) The role of NGOs where government is weak.
(3) Advocacy, or engagement at the grass roots?

It soon became apparent that the three themes were inextricably entwined, whilst within each theme the workshop and seminar generated a wide variety of experiences, issues and ideas. The presentations varied in approach, too: some were simple case studies, others more discursive. The discussions were fluid and wide-ranging. Nevertheless, several common or prominent issues emerged.

[8] House of Commons International Development Committee, *Migration and Development: How to make migration work for poverty reduction.* Sixth Report of Session 2003-4, Vol. I (London: The Stationery Office, 2004).
[9] Three of the organisations contributing to this book – South Sudan Women Concern, Tigrai Development Association and the Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa – were founded by Africans in exile.
[10] DFID, *Why we need to work more effectively in fragile states* (London: Department for International Development, 2005).
[11] See Anthony Giddens, 'Runaway World' (BBC Radio 4 Reith Lectures, 1999, www.bbc.co.uk/print/radio4/reith1999).

(1) Building capacity where civil society has broken down

There is enormous diversity among civil society organisations. The International Programme's partners support a wide variety of NGOs and CBOs. International NGOs take experience, practicality and ideology into account when deciding which elements of civil society to support in a given context, and whether to work with existing groups or create new ones. These decisions are never straightforward, but they are particularly challenging where civil society structures have been damaged or destroyed – for example, by conflict or displacement.

In one sense, civil society never breaks down entirely: people will always act collectively in pursuit of common aims. In this book Tesfazghi Aberra and his colleagues give an example of spontaneous interaction across the disputed Ethiopia-Eritrea border by children and farmers, despite the differences between their respective governments. However, the challenges to civil society's effective working are often enormous in fragile states with weak or unsympathetic governments, poor infrastructure and facilities, and particularly in those torn by conflict.

Speakers revealed some of the serious everyday practical problems that civil society organisations face.

Conflict was of course a major threat to organisations and their work. The tales told by participants were a vivid reminder that aerial bombardment, trigger-happy insurgents and mined roads are a fact of life in many countries. One NGO working in South Sudan had only recently been able to move its operational headquarters there from Uganda with the return of peace; the work of another had been disrupted from time to time as fighting flared up or soldiers passed through the district. The dedication and indeed physical courage of those who join community groups and work for NGOs in such conditions was obvious.

Yet even in volatile situations, it is possible to support community groups and community development. The work of South Sudan Women Concern (see the paper by Mary Kiden) is a prime example of this. Through example, negotiation and persistence, this project has improved women's livelihood security and status in society, and helped to protect them from violence and domestic exploitation.

It seemed that there was often strong demand from local NGOs and CBOs for quite basic skills. This impression is borne out by examination of all the funding applications received by the International Programme in the past four years, especially for support to CBOs, which typically were either new (even being created from scratch), relatively recent, or established groups having to adapt to new roles. Local partners in general were energetic and committed. They were real local organisations, created by local people or reflecting their concerns. But they were often weak in organisational development and project management terms, with a widespread need for improved monitoring and evaluation systems, stronger local management boards, and training in participatory techniques, leadership skills, facilitation methods and business management.

The idea of education and skills as a 'portable resource' (in the words of Education Action International) was common. For some local partners and beneficiary communities, the threat of being forced to move because of conflict is never very remote. The immense value of basic literacy work in building the administrative capacity and confidence of community organisations has been demonstrated in quite different contexts by projects the International Programme has funded, notably those of South Sudan Women Concern and ICA Tanzania (see the papers by Mary Kiden, and Doris Mutashobya and Jonathan Dudding). Literacy is highly valued by communities and there has been high demand for such support: on occasion, the inability of projects to meet the level of demand has caused tension within communities.

Organisational development work generally now prefers this kind of 'software' approach, based on enhancement of skills and capacities, to the more old-fashioned 'hardware' approach that placed greater emphasis on provision of equipment and goods. But as several presenters and participants showed, the lack of adequate facilities and materials is a severe handicap to local organisations. An NGO in South Sudan used much of its sub-grant from an International Programme partner NGO to construct an operational headquarters, and install power and communications equipment. Although NGOs' willingness to spend money on buying vehicles is often criticized,[12] the much-maligned 4x4 is often essential to manage projects in remote locations where roads are poor or non-existent. Donors are often anxious to see local NGOs become financially sustainable, but this is easier said than done in many developing countries, and in many cases external agencies will need to provide financial support for wages and other running costs for long periods of time.

(2) The role of NGOs where government is weak

Civil society organisations have to position themselves in relation to government policies, structures and actions. In many developing countries, national and local government are weakened by lack of capacities, resources or understanding of issues. Unstable situations, or rapid change, can create or accentuate such weaknesses, placing a greater burden on NGOs and community groups to fill gaps in thinking and implementation.

This theme was at the heart of the workshop and seminar discussions as a whole. Every project interacts with government at one level or another, whatever the nature of the work on the ground. No project, however uncontroversial, can function without at least government tolerance.

In an ordered conceptual model of society, there are defined spaces or spheres of operation or responsibility for government and civil society, as well as the private sector and the family (the paper by Archie McCarron and Hugo Córdova is a useful discussion of these principles).[13] Problems arise for civil society when its space is ill-defined or contested, which is likely where there is conflict or under authoritarian regimes, and where states are emerging from prolonged periods of conflict or authoritarian rule – and many of the International Programme's partners are working in the latter situations.

[12] Some donors, including the International Programme, do not allow their grants to be used towards purchase of vehicles.
[13] For a more extensive discussion, see Michael Edwards, *Civil Society* (London: Polity Press, 2004).

These uncertainties are illustrated in the paper by Joseph Lasuru and Sally Pritchard on the work of Education Action International's partner Needs Service Education Agency (NSEA) in South Sudan. Here, during decades of conflict, state education infrastructure has virtually collapsed, leaving communities and NGOs such as NSEA to make what provision they can. In effect, they have taken on the role of government in some areas, for example in teacher training and development of educational materials for schools. With the recent peace settlement, the task of rebuilding educational services should fall to the new civilian authority in the South but this currently lacks the capacity to deal with the problem. Civil society organisations still have a role here, for the moment, but this will change as the new administration establishes itself. NSEA is already reflecting on how its role should adapt in the future.

A good example of the positive and significant role that civil society can play where space is available comes from work to tackle the psychological consequences of conflict. This tends to be a neglected area in governments' and international aid agencies' development work (as are mental health problems generally).[14] Moreover, government, which is usually a party to internal conflict, inevitably finds it difficult to approach such issues neutrally and to be perceived as neutral by those who have suffered. This creates space for civil society organisations of all kinds. The Tigrai Development Association's conflict resolution initiative along the Ethiopian border with Eritrea and the work on post-traumatic stress disorder by Reason Partnership and Richmond Fellowship del Peru (see the papers by Aberra and colleagues, and McCarron and Córdova) illustrate the opportunities that can be grasped in such situations. In both cases, NGOs occupying a neutral middle ground and in possession of relevant technical expertise were able to engage with community and government organisations to develop and implement effective strategies.

It was also apparent from the seminar presentations that local and national governments often welcome NGO assistance, especially on matters where they lack the relevant expertise or capacity: for example, post-traumatic stress disorder in Peru, disability in Angola and pastoralism in Somaliland. NGOs have made significant contributions to the development of policy and legislation in several countries. In other cases, where government's lack of resources and capacity is acute, NGOs have provided more material support: office equipment in Somaliland, training and shared visits in Tanzania.

In all these instances, mutual trust between government and civil society was identified as an essential ingredient of effective programmes. Interestingly, government corruption, which was often mentioned as an issue by speakers and participants in the discussions and is clearly a major problem in many countries, appeared as a central issue only in two of the presentations; in the other case studies at least, other government weaknesses were more significant.

[14] The International Programme has received only a handful of proposals to tackle mental health problems arising from conflict and associated displacement: e.g. for counselling and psychological rehabilitation of refugees, communities affected by conflict, and girls abducted by rebel armies. There have also been one or two proposals to rehabilitate victims of organised violence and torture.

(3) Advocacy, or engagement at the grass roots?

This is a classic dilemma for NGOs and CBOs: with their limited capacity, should they concentrate their efforts on improving conditions on the ground, or seek to change the policies and structures that create those conditions? The advocacy needed for the latter approach requires considerable skill, resources, determination and sometimes courage. It is a particular challenge where the policy environment is hostile, liable to change rapidly (in situations of political instability and conflict, for example) or vulnerable to other external shocks. Those who are in greatest need of advocates on their behalf may also be in greatest need of basic material support.

The answer to the question at the two meetings was unequivocal: there should be advocacy *and* work at the grass roots. There was also general agreement on the main reasons for this.

Even the most local-level projects are in some way responding to powerful higher-level forces (economic, social and political) that may cause substantial or rapid change. Project reports which focus on the activities of local partners sometimes appear to downplay these pressures, but discussions show that agencies are acutely aware of them. The boundaries between implementation and advocacy, between local and wider geographical spheres of activity, are much more fluid in reality than in writing on policy or in project documentation. Advocacy to tackle underlying causes was seen as the inevitable result of more materially focused work on the ground and essential to scaling up impact.

The crucial role of national and local governments – as targets for advocacy, and as partners in achieving change – was highlighted throughout the two days' discussions. As we saw above, many of the experiences presented indicated that government welcomed NGO interest in issues, by and large, especially where this included specialist advice on policy and legislation relating to subjects on which expertise might be lacking in government circles (the positive responses from several West African governments to local NGOs' initiatives on child trafficking are a good example of this). But the discussions revealed widespread awareness that advocacy can easily create friction and conflict between civil society and government, because it challenges the status quo and asserts the rights of those to whom they are denied. This can present real threats – including physical threats – to institutions and individuals who are involved. Acute instability and conflict were even more threatening: by creating more confrontational political environments, they cut away the 'middle ground' needed for negotiation. The experiences of NGO partners in countries emerging from conflict or authoritarian rule suggested that re-opening this space was no simple matter in systems accustomed to polarization and militarization: in fact, as Simon Counsell points out in his paper, this can be a particularly dangerous period, 'where the political space for civil society has begun to open and expand, but where the boundaries are not at all clear; where there is still a strong reaction to non-state actors moving into the scene'. One of the perceived benefits of regional advocacy initiatives and

networks was that they gave some protection to individual members in situations where their national governments were defensive or hostile to proposed changes.

Often, the problems that partners are seeking to address are not confined within national borders but common to a whole region. For example, child trafficking is a problem in several West African countries and may involve children moving between countries; and the common lands of traditional pastoralist or hunter-gatherer communities often straddle national boundaries. Intervention at several levels, from local to regional or even global, may be required to tackle these issues, making international advocacy a logical activity in support of grass-roots work. Reference to relevant international mechanisms or agreements, notably those on human rights, gave leverage to such initiatives and provided a framework for advocacy at various levels. Many agencies involved in advocacy make little distinction between particular levels of engagement (local, district, national or whatever). In their view, a multi-track approach is essential to engage all the relevant stakeholders in resolving complex problems.

Agencies' ability to influence changes, or at least to mitigate their effects, varies according to circumstances but is effective in some cases. NGO campaigning in West and Central Africa has forced shifts in the way governments and international development agencies approach forestry issues. In Angola, a movement of displaced people has made government more aware of their needs and willing to adapt policy and legislation. At a more local level, women's groups in South Sudan have successfully lobbied military commanders to curb soldiers' violence against women, and community leaders to defend women's rights to property.

Nevertheless, advocacy is often a long and difficult process that does not fit easily within donor agencies' fixed-term and often short-term funding cycles. This is a particular issue for regional networks, where the start-up and running costs may be high, which cannot be made sustainable within the standard duration of a 'project' and whose results may not appear for some time. Short-term campaigns, pursued with vigour, can be effective, but creation of platforms for long-term change requires substantial investment in research and awareness raising.

International NGOs have a significant role to play in supporting local partners' advocacy work, by giving training in the necessary skills, supplying resources, providing platforms to raise their issues, building bridges between them and intergovernmental and other international bodies, and contacting international institutions that might otherwise be out of reach to local civil society. In Africa in particular, civil society capacities and opportunities to engage with key decision makers are limited. At its best, the work of international partners opens up space for local views to be heard and creates opportunities for local organisations to take part in debates. Yet several partners insisted that advocacy initiatives should be genuinely representative of the people they sought to help, and should seek to give them a voice rather than trying to speak for them.

3. Conclusion: from understanding to action

This book seeks to stimulate more effective engagement by practitioners, policy makers and funders with the problems of building the capacity of civil society in conditions of instability. Understanding those problems – especially as they are faced by agencies working on the ground – is just a first step towards this, albeit an essential one.

The papers that follow describe how the International Programme's partners have addressed these problems, generally with a high degree of success. They should be read carefully as examples of what can be achieved and how to do it. There is no substitute for learning from experience. However, as an aide memoire to policy makers and donors in particular, the case studies are followed by a set of key recommendations.

Historical note on the Baring Foundation International Programme

Nicholas Baring

My opening address to the seminar held on 20th January included a short account of the historical background to the Baring Foundation's present International Programme. An edited version of that section of my comments follows for the benefit of those readers who are interested in knowing what led up to the programme in its present form.

Prior to 1995 the Foundation had no international programme as such, but was open to applications from organisations based in the UK with activities in Sub-Saharan Africa or Latin America falling within the categories into which the Foundation's grant-giving was then divided – Social Welfare, Arts, Environment, Health and Education.

The geographical limits (which included areas of particular interest to Barings the merchant bank and hence to those Foundation Trustees who were also Directors of the Bank) were set to avoid over-stretching the financial and human resources of the Foundation.

1995 marked a watershed in the affairs of the Foundation. Following the loss of its principal asset and the reduction of the income available for distribution in the form of grants to a quarter of what it had been previously, it was clear that Trustees would have to restrict the categories of grant-giving and set clear guidelines for the applications which could be considered. After a long period of deliberation led by David Carrington, the then Director, it was decided to confine giving to three areas – Strengthening the Voluntary Sector, Arts in the Community and in Education and internationally in a modest continuation of support to organisations operating in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America. In all three cases (the new international programme did not in fact start until late 1997) the programmes were divided between a number of core grants spread over three years and one-off project grants; to reduce the number of potential applicants themes were selected and, for core-grants, a limited number of organisations invited to bid.

The obvious question is why was an international programme maintained when, with such a drastic reduction in grant-giving capacity, there would have been no difficulty in finding strong candidates for the domestic programmes. Trustees identified a number of different reasons. First, however great the needs in this country, the needs of the Third World are even greater; contributions from private sector grant-givers form an essential complement to the aid which flows, sometimes uncertainly and inefficiently, through bilateral and multilateral

government channels. Secondly, there are few enough UK trusts and foundations with any international programme and the loss of any one, however modest in size, would be keenly felt. Thirdly, it is easy to assume that the benefit is all one-way, flowing from North to South; in fact the conditions faced by NGOs and CBOs operating in third-world countries call for determination and ingenuity from which we in this country can learn a great deal. Finally, in the particular case of the Foundation a number of the Trustees had interests and experience in the international sphere to contribute to an international programme.

These, then, were the arguments which led Trustees to decide in favour of a continuation and in each of 1998 and 1999 some £600,000 was distributed, of which some 60% was represented by core grants on two particular themes – work with women and displacement of people. During 1999 and 2000 further thought was given to giving the programme greater focus; for 2001 it was decided that the project grants should be discontinued and that the programme should be open to application from any organisation able to fit within the theme of Migration and Displacement of People for a mix of core and block grants, the latter for redistribution to NGO or CBO partners in the field, with a general objective of capacity-building, covered fully in John Twigg's preceding chapter.

Over the first four years of its life the programme yielded good results with a good flow of eligible applicants – averaging more than fifty a year – making it possible to select strong short-lists for final presentations and valuable outcomes from the thirteen organisations which received grants. It is particularly gratifying to record that in the fourth year the Trustees of the John Ellerman Foundation agreed to participate in the African part of the Programme and are continuing for the current year.

Theme 1:

BUILDING CAPACITY WHERE CIVIL SOCIETY HAS BROKEN DOWN

Building capacity where civil society has broken down: NSEA's work in Southern Sudan

Joseph Lasuru
Needs Service Education Agency

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Education Action International

1. Introduction

Education Action International[15] supports people affected by conflict to realize their right to education, in the belief that education is a fundamental human right and an essential factor in enabling individuals and societies to develop. It also believes that education and skills are amongst the most important and portable assets for people forced to move, often repeatedly, by conflict and oppression. Accordingly, Education Action International works with indigenous organisations in several countries to help refugees, internally displaced people and societies affected by conflict to gain access to, and expand, education. It generally works with southern NGOs as well as teachers' unions and, where conditions permit, local education authorities, which focus on equitably improving access to education and the quality of teaching and governance. It also works with refugees in the UK to assist them in realizing their rights to continue or complete their education or training and gain employment.

Education Action International's particular concern is the long-term impact of conflict and displacement on the education rights, aspirations and expectations of displaced people (especially in the poorest communities). Outside externally supported settlements people often accept any provision, whether or not it is appropriate. Education Action International supports educators from affected communities who are working for change in education services. It currently works with educationalists in Sudan, Uganda, Egypt, Peru and Palestine on medium to long-term projects in organisational development, national educational policy development, adult literacy, curriculum development, teacher training, child rights awareness and improving access to education for poor and marginalized groups. Internationally, its approach is to work with partners to help identify strategies for contributing towards the Education For All (EFA) goals.[16] It also hopes to ameliorate some of the negative effects of national Education For All planning on access for girls and disabled pupils.

[15] The organisation was established in England in 1923 as Student Relief to assist refugees from central European nationalism in continuing their education and careers. In the 1950s it evolved into World University Service (UK). In June 2003 the name Education Action International was adopted as the operating name to reflect its current goals and activities more fully.
[16] The six Education For All goals, to which 160 countries committed themselves at the World Education Forum in 2000 are: expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education; ensuring that by 2015 all children have access to free and compulsory primary education; learning and life skills programmes for adults and youth; achieving a 50% improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015; and improving all aspects of the quality of education.

Over the past three years, funded by the Baring Foundation, it has worked on a programme of capacity building with three partner organisations. The programme took as a starting point Education Action International's own capacity to support partners, and enabled it to develop materials and training modules which would be of use in situations where resources are scarce. A case study of one of the project partners is featured here.

2. Civil society in Southern Sudan

Southern Sudan covers an area of about 640,000 square kilometres, with an estimated population of 7.5 million in 2003. This population is expected to grow by 4.5 million in the next six years as a result of the return of refugees and internally displaced people. Since Sudan's independence in 1956, South Sudan has experienced long periods of political turmoil and civil war (1955-72 and 1983 to the present). The conflict has caused immense suffering and destruction and has deprived the population of the most basic human needs. An estimated two million people have lost their lives and over four million have been displaced.

A comprehensive peace treaty has just been signed between the government in the north and the main southern opposition group, the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM). Under this agreement, the SPLM will form the main administrative authority in the South during a six-year interim period. At the end of the interim period, a referendum will be held to determine the future of Sudan, with the option of secession for the South. More than 75% of the South is today under SPLM administration. The SPLM, however, has limited capacity to implement any significant development in these areas. The reality is that people have to rely to a significant extent on external relief aid and NGOs for provision of basic services. NGOs are 'filling the gap'.

Civil society in South Sudan is affected by two main factors: militarized communities, and poor access to primary education.

As a result of the conflict, communities are heavily militarized. People who run public offices – both men and women – are in uniform or former soldiers. Elections of people to offices are limited.

The net enrolment rate in primary schools in Southern Sudan is approximately 25%, which is the lowest for any country in the world. Research also indicates that over 75% of the one million school age children in South Sudan do not have access to any form of formal education. Only 27% of the pupils enrolled in primary schools are girls.

An estimated 48% of teachers are untrained. Only 6% of teachers in primary schools are women. In 1,426 schools that have been assessed 94,387 textbooks are shared between over 300,000 pupils. Schools are still using different curricula from neighbouring countries.

3. NSEA and its work

The Needs Service Education Agency (NSEA: formerly called New Sudan Education Association) is an indigenous NGO, established in 1994 by a group of Southern Sudanese educationalists and other professionals. Its main aim is to improve the quality of education and empower the people of Southern Sudan, through the establishment of community-based resource centres, teacher training, curriculum development, civic education and early childhood education. To NSEA, sustainability means building communities' capacity to become self-reliant so that they can take care of their own future: education is key to achieving this.

NSEA faces a lot of challenges in implementing its programmes: in particular its own capacity and infrastructure. For a long time it has harboured the ideal of operating from within Sudan but because of the unrest has maintained an operational base in Northern Uganda and coordinated teacher training via its four resource centres at Yei, Kajokeji, Yambio and Rubeke. This has meant considerable resources going into travel and logistics. It is only with the support from the Baring Foundation that it has been able to take steps towards this ideal by establishing an office in Maridi, Southern Sudan over the past three years as the security situation has eased.

When it got the opportunity of a grant focused on building capacity, NSEA was delighted because it enabled it to successfully carry out the following activities:

- Staff capacity building. The grant has enabled the organisation to train six of its staff members in computer skills. This has very much improved the efficiency and effectiveness of programme implementation. The Foundation has also supported the programme coordinator's study at a higher education institution (by distance learning).
- Power and communications equipment. NSEA purchased radio communications and power equipment for its new headquarters in South Sudan. Given the fact that communication infrastructures are very poor in the South, this radio equipment has been instrumental in message delivery and monitoring the progress of work on the ground. A portable generator and eight solar panels with accessories were also purchased.
- Office computers and maintenance. Two desktop computers and one laptop have been purchased. This has greatly enhanced staff work. The maintenance of these computers and Internet fees were also paid from this grant.
- Construction of the organisation's headquarters in South Sudan. The construction of a six-room office building has been completed and the compound fenced. In fact, this has been one of the greatest achievements because in the first instance NSEA renovated an old building that was originally owned by the Ministry of Education. However, this building was subsequently needed for use by the Secretariat of Education (SoE) – the current Southern Sudanese educational authority – and NSEA had to start a fresh search for premises. Funds from the Baring Foundation have enabled

NSEA to acquire new premises and build an office of its own in Maridi, which is the traditional geographical centre for education in Southern Sudan and where the SoE expects to base its teacher training college.

It should, however, be noted that a number of difficulties were encountered during the implementation of these activities. These included:

- Lack of means of transport to bring building materials to the site from Uganda and within Maridi. The vehicles that were hired proved costly. Costs of local materials were also high: for instance a brick that cost 20 Ugandan Shillings (equivalent to £0.07) in Uganda was four times as much when purchased inside Sudan.
- An inadequate number of skilled contractors in Maridi. Contractors had to be hired from Uganda. This was indeed very expensive.
- Bad road network and infrastructure, and aerial bombardments during the conflict.

With regard to staff capacity building, there was no training institution nearby for the staff. This meant that they had to be trained in Kampala (Uganda), increasing the costs. Nevertheless, there is still a need for further staff training and recruitment.

4. NSEA'S approach

In response to these problems, NSEA has adopted a range of interventions.

(1) Teacher training and curriculum development

The teacher-training programme is aimed at improving the quality of teachers working in South Sudan. The focus is on in-service training and involves: piloting teacher training courses that improve, in a holistic way, the skills, confidence and attitudes of teachers; training trainers who can pass on their knowledge to others; and lobbying and advocating for a practical, child-centred approach in teacher training programmes. So far, 244 teachers have been trained (only 27 of whom are women as the courses so far target teachers already practising and there are currently very few women teachers). NSEA has also produced a number of primary school curricula and syllabi, with support materials.

(2) Establishment of community-based resource centres

Four resource centres have so far been established (in Yei, Kajokeji, and Magwi counties) with funds raised from Operation Day's Work – a fundraising initiative amongst secondary school children in Denmark. The resource centres are community centres with the main objective of improving information access for the local communities and the general public, since there are as yet no media institutions in the South.

(3) Civic education materials

The recent 21 years of conflict in South Sudan have left civil society completely weakened, and civic education programmes have collapsed. NSEA has therefore embarked on the production of civic education materials that can be used when peace returns to the country, for instance introducing and discussing the concepts of rights and obligations of citizens. It is hoped that these elements will eventually be integrated into the national curriculum.

(4) Early childhood care and development (ECCD)

This approach has been adopted to enhance the quality of early childhood guidance and care through community awareness raising and mobilization to support ECCD, equipping ECCD centres with appropriate materials, and training ECCD community facilitators, support tutors, parents and caregivers. A baseline study of early childhood education has been completed.

(5) Promoting civil society

NSEA has for over six years worked with partners on promoting civil society in Southern Sudan and has helped to organise two major workshops on this issue (in Limuru, Kenya, and Rumbek, Sudan). NSEA is also currently working with other local partners (e.g. the Institute for Promotion of Civil Society), mainly on the production of civic education documents and organizing seminars and workshops that strengthen civil society.

5. Challenges and opportunities

NSEA faces several challenges in carrying out this work.

(1) Funding

Although NSEA continues to receive funds from its partners (Education Action International, the Baring Foundation, MS-Uganda, Operation Day's Work and Inter-Church Organisation for Development Cooperation), these funds are inadequate to meet the level of need.

(2) Sustainability of the resource centres

NSEA needs to ensure that the resource centres remain relevant and provide services that are in demand from the community, to complement the changing environment where schools and the private sector may soon begin to offer similar activities. It must also balance the need for local fund-raising/income-generation and sustainability against the need to maintain focus on the quality of its core services.

Communications systems such as mobile telephones and Internet access may be expected to spread to the main population centres within a decade or less and NSEA will adapt its information-dissemination activities accordingly.

(3) Governance of NSEA

NSEA has done well in developing local support structures but communications at all levels within the organisation need to be improved including between different levels of management.

(4) Lack of government educational structures

The context of education in South Sudan has been changing rapidly in the last few years and is set to change even more substantially with peace. NSEA must adapt to those changes. This means grasping new opportunities such as early childhood development and civic education; but it also involves making a strategic withdrawal from areas where NSEA no longer enjoys a comparative advantage or which are simply a burden to the organisation. Clear focus will be key to NSEA's future success.

(5) Lobbying and advocacy

This important aspect of NSEA's work goes hand in hand with service delivery. NSEA believes that communities should have a say in how education is delivered, and seeks dialogue with the SoE to ensure that its programmes complement the government's activities. The benefits of this aspect of NSEA's work are long-term and therefore NSEA is working to a five-year plan.

(6) Post-war government programmes

With the comprehensive peace agreement signed, it is possible that the government will take over the principal role of supporting basic education from NGOs and communities. South Sudan resource sharing (a key element of the peace agreement covering the division of oil and non-oil revenues, the management of the oil sector, the monetary authority and the reconstruction of the South and other war-affected areas) is likely to generate substantial income for the SPLM administration soon after the start of the six-year interim period. In this context, several major changes will affect NSEA. The interim government's plans to develop a comprehensive teacher training and school support network to meet the needs of both primary schools and alternative education centres will impact on NSEA's teacher training activities. The government is also developing plans to complete curriculum work for all levels of education within the next two years. It is reviewing its instructional materials supply strategy and could choose to adopt policies ranging from 100% government control and management to one of *laissez-faire*. The legitimacy and parameters of NSEA's curriculum work will be defined by these policies.

(7) Teacher recruitment

Developing strategies to increase the number of female teachers remains a critical need as well as a central aim of NSEA, but one which presents significant challenges.

NSEA has several options for engagement with all these changes. These include:

- Teacher training: supporting the new government's teacher training programme. NSEA could offer its services as a capacity-building partner in developing in-service teacher training support in one or more of its target counties (but management and logistical skills rather than teacher training quality will be the main strengths required). NSEA could also second its staff as national training resource persons – this would make use of NSEA's skills but would not provide NSEA with any clear organisational benefits. Another approach would be to develop in-service teacher training packages and perhaps other educational packages such as ECCD for delivery through the government's Education Support Network. This reflects NSEA's skills and offers it a recognizable national role as an educational innovator.
- Resource centres and community development. There is a lot of enthusiasm in communities for resource centres to be established in locations which have not yet been reached, and centre users are vocal in their suggestions for new activities at existing centres. NSEA, therefore, aims to exploit this opportunity to work and plan with these communities to support their educational needs.
- Civic Education. As South Sudan moves towards peace and democracy (with elections due after three years of the interim period and the referendum after six years), there will be a massive need for civic education. NSEA could, therefore, through its skilled human resources work with the government of South Sudan, promote civic education programmes at grass-roots levels.
- Early childhood care and development. NSEA sees ECCD as a critical area of education, which is being neglected. The Secretariat of Education, though it appreciates the importance of ECCD, recognizes its own institutional limitations and plans to allow NGOs to develop models of community-based ECCD, which can become the basis for future government policy.
- Gender mainstreaming. NSEA expects that a Ministry of Gender will soon be created and that this will provide an opportunity for NGOs such as NSEA to work with government to improve the position of women at the grass roots of Southern Sudanese society.

6. Conclusions

Over the years NSEA's achievements have shown that its core strengths come from: the long history and experience of the founders in managing education and development programmes; the national scope of the programme; the creative talent of its staff; excellent relations with funding partners; effective teacher training and use of modern, child-centred teaching methodologies; a learning approach with a holistic perspective covering knowledge, skills and attitudes; and a participatory approach to community development (including use of community-based resource centres as a vehicle to enlighten and empower communities).

With a comprehensive peace agreement signed in Sudan and the support of its partners, NSEA very much hopes to be in the forefront of the reconstruction and rehabilitation programme.

Building capacity where civil society has been disrupted: working with women's groups in South Sudan

Mary Kiden
South Sudan Women Concern

1. Introduction

South Sudan Women Concern (SSWC) was formed in the UK in 1993 by a group of Sudanese women, with the aim of alleviating poverty and advancing education and training among Sudanese refugees in Britain and Africa. Initially it focused on the needs of Sudanese refugees in the UK, where it provides education support and welfare advice, but since 1997 it has been working with displaced women and their families in South Sudan, where there has been a civil war for many years. SSWC is registered with the SRRC (Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission) and has a base in South Sudan, working in Kajokeji County, Equatoria Region.

In peace time the population of Kajokeji is about 350,000, but it is currently 150,000. It is largely Christian (all meetings are opened and closed by prayers; several situations are compared to biblical equivalents). About 60% of women are widows or female heads of families whose men folk are at the front lines fighting with the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Traditional attitudes and practices in South Sudan have made women subordinate to men. Girls are looked at as a source of wealth and not as members of the family. Traditionally, once a man can afford a girl's dowry or bride price, the girl is given up to her new marital home to continue her subordinate existence. She cannot become a member of her husband's clan, which is a crucial qualification for land rights or indeed any property ownership within the clan, while tradition allows the head of the family to prosper (have children, receive a bride price from his girl children and benefit from woman's labour). Girls' education has not been a priority in this context. As a result, a large majority of the members of the groups supported by SSWC have had no education at all.

Peace in Southern Sudan (New Sudan as it is referred to in Kajokeji) appears to be holding. Negotiations in Kenya reached their final stages early in 2005. However, past experience has shown that ceasefires have been fragile.

2. Project background

SSWC carried out a needs assessment among women in and around camps for displaced people in Southern Sudan early in 1997. This highlighted the need for food security, healthcare and education. There were severe food storages and frequent violence against women and children. There was an acute lack of healthcare services (the health clinic in the camp consisted of three mud huts, each occupied by male patients).

Faced with these problems, women wanted to do something about them, but were unable to articulate their needs adequately. Although they had formed women's groups these were isolated and ineffective. The low level of literacy and other obstacles (e.g. insecurity, negative attitudes towards women in society) prevented women from organizing effectively.

From the beginning, SSWC has placed emphasis on promoting education and capacity building for women, seeking to support their aspirations via organisational development and management skills, adult literacy, entrepreneurial skills, and other training skills including advocacy, networking, agriculture and intermediate technology.

3. Challenges

Organisation was the key to making sustainable improvements. Many women had formed groups around particular activities but these were very weak institutionally and isolated from one another. Bringing these groups together became a challenge. SSWC had to obtain permission from the authorities to operate in the area, and to impress on them that SSWC's support would be more effective if delivered through the women's groups and that it was necessary for better management of resources for the groups to receive training.

When SSWC started its work, the security situation presented particular difficulties. The camps themselves were very violent places, particularly for women. There was frequent aerial bombardment, and on the ground movement was restricted due to attacks from the Ugandan rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). During 1998-2002 SSWC had to work around these realities to create a viable existence for displaced women and their families.

The most important challenge, though, was the psychological impact of instability. The displaced people had been on the move for a very long time. There was a feeling that this was not their final destination. There was always an air of temporary existence. As a result people were reluctant to put up permanent systems for fear of moving on. Many women had also lost confidence.

The groups and the initiatives supporting them were very vulnerable to rapidly changing contexts, making sustainability a particular challenge. For SSWC,

'sustainability' meant working around the realities of insecurity and local authorities' regulations to build the capacity of women's groups to respond to their needs and the needs of their communities. This meant that groups had to be organised around projects identified by women – in this case, those that gave immediate response to family needs. Such projects included food security, healthcare, education and training. Sustainability also meant training women in replicable skills that could be used by members if there was a need to relocate.

4. Activities and achievements

The project has provided opportunities for women to contribute to development, rehabilitation and reduction of conflict in their communities. It has supported and strengthened viable community-based women's organisations and local partner organisations, through a range of strategies.

(1) Training women's groups

Managerial skills training helped to empower and strengthen the grass-roots women's movement in Kajokeji. Before the project there was no properly constituted women's group in the area. Now there are 20 women's groups and one women's network, with a total membership of 5,000. The groups' organisational and networking skills have improved.

(2) Training women leaders

The majority of group leaders were illiterate. SSWC had to begin by providing literacy training. After three years of training the women feel that the training has had a big influence on their daily lives as well as the management of their groups. Management committee members can now read and write well in Bari (the local language) and write a few words in English. The committees are able to keep records, negotiate and make payments on behalf of their groups; treasurers and chairladies are able to withdraw money from the bank.

(3) Resource centres

The construction of women's resource centres has provided a focal point for women to meet and for other activities to be carried out (e.g. training, seed distributions and collection). They have also raised the profile of SSWC and the groups within local communities.

(4) Exchange visits and civil society workshops

SSWC organised exchange visits to Uganda, other parts of South Sudan and between the groups themselves. These provided learning opportunities and eye-opening experiences. When the women came back, they shared the knowledge they had acquired with other members and emulated what they had seen. SSWC

organised civil society workshops that brought together elders and chiefs in support of the project. As a result, both SSWC and the women's groups received community support.

(5) Consultation workshops

SSWC held consultative workshops and annual general assemblies for representatives of the women's organisations. The general assemblies were attended by SSWC staff, with representatives from NGOs, the local authority and 150-200 women participants representing all the women's groups. Participants gathered for four days of reporting from groups, discussion of issues and making recommendations which were conveyed back to the groups. Many of the issues discussed were practical (e.g. termites in crops, seed storage), and the meetings highlighted the need for ongoing support to reinforce and share the organisational and project management skills already acquired. They also showed a shift in emphasis, as new demands emerged for skills in small enterprise management and networking, indicating that the groups were ready to play a bigger role in community regeneration.

(6) Practical skills training

Training in ploughing with oxen, agricultural techniques, livestock management and entrepreneurship was vital to support the development projects initiated by the women's groups. It enhanced the ability of displaced women to produce food for their families. As a result, members increased their income and were able to pay school fees for their children. The project helped train women in the management of their livestock (this work was funded by CAFOD and Comic Relief). The impact of training in ploughing with oxen made a noticeable difference: in 2004 farms were bigger, because more land could be ploughed, and more surplus crops were sold. Husbands, sons and daughters trained together in ox ploughing, and continued to work together as families in the fields.

SSWC successfully reintroduced crops that had disappeared, and introduced new cereal varieties. Beans and other legumes have been encouraged as new cash crops, and SSWC has promoted intercropping of short-season legumes and slower-maturing crops such as cassava. Thus overall yields per *feddan*[17] have been increased.

(7) Peace building

The project provided training in advocacy skills. Groups used these skills to lobby authorities and speak to soldiers in the area. As a result there were fewer attacks on civilians by soldiers. The changing security situation has been a major influence on the programme, especially in late 1998, when some training had to be cancelled, crops were stolen and some members of the groups moved away from the area. However, security has improved during the period overall.

[17] A *feddan* is just over an acre.

One consequence of this was that more women returned from the camps to their villages, and SSWC had to expand its outreach programme to cover them. The relative peace also encouraged more families to return to Sudan from refugee camps in Uganda.

Women now report being able to offer food to soldiers when demanded because of their better livelihoods, and so being left in peace. SSWC's understanding with the local authorities, elders and military through networking resulted in the value of its work in supporting women (who are often left alone for years with their men at the front) being recognized and valued by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A).

(8) Ownership of Assets

Ownership of livestock was a new experience for most women, giving them self-confidence. As one woman said, 'Before we were in a group like this, we wouldn't have been allowed to sit on chairs and to answer questions like this. And who would have thought we would own chairs like these?' Another reported that her children respected her more because of the security that goats and seeds had afforded their family; her husband also valued and respected this stability, leaving her at home instead of moving her to the front line area. Another woman reported having previously had no property and therefore having led a very itinerant lifestyle; but 'now I have to come back since I have property'.

(9) Relationship between men and women

Some members reported that relationships with their husbands were more harmonious since they were now able to contribute to family income and needs. In one polygamous marriage, the acquisition of assets by one wife had caused tension and jealousies within the marriage, but local authorities and other members of the husband's family had defended the SSWC member against her husband's perceived unreasonable behaviour. However women said the underlying currents of unease among men caused by women's newly acquired status always surfaced whenever there was a dispute.

(10) Advocacy and lobbying

The project's training in advocacy and lobbying enabled women leaders to take collective action on issues affecting group members and represent their members in disputes. These skills were evident in their ability to deal with domestic disputes. For example there was a case where a husband agreed with his brothers to divorce his wife. They confiscated her oxen and plough, which were loaned to her from SSWC. The member reported the case to her management committee. The chairlady and three other women leaders went to the house of the member and successfully negotiated the release of the assets. In another group, the local court confiscated five goats belonging to a member as punishment for her son

who married a local girl without paying enough dowry. When this was reported to the group leaders, they went to the local chief and negotiated a settlement.

(11) Training in health promotion skills

SSWC organised a series of workshops and seminars in the women's centres and schools on health promotion. These focused on mother and child health, reproductive health (particularly among young families) and the girl child. Women leaders were also trained as health promoters: they conducted home visits and helped encourage families to live healthy lives. Women reported that the health of families improved, and members took better care of their children.

(12) Capacity building of SSWC

SSWC has improved its resource base and its professional ability to deliver the project. It organised in-service training for field staff on a range of technical and project management subjects. As a result management and administrative systems have improved.

5. Factors in success and failure

One key factor in success has been the involvement of the group members in project planning, implementation and monitoring processes. SSWC holds consultative seminars, workshops and an annual assembly for members to deliberate on issues and make decisions. Another factor has been the involvement of different layers of civil society in the project through civil society workshops, organised by SSWC, bringing together local chiefs, local leaders, local commanders and the civil authorities to discuss issues facing displaced women. Issues discussed have included violence against women and lack of access to land. The involvement of the local authorities and elders created a situation of amicable understanding, which contributed to peace building in the area.

The key factor in failure has been loss of crops because of frequent insecurity. Whenever there was fighting women often lost crops. In the early years, crops were simply stolen from the farms. But in subsequent years, women have had to contribute crops to avert attacks on their communities. This has meant that women lost surplus crops, which they could have sold to gain income. Another factor has been the fear created in the civil population by the insecurity: the result of conditions where the property of the groups and organisations supporting them could be demanded by armed men. This fear has eaten into their confidence.

6. Future development of the programme

SSWC has been a pioneer, moving back into South Sudan at an early stage when security was far from assured. Its initiators are dynamic, strong willed women who have gathered others around them and by 'the threat of a good example' (a proverb from Mali) inspired others. However, success also earned SSWC enemies in some powerful quarters. This was a particular problem during 2004, prompting SSWC to embark on a lobbying scheme that lasted some months.

The new problem of ex-child soldiers returning from the conflict is part of a much wider challenge facing SSWC and the groups: how to deal with groups of men who feel excluded by the project. SSWC will need to rethink its approach and include some vulnerable men in the programme, while keeping an open mind and engaging in constant dialogue with local authorities and elders. SSWC needs to develop a rapprochement with these groups in the medium and long term.

The project's experience shows that displaced and refugee communities are very resilient. They have learned many survival strategies. As a result of this flexible attitude, the women's groups supported by SSWC during this period have gained capacity and confidence against all odds. There are several indicators of this but perhaps the most significant is the decrease in violence against women. Women's groups and SSWC lobbied local authorities about attacks on women by soldiers, and women leaders even visited soldiers in the front line. As a result, civilian officials began to speak out against the violence, and pledged to prosecute anyone convicted of such crimes. The number of assaults has fallen, and women now feel safer walking on the roads and working in the fields.

Safeguarding the future, dealing with the past: promoting conflict resolution skills with displaced people in Tigrai, Ethiopia

Tesfazghi Aberra and Conflict Resolution Project Staff
Tigrai Development Association

1. Introduction

The Tigrai Development Association (TDA) was founded by a group of Tigraians among the diaspora in 1989, during the Ethiopian civil war, as a non-political humanitarian organisation. Today it has over 200,000 members in Ethiopia and other parts of the world. In October 1992 TDA moved its Headquarters to Mekelle, the capital of Tigrai, the northernmost region of Ethiopia.

TDA's mission is to support the development efforts of the people of Tigrai. Major areas of intervention include: education (with special emphasis on primary education), basic health services (focusing on maternal and child health care), targeted skills training for income generation (to enable people living in drought-prone areas to achieve food security), and capacity building.

2. The Conflict Resolution Project

The Conflict Resolution Project was established to rebuild the capacity of civil society, broken by the Ethio-Eritrea war. This war has caused great loss of life and property; conflict over meagre resources among displaced and host communities; mistrust, hatred and lack of good neighbourliness; trauma and other psycho-social problems. It has resulted in over 300,000 internally displaced people, over 100,000 deportees and more than 12,000 Eritrean refugees in Tigrai. Such a forced migration has an impact on the place of origin, the place of destination and the migrants themselves.

The project promotes conflict resolution as an essential strand running through development initiatives with displaced people bordering Eritrea and those affected by the Ethio-Eritrea conflict. It has accomplished several successful activities to date.

(1) Resource centre

Training materials, papers, books and magazines relevant to conflict resolution and the project are now available to NGO staff, teachers, interested individuals and TDA staff at a resource centre. The centre provides people with the opportunity to understand the scope of the project and to explore the issues of conflict resolution.

(2) Steering committee

Project staff are providing vital and creative links between various stakeholders working directly with displaced people and other organisations in the project area. A project steering committee was formed: its members are the Farmers' Association, Women's Association, Youth Association, Office for Rehabilitation and Social Affairs (ORSA), Red Cross Society, Relief Society of Tigrai (REST), Bureau of Education, Bureau of Health, Rehabilitation and Development Organisation (RaDO) and the Regional Police Commission. Committee members greatly value the role of such a diverse body, and are making vital contributions to the project, by giving guidance, monitoring progress and sharing information at regular meetings.

(3) Staff training

Project staff participated in four different types of conflict resolution training sessions organised in collaboration with Mekelle University, German experts, the Office for Rehabilitation and Social Affairs, TDA International and the Ministry of Federal Affairs. The main contents of the training were the meaning of conflict, differences between conflict and violence, conflict transformation, stages of conflict, conflict analysis, post-settlement peace-building and conflict mapping. The staff members benefited a lot from the training and have developed skills in conflict management and peace building.

(4) Assessments

Staff training on Participatory Rural Appraisal was carried out by TDA International, exploring a range of ways of gathering data and working with groups on sensitive issues. Using these methods, a needs assessment was carried out in three border *woredas*[18] as well as Mekelle to find out about the psycho-social training needs of displaced people and to identify the content and methodologies to be used in training and counselling interventions.

In August 2003 a further needs assessment took place in the border *woredas*. Its objectives were to identify the main post-war problems of the people living near the border and discuss the possible solutions with local stakeholders (i.e. members of the steering committee, project staff, representatives of the displaced people and the local administration) so that they could contribute to national and regional developmental endeavours; to develop a greater understanding of the experiences and the situation of internally displaced people and assist in the identification of possible solutions; and to understand the impact of conflict and the extent of damage to civil society.

According to the assessment, the key issues faced by the displaced communities were hunger, clothing and shelter problems (69%), leaving household possessions behind and experiencing the destruction of their homes (64%), and looting of

[18] A *woreda* is an administrative district with about 100,000 inhabitants.

property (57%). A significant proportion of respondents (15%) were victims of rockets and landmines. Sixty per cent of males and 40% of females revealed that they had experienced hostility from their host community. The assessment findings have been shared with local and international NGOs who have found them very useful. Such data have not been collected in the region in the past, but are essential for effective planning.

(5) Block grant

Part of the funding from the Baring Foundation was in the form of a block grant to be re-granted to local organisations. In this project, the main objectives in releasing the grant were to raise awareness of the importance of conflict resolution, contribute to long-term development, and support beneficiaries in the development of the skills required to manage conflict and strengthen the peace-building process within the social fabric.

Publicity related to the grants was circulated. The criteria for selecting beneficiary organisations were set by the steering committee and project staff. The main criteria were that they were expected to reach a significant number of people, have structures and networks down to the grass-roots level, and also to have sufficient dedication and implementation capacity. Before releasing the grant, discussions were also held as to the types of projects to be implemented and their general objectives in relation to the contribution they could make in developing the beneficiaries' conflict resolution skills.

Five organisations were awarded a grant (see Table 1 below).

Table1: Block grant awards

Implementing body	Project type (content)	Project area	No. of participants
Regional Supreme Court	Workshop on conflict management and resolution in relation to the judicial system and the law.	Mekelle	150
Farmers' Association of Tigrai	Workshop on conflict management and resolution in farming communities affected by the Ethio-Eritrean war.	Humera	142
Youth Association of Tigrai	Awareness raising workshops on conflict management and resolution for youth. Needs assessment of conflict situation.	Mekelle Adigrat Border areas and Mekelle	86 86 300 (sample size)
Women's Association of Tigrai	Awareness-raising workshop on conflict management and resolution for women.	Mekelle	310
Blue Nile Film Production	Awareness-raising programme on conflict management and resolution through drama and music.	Refugee camp	12,000 (audience)

To give a better idea of these activities, the work of two beneficiary organisations – the Supreme Court of Tigrai and the Farmers' Association of Tigrai – is outlined here.

The Supreme Court of Tigrai conducted a workshop on general aspects of conflict and its management in relation to the law. The objectives of the workshop were to raise awareness amongst the participants about issues pertinent to conflict resolution, to demonstrate how trials were conducted and get feed back on whether or not the trials were participatory and democratic, and finally to encourage all participants of the workshop including the victims and the perpetrators of the 'Red Terror'[19] to comment freely on the trial process as a whole. About 150 people participated: these included community representatives, professionals working at various levels of the judiciary (including the social courts at the grass-roots level), members of the police force, members of the families of victims of the Red Terror and prisoners. Members of the Conflict Resolution Project also participated by presenting a paper on conflict management and resolution. Participants were encouraged to participate in the discussion and question and answer sessions. The feedback from the participants indicated that the outcome was positive. Almost all felt that the discussions contributed a lot in raising awareness of conflict management and resolution and its relevance to their daily lives.

The objective of the Farmers' Association of Tigrai's workshop on conflict management and resolution was to raise awareness and harmonize relations between host communities and displaced people. Skills training in conflict management and resolution was given so that any tensions could be solved amicably, in order to lay the foundations for peace building in the *woreda* and around the border in the future.

The workshop was held in the Western Zone of Tigrai in the town of Humera, at the border with Eritrea. This area was selected because of its vulnerability: it was severely affected by the conflict and is therefore a priority for peace building between the two countries. One hundred and forty-two representative participants of farmers, women, youth and members of the local administration from 18 *tabias*[20] attended the workshop for five days in March 2004. After a comprehensive presentation, discussion, sharing of experiences and voicing of suggestions, an understanding was reached. Participants pointed out that they had benefited from the workshop and said that they were more aware of how to react to and resolve conflict. They pledged to play their own role in handling conflict in their localities. Finally, the workshop concluded by agreeing to establish conflict resolution and management committees at all levels down to the *kushet* (village) level to assist the community in handling conflict.

[19] The 'Red Terror' was a programme of mass killing, torture and intimidation of citizens who did not follow the ideology and directives of the former military socialist government known as the Dergue (1974-91).
[20] The *tabia* is the lowest form of administrative unit of the Federal Government of Ethiopia, covering about 10,000 people.

(6) Awareness-raising workshops

After conducting the needs assessment in the *woredas* bordering Eritrea, TDA held awareness-raising workshops in Adigrat, Inticho, Rama and Sheraro. These towns were selected because of the high numbers of displaced people there and their location close to the border. Participants included displaced people, elderly people, representatives of the local administration, youths, women and the police. People from governmental and non-governmental organisations who were involved in issues of conflict resolution also took part. In the workshops, the participants were introduced to the concepts and causes of conflict, types of conflict and various mechanisms of handling conflict, relating these to their background and experiences. A training manual on conflict and its management was prepared and was used as a guide in each workshop.

The participants conducted heated discussions, and indicated that the workshops had helped them in raising their awareness of conflict and mechanisms for resolving it. Following the workshops, displaced people were encouraged to establish their own coordinating committees in each town that would help them to see and solve their common problems together. Each committee is composed of five members elected democratically by the delegated displaced people. They are supported with working materials and stationery from the project to run their activities effectively.

This programme will continue with workshops for elected committee members and counsellors in the towns close to the border.

(7) Counselling training

The need to train people for psycho-social counselling was a priority for the project. This training took place with selected displaced people in the four *woredas*. Participants included the members of the coordinating committees and 25 other members selected from among the displaced people in each town. The criteria for selection were the ability to read and write, strong communication skills, and a good reputation amongst the displaced people and the community as a whole.

The participants attended the training with enthusiasm. Post-training evaluations showed that they had gained knowledge and skills that would enable them to help their peers by providing counselling for stress and other psycho-social problems. Since then, project staff have provided support to the counsellors and found that they have applied the acquired knowledge and are getting positive results. For example, many of the trainees have worked with displaced people from Eritrea, offering support in an attempt to make their settlement process as smooth as possible. Such positive results were also evident at the evaluation forum conducted in August 2003 in Mekelle, organised by the Regional Office of Rehabilitation and Social Affairs (ORSA), where representatives of trained

counsellors from the whole of Tigrai met to evaluate the effectiveness of the training given by ORSA and our project.

Table 2 gives additional information on the awareness-raising workshops and training sessions.

Table 2: Awareness-raising workshops and training sessions

	No. of participants			
Major Activities	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Date**
Awareness-raising workshops	223	84	307	May & June 2003
Training in counselling for delegates of displaced people	75	45	120	June 2003
Counselling training for students and teachers	80 students 56 teachers	80 students 24 teachers	160 students 80 teachers	October & Nov. 2003
Awareness-raising workshops for artists	72	48	120	July & August 2003
Counselling training for selected deportees	12	11	23	September 2004

(8) Information and public awareness

The project has printed and distributed leaflets and reference materials on conflict resolution, targeting students, teachers, civil servants and civic society. The project also prepared reference material on conflict resolution: copies were distributed to the beneficiaries around the border and further copies are available in the resource centre at TDA's headquarters.

The objective and activities of the Conflict Resolution Project were broadcast via local radio in the region, on Ethiopian Television, through newspapers and in TDA's bimonthly newsletter. The project unit also organised a weekly radio programme on conflict resolution and related issues which has been well received. A two-year Ethiopian calendar containing messages of peace, stability and harmony has been produced and distributed to various governmental and non-governmental institutions in Tigrai and in Addis Ababa.

(9) External evaluation

In February 2004 an external evaluation assessed the implementation of the activities planned by the Conflict Resolution Project, identified the achievements and weaknesses to date, and made recommendations for improved future intervention. The assessment was conducted in areas with a high number of beneficiaries in the *woredas* bordering Eritrea. The evaluator interviewed 385 displaced and non-displaced individuals in and around the towns of Adigrat,

Inticho, Rama and Sheraro. The evaluation dealt with the overall process and the outcomes of the interventions made by the project, and is contributing to the coordination and planning of the remaining activities.

3. Major achievements

The main achievements to date are as follows

- Awareness-raising sessions. These were dynamic and informative sessions that revealed much about the underlying tensions which affected people in the region. For the participants this was a rare opportunity. They could say what they felt about the conflict and, despite the emotional feelings generated, people felt very positive at the end of the sessions. The workshops have become local talking points and there are demands for more. Initial reports suggest that people are more aware of the process of conflict and thus more able to avoid violence in their communities as a result of these sessions.
- Counselling training for displaced people. The traditional counselling system of the community has been re-structured through peer-to-peer training under the guidance of the project team. The peer-to-peer counselling is effective because the counsellors and the beneficiaries speak the same language and have the same culture; and it is less costly. It is reported that there has been a reduction in domestic violence and conflict as a result of skills learned at the training, and participants have said that they have been able to successfully intervene on behalf of family members and neighbours when conflict has arisen in the community. Understanding the dynamics of conflict and the need for it to be managed on an on-going basis has proved extremely useful to participants.
- Establishment of coordinating committees. This has greatly encouraged displaced people to solve problems on their own and support one another. It has also resulted in other co-operative post-conflict initiatives which are aiding the reconstruction process and building their communities.
- Through the block grants, organisations working with war victim communities near the border have been given the opportunity to raise awareness of conflict resolution and introduce effective problem solving at the grassroots level. Significantly, the organisations are now starting to see the value of conflict resolution across a range of their own activities, prompted in part by those who have participated in the training and awareness raising sessions. We expect a number of conflict resolution initiatives to develop independently over the coming years as a result of the training and exposure that this project has provided.

Generally the project has been successful in narrowing the gap between deportees and host communities which is contributing to a movement towards peace in the community as a whole. However, the persisting conflict around the border and the delay in completing legal border demarcation between Ethiopia and Eritrea has retarded the intended progress of a lasting peace.

4. Lessons learnt

As a result of the intervention, tensions between displaced people and host communities have greatly reduced in the border *woredas* and towns with high concentrations of deportees. The project's community participation approach was the key to success.

In situations of conflict, raising awareness of methods of conflict resolution is fundamental to promoting peace. Furthermore, we should not limit this to the displaced people but rather extend it to the community as a whole. TDA International is exploring ways in which the Tigrai Bureau of Education can include the concepts of conflict management and resolution in the curriculum of primary and secondary schools. We believe this could have a significant impact in sustaining the project's objectives.

Although the governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia do not have smooth relations, there are some signs of informal cross-border interactions. Children from Omhajer (Eritrea) and Humera (Ethiopia) can be seen swimming together in the Tekeze River, which flows along the border. Here, children from the two countries also exchange audio cassettes. Some Eritrean and Ethiopian farmers have been observed using the same grazing land around the Mereb River, which is shared by both countries. These situations indicate that if there is political will for peace building it may not be difficult to start cross-border people-to-people interactions.

5. Problems encountered

Although TDA wanted to build the capacity of the community and to see peace prevailing throughout the area, the situation has not allowed us to communicate with farmers, local administrators and other civil society groups in Eritrea. Although the psycho-social problems of displaced people are improving, they still need food, shelter and other necessities, because they lost all their personal possessions during the war. The project staff believe that this can be solved by providing skills training and seed money to run small-scale enterprises.

6. Future directions

Future plans are to:

- Conduct further workshops on conflict resolution and counselling in the areas surrounding the border.
- Conduct cross-border peace-building activities.
- By convincing the two governments, promote cross-border services such as market places, schools and health facilities.
- Organise radio programmes on conflict resolution and peace-building.
- Hold experience-sharing forums among different peace actors.
- Provide skills training and seed money to displaced poor women who are heads of families.

Theme 2:

THE ROLE OF NGOS WHERE GOVERNMENT IS WEAK

The role of NGOs where government is weak: a 'space mission'

Archie McCarron
Reason Partnership

Hugo Córdova
Richmond Fellowship del Perú

1. Introduction

The three themes for discussion in the Baring Foundation's International Programme Seminar are clearly linked. Essentially, the seminar seeks to delineate the role of civil society in situations where, for whatever reason, the governments in question are playing a role which is less than optimal. We, the representatives of various NGOs, are here to argue the case for more vigorous involvement in forging ever stronger civil society, to increase the protection of the rights of citizens in those situations where, again for whatever reason, governments are unable to afford such protection.

Whilst this paper is not a piece of political theory or philosophy, it may serve us well to consider what we mean by civil society and, furthermore, to recognise where such a concept arises in the first place. We would, I think, all agree that the state is that entity which makes and enacts laws. It also, by and large, makes national policies governing such areas as health, education, trade and industry and defence, and develops an apparatus through which such policies are put into practice. All remaining areas are the 'spaces' where we, the citizens, are supposed to be free to act in the exercise of our rights, but only in so far as our acts do not infringe the rights and liberties of others.

In this situation, the powers and actions of the state, as well as the powers and actions of the citizenry, are governed under the law. That is, each party knows the legal limits of the appropriate 'spaces' within which each can operate without violating the law. It is the legal existence of these 'spaces' that can give rise to the emergence of civil society. Where a government is weak, the very existence of such 'spaces' can come under threat and inhibit or even destroy civil society.

2. Civil society

The very possibility of civil society is a peculiarly liberal notion. Liberal philosophy posits a 'minimal' state, a state which, in effect, deals with those issues too big for the citizens to have the time, knowledge or inclination to deal with. Liberal philosophy also argues for the legal protection of the rights granted to such citizens and allows them to exercize these rights, but with due respect to the rights of others. The idea of the minimal state creates an area between state

action and the actions of individual citizens, or groups of citizens, that enables the development of civil society: that is, an area where legitimate non-state, collective action can take place without transgression of the law and, more importantly, which need not necessarily be in accord with the wishes or desires of the leaders of the state.

3. Forms of rule

There is one form of rule which best guarantees a vibrant civil society. This is not to say that civil society, or rather, legitimate organised civil action, cannot take place under other forms of rule. It is, however, to say that one form of rule alone is best suited to civil society, where other forms of rule may allow certain civil actions independent of the state.

Tyranny is a form of rule, totalitarianism is a form of rule, theocracy is a form of rule and politics is a form of rule. Tyranny, totalitarianism and theocracy are, however, forms of rule which tend to posit the notion of the 'perfectability of the state' such that citizens of the state are subservient to the need to achieve perfectability. In these circumstances, such states may allow collective civil action, but if and only if such actions themselves contribute to achieving a particular end, namely the perfect state. There is, therefore, no civil society, free to act independently of the state and achieve ends other than those prescribed by the state.

A political form of rule, on the other hand, has no perfect state to achieve. A political form of rule takes as its basic assumption the notion that people see the benefits of living in society and, therefore, adopt a form of rule which keeps the society intact despite the pressures of scarce resources and competition over these. Such competition and consequent pressures can and have destroyed societies. They can also be handled in various ways to relieve the pressures. Ethnic cleansing, genocide, displacement, resettlement and simply ignoring certain ethnic groups or religious communities have all been tried. A political form of rule views the competition over scarce resources as an inescapable fact of life and, consequently, seeks to mediate and arbitrate between the competitors in order to secure the continued viability of society itself. That is, if society, including all its component parts, is a thing worth enduring, because of the collective benefits it brings, then mediation and arbitration are the tools best suited to ensuring that the competition over scarce resources does not reach a point endangering the whole of the society.

There is no guarantee under a political form of rule that all competitors will 'win' in the competition over scarce resources, but there is, at least, recognition of them as legitimate competitors. It is this fact which contributes to the development of civil society. Competitors who 'win', 'lose' or 'draw' in the never ending competition can forge alliances, develop networks and draw wider public and private support in order to strengthen or enhance their chances of influencing the

final arbiters of where resources should be expended. These sometimes fluid and temporary networks and alliances involve private citizens, politicians, public bodies, commerce and secular and religious bodies, united in increasing their competitive edge to achieve an end which, it is jointly believed, will make for a better society in some sense.

4. Development

The notions of civil society and politics as a form of rule outlined above derive from a conception of development which sees it as a piece of social anthropology. That is, development is something that people do when confronted by problems or pressures they have to do something about, collectively, or in groups. Development as social anthropology is at odds with the idea of development as something specific. For example, in the 1960s and 1970s, development theory was essentially macro-economic growth theory, with the poor benefiting from the 'trickle down' of increasing wealth. By the 1980s, this theory was challenged by the move to secure the 'basic needs' of the world's poor. In the 1990s, the focus was on gender equality and local empowerment, only for this to be overshadowed in the 21st century by the idea that development could only be secured for the poor through the realization of their rights-based entitlements.

The problem with such conceptions of development is two-fold. Firstly, it seems to suggest that prior to Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (1776), development did not happen, at least not in some planned way by communities and societies. Secondly, such conceptions deny human resilience, ingenuity, inventiveness and doggedness as people, over centuries, dealt with the myriad pressures and problems that threatened them. For humans, problems of one sort or another have been inescapable as they seek to survive. This fact alone suggests that humans have the social anthropological ability not only to confront such problems and pressures, but also to overcome them, or at least mitigate the worst effects. So, whilst economic growth, basic needs, empowerment and entitlement are elements of the problems faced, they are not, in and of themselves, an explanation of what development is. To reiterate, development does not rest in this or that 'thing' but is instead something we do as a species to survive.

This conception of development, as species learned social anthropological behaviour towards problem solving, requires political rule in which to flourish and this, in turn, gives rise to civil society. Political rule legitimizes the competition over scarce resources, even where this is problematic; and civil society, with the state, can mobilize more resources collectively to minimize the problems created. Where peoples have chosen to live together, as they have for millennia, they have had to 'do' development in order to survive.

5. Weak government

Governments can be weak for all kinds of reasons: lack of expertise or resources, weak institutionally, subject to external or internal threats or weak, perhaps, by virtue of being new to wielding power.

The real and enduring weakness of many governments is, however, none of the above, but instead a weakness in their ability or willingness to use politics as their preferred form of rule. This, of itself, is a pernicious weakness that can enable those wielding the power of the state to excuse their lack of protection to all their citizens under the guise of lacking the necessary resources, or some other excuse.

What is meant here is that weak government need not necessarily be bad government, but this is more likely where the weak government in question does not practice politics as a form of rule. Even when weak, for whatever reason, a government that rules by politics will still entertain the legitimacy of all competitors over the resources available and, hence, still provide for the development of civil society as a tool in managing such competition.

Where politics is not the form of rule adopted, a weak government is likely to be also a bad government simply by virtue of the fact that the legitimacy of some competitors over resources can be denied with virtual impunity. This denial can then be used to exclude competitors from forging any alliances to improve their competitive position and, as argued above, inhibit the development of a truly representative civil society.

6. Perú

In the modern period, Perú began civilian rule in 1980, where previously there had been military dictatorships and various coups. In 1980 President Belaúnde was elected, to be replaced by President García in 1985, who presided over the rise of massive economic inflation and increasing insurgency from left-wing guerrilla groups: Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) in particular, and Tupac Amaru. In 1990, García was defeated by President Fujimori, who served until 2000, when he was defeated by President Toledo. In addition, with the capture of Sendero Luminoso's leader in 1992, the power of the insurgents was weakened such that by 1995 the organisation was seeking an end to hostilities with the government.

Despite civilian rule since 1980, Perú is a country where corruption is pernicious. Former Presidents García and Fujimori are sought by the Peruvian authorities for extradition and the current President, Toledo, narrowly escaped impeachment in early 2004. Whilst armed insurgency is now confined to remote areas, the war against drug production and trafficking continues, leading to on-going instability in various regions in the country.

Perú has a weak government, characterized by corruption, political instability, a fragile economy, politically biased state institutions and enduring security problems with insurgency and drug producers and traffickers. In Perú, as with so many other Latin American countries, the role of indigenous peoples in society – in this case, Andean peoples – has been less than it could be. Speaking a different language, or languages, and having different beliefs, there is always a danger that indigenous peoples suffer from being, at least, 'misunderstood'. Their very 'strangeness' to the powers that be can lead, as it did in Perú, to their needs being ignored, or re-interpreted, to suit the prevailing political forces at play in the country at the time. This can come to be embedded in the institutions of government and, by virtue of this, become perceived as 'institutional wisdom'.

The poorest communities in the country, largely indigenous people, were caught in the middle of the 20-year conflict between government and insurgents, in which their needs counted for little. Sendero Luminoso and Tupac Amaru fought against each other as well as the Peruvian armed forces. Both groups assassinated civic authorities and community leaders, destroyed community organisations and laid waste small holdings and villages. In reprisal for military operations, terrorist groups would take over villages, carry out so-called 'People's Trials' and publicly execute community leaders as collaborators for having allowed the armed forces to enter their village. Counter-insurgency efforts by the armed forces (regular and para-military) were at least as brutal as the insurgency itself. They generally believed that the members of poor Andean communities provided the terrorist groups with assistance and support. Some 70,000 people were murdered. Over 600,000 people were displaced, migrating mostly to urban areas, especially in and around Lima, the capital.

By not practising politics as a form of rule, successive Peruvian governments have been successful in ignoring the plight of major sections of the populace affected by enduring conflict. Despite being enfranchized, despite being asked to swear an oath of allegiance and despite being recognized as people of Perú, those affected by the insurgency simply did not count as legitimate citizens whose needs had to be recognized within the national calculation on the disposal of resources. There was, in effect, no 'space' made available to deal with their particular needs. For 20 years, victims of political violence and the systematic violation of basic human rights were unable to speak about their suffering or of those murdered or 'disappeared' by official or terrorist activities.

Only after the political violence ended could Peruvians begin to rebuild their country. They started to open a Pandora's Box and to speak publicly of the horrors they had experienced. Only then could they begin to cure their wounds, to free themselves from the darkness of their past and look into the future with hope.

Left: The lack of materials and facilities is a severe handicap to civil society organisations in poor and especially conflict-affected countries. Investment in organisational 'hardware', such as this women's training and resource centre in South Sudan, is therefore essential (see the paper by Mary Kiden).
South Sudan Women Concern

Right: A family displaced by conflict return to their lands in South Sudan (see the paper by Mary Kiden). Vulnerable people are keen to join local groups and associations as a means towards economic and social empowerment.
South Sudan Women Concern

Below: A disabled auto-rickshaw driver in Angola (see the paper by Isaac Nyathi). Advocacy coupled with economic empowerment can strengthen the status of marginalized groups such as the disabled.
Disability and Development Partners

Above: Community events and practices are vehicles for stimulating discussion and collective action. Here a local NGO's project to combat post-traumatic stress disorder has set up a tent at a fair in a shanty town occupied by displaced people in Lima, Peru (see the paper by Archie McCarron and Hugo Córdova).
Reason Partnership

Below: Training session for a local disabled people's group, Angola (see the paper by Isaac Nyathi). Training and discussion play a vital role in capacity building at all levels.
Disability and Development Partners

7. The project and its approach

Our project, called 'Recovering our Dreams', has focused on the existence, within the displaced indigenous population, of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), identified by Reason Partnership's local partner, Richmond Fellowship del Perú. It was also the case that some staff members of the government agency responsible for the post-conflict programme to resettle displaced people had, through their dealings with the victims of violence, developed symptoms of PTSD.

On the basis of this evidence, Reason Partnership and Richmond Fellowship del Perú developed a programme of action to provide education and training on the symptomatology of PTSD, its effects and aftermath and, more importantly, what communities themselves could do to mitigate the effects of PTSD and aid one another into recovery. The first phase of the project ran from 2002 to 2004.

There was virtually no knowledge of PTSD within the Peruvian authorities charged with providing material support to the displaced populations and hence no resources were dedicated to tackling the problem. The displaced themselves also had no understanding of PTSD and, consequently, of its community and social effects. The problem of PTSD was, by virtue of these factors, 'invisible'; no civic 'space' had been agreed within which it could be dealt with.

Work would have been impossible without the assistance of strategic partners. The Ministry for Gender and Social Development's division responsible for resettlement programmes, Programa de Apoyo al Repoblamiento (Resettlement Support Programme – PAR), helped Richmond Fellowship del Perú to locate and identify those districts in Lima with the greatest numbers of displaced persons. Richmond Fellowship del Perú and PAR designed joint activities to make PTSD among displaced Andean women visible.

The project carried out community campaigns to explain the problem and how to confront it, presenting easily understood explanations of the symptoms of PTSD. We observed that on many occasions women would carefully read these details and point to those describing what they experienced themselves. With no pressure, the women became identified with these explanations and recognized those that affected them directly. This was the first 'trigger' for them to seek specialist treatment. Following preliminary meetings, the project worked with community leaders who encouraged their neighbours to come to the meetings held to explain the psychological effects of violence (a vital aspect of the project has been to agree working plans with community leaders in districts where large pockets of displaced persons live).

Children of displaced women were also integrated into the community information and sensitization programmes. Richmond Fellowship del Perú organised video-forums with educational content through which they could express their feelings about their parents' pain and grief and memories of their

original Andean communities. We involved younger members of the community in meetings, establishing educational and discussion groups on the subjects of mental health, adolescence and personal development. The main social-emotional crisis within displaced Andean families originated in cultural confrontation between parents from the Andes and teenagers or young adults brought up in an urban environment completely devoid of Andean beliefs and values. These meetings were also used to discuss the inheritance of memories and folklore among the displaced persons and their effect on adolescents.

In addition to these training and sensitization components, direct psycho-social support was necessary. Professional experience in mental health work with displaced Andean women is extremely limited and, given the lack of understanding of PTSD and of available resources, the approach had to be community-based to succeed and be sustainable. The project therefore selected a therapeutic model that fitted within Andean communities' collective social life. They have a history and culture of community social support, based on a system of collective decision making, the *Ayllu* (community clan). When a couple is to be married, the *Ayllu* assigns community members to help in the construction of their new house; roads, bridges and other public works are made by the community, since all will benefit from them. Community health is also a matter for collective decision to the extent that family problems can be taken to assembly and openly discussed with members of the *Ayllu*.

Within the displaced populations in the project's target area, evidence of social support and cohesion existed, primarily fostered and led by women, with a focus on mutual support in favour of their children. Fiesta celebrations, health fairs, 'glass of milk committees', 'community dining rooms' and 'neighbourhood management boards' could all be mobilized to explain PTSD, its importance and what could be done about it.

The project therefore chose a therapeutic model based on mutual support groups (Grupos de Ayuda Mutua – GAM) for the treatment of women suffering from PTSD. In the GAM people are cured in the process of helping others to cure themselves. This is a method in which the therapist acts more as a facilitator, and the participants themselves become the protagonists. Almost anybody with a helpful attitude and basic training in group dynamics can be the facilitator. There is a collectivization of the problem and its solution; and it allows the identification of peer spirit, since all discover that they suffer from the same problem. It is a highly intensive therapeutic model.

The GAM became a powerful tool that gave women back their 'voice'. After 20 years of enforced silence, they could speak of their suffering for the first time. The GAM have proven their value in addressing different mental health problems such as addictions, depression and eating disorders, among others.

This approach helped secure local acceptance of the project. The GAM became accepted as simply a social support system within other systems and were not perceived as some form of 'alien' imposition on an already fragile population. Utilizing, strengthening and adding to conceptually appropriate social support systems within the displaced populations not only embedded knowledge and education regarding PTSD within this population, but, by providing education and training to government personnel responsible for the needs of such populations, also created a 'synthesis' of mutual understanding.

8. 'Invisibility' and 'space'

Clearly, the existence of PTSD in the displaced population and government staff charged to support them was an 'invisible' problem in Perú. Community and social problems such as domestic and social violence, individual and group alcohol and substance abuse and general criminality were not related back to prolonged exposure to severe violence, but instead seen as behaviours typical perhaps of an 'alien' population.

By virtue of being 'invisible', the specific problem of PTSD and, more generally, its behavioural consequences, resulted in no 'space' being negotiated between state and civil society wherein roles and responsibilities could be ascribed to deal with the phenomenon.

9. Results

Reason Partnership and Richmond Fellowship del Perú, by undertaking this project, removed the invisibility of the problem of PTSD and consequent delinquent behaviour. This coincided with the findings of the Peruvian government sponsored Truth and Reconciliation Commission which, in 2004, included in its final report recognition of the psychological effects of exposure to violence and, more importantly, recommended inclusion of psychological care in programmes for the resettlement of displaced peoples.

By making the problem visible and offering a solution, Richmond Fellowship del Perú was able to negotiate with the various Ministries concerned, in particular the Ministry of Gender and Social Development, the necessary 'space' in terms of roles and responsibilities wherein the problem could begin to be tackled. More needs to be done, but the invisibility has gone and the space for collaboration and co-operation now exists.

10. Conclusion

The argument in this paper is simple. Whatever the weakness of government, its relation with civil society is based on negotiation over legitimate spheres of action, what we have named here as 'spaces'. The role of NGOs in such situations is also 'simple', but only where government is willing to tolerate and accept as legitimate, the existence and inclusion of civil society.

Where government is weak, the role of NGOs is to expose unmet need and problems, to remove 'invisibility' and, as a consequence of this, to negotiate with government respective roles and responsibilities within the 'space' created to deal with the unmet need or problems. This process is not necessarily a resource based solution to the problems confronted, but is a political solution to the problems. Once invisibility is removed, the 'space' for action can be negotiated through arbitration and compromise in recognition of the scarcity of resources, rather than such scarcity becoming the reason for not agreeing the necessary 'space' in the first place.

The role of NGOs where government is weak: the experience of ICA Tanzania

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1. Background

ICA Tanzania[21] has been working with 20 community groups in Kisongo, Makuyuni and Manyara divisions, Monduli District, since 2000. The area was chosen because of the few other organisations working in the three divisions and the overall vulnerability of the people there, who are predominantly Maasai pastoralists. Based on that experience, and having consulted local NGOs, CBOs, informal economic groups, the local authority and the local communities themselves, key problems in the areas of health, environment, education, human rights, access to capital and business skills, leadership and planning skills were identified. ICA UK's role includes acting as the project holder, and providing support and advice to ICA Tanzania both in organisational development and programme implementation.

The Kisongo, Manyara and Makuyuni Divisions Integrated Development Program aims to strengthen the economic and social status of the 20 groups and their families and to create awareness of health, environmental conservation, legal literacy and illiteracy issues in the three divisions.

Through training in participatory leadership and planning skills, facilitation, credit provision, literacy classes, HIV/AIDS and legal training, awareness creation and public campaigns as well as reducing indoor air pollution, the following impact can now be seen:

- More groups have been formed and are strong, thus influencing the wider community.
- Confidence has been built among women, and many of them are involved in village government leadership. Happiness Lamuriet is a living example of this capacity building. When ICA Tanzania started to work with her group in 2000, she was one of the many Maasai women with brilliant ideas but too shy to talk. After going through various training courses and a lot of encouragement to contribute her ideas, she is now involved in several village development committees. In 2003, she was selected to attend a donor community meeting in the capital city. When her turn came to speak, Happiness refused to speak in Kiswahili because, she said, 'I am here on behalf of the Maasai community and almost 90% of them can not speak Kiswahili, so I am going to speak in Maasai so that they can understand that I said what they told me to say.'

[21] ICA Tanzania and ICA UK are members of the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) International: a network of non-profit organisations in over 30 countries. ICA is almost always referred to only by its initials.

- There is an increase in women's income and most of their businesses are profit-oriented.
- HIV/AIDS community counsellors and legal community advisors are active in their communities.
- Community members who were trained in the REFLECT methodology[22] are running seven literacy classes, which has enabled people to read and write.
- Smoke-related diseases and accidents such as burns and stepping on sharp objects have been reduced. Child-to-child education (children disseminating information on the project's experience to other children who are not direct beneficiaries) is working well: children in homes without interventions are passing the information to their parents and some parents are coming to ICA offices to ask how to access smoke-removing technologies. Women have saved money which is used to buy kerosene to light their houses during the day, and this has encouraged children to rest in the house on sunny hot days. One of the beneficiaries of this project, Nondomooni, said that with the help of light she was able to kill a snake which entered her house: something undreamt of in the past.

2. Working with local government systems

We have been able to make this impact despite the fact that the governments we are working with are weak. While implementing this programme, ICA Tanzania has been working with two types of governments: the Maasai's traditional governing system and the local government of Monduli District Council.

The Maasai traditional governing system has been operating since time immemorial. The Tanzania government decided to retain this tribal governing system, just as the British colonial government had done before it. The system works well for the community but it has its weak points. The main one is that it places the decision-making process in the hands of men – and not all men, but a group of old men and chiefs selected from the clan to be decision makers for everyone in the community. This denies a big part of the population the right to contribute ideas, which is actually against the Tanzanian constitution.

ICA Tanzania realized this weakness right from the beginning, and we have managed to create partnerships with this type of government by involving opinion/clan leaders in our training or talking to them first and assuring them that their positions are not threatened by any training or activity, but rather that individuals, groups and the community are empowered to deal with issues facing them. For example, the first legal training involved the chiefs: as we knew that the Maasai do not give room to women and children to make decisions, the initial training curriculum did not include the topics on women's and children's rights for fear of alienating the participants from the wider messages the project wanted to put across, and to see how the participants would react if the women's and children's rights were not mentioned. We were delighted when, during the overall recommendations about the curriculum, the participants themselves requested the inclusion of these topics and the chiefs supported the request.

[22] REFLECT (Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Empowering Community Techniques) is a widely used approach to adult education that emphasizes dialogue, action, awareness raising among the population, co-operation and empowerment.

The second type of government we have been working with is the Monduli District Council, which operates at different levels: District Authority, Division Authority, Ward Authority, Village Authority and Sub-Village Authority. From our experience, we can say that the Monduli District Local Government is weakened by inadequate human and financial resources, and mismanagement of funds.

First, finances. From the 1980s, 80% of the District's Rural Development Programme budget was financed by the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV). This generosity enabled the District Council to implement at least 90% of its development plans. District Council staff could visit interior villages because the programme supported maintenance of vehicles and field staff allowances. At some meetings in 2000-2001, the District Council management team was talking of subcontracting ICA Tanzania to implement some of their activities. Unfortunately the SNV support came to an end in 2002, and the District Council now has to depend on its own sources of funds. This created a very big gap which will take years to fill. It means that the Council is operating on less than 20% of its budget, thus making it difficult either to deliver services or contract others to deliver.

Despite this weakness we still involve local government officers who attend our training and we have synchronized our schedules during visits to the remote rural areas in the District to keep them active in the development process. This both builds their capacity and enables us, to some extent, to fill the gap left by the government. Although this was done as a way of addressing a weakness, it has also enabled us to influence the government to operate in a more participatory way.

Next, we shall look at the weakness in human resources. Monduli District covers an area of 14,201 square kilometers with 20 administrative wards. For effective implementation of the development plans, each ward is supposed to have six extension staff: one in each of the six development departments of the District Council, that is Community Development, Education, Health, Water, Works (the department which deals with government buildings and vehicles), and Agriculture and Livestock (Agriculture and Livestock used to be one department and still work together). In reality, there are far fewer than this. For example, although there should be 20 Community Development Officers across the whole District, there are only 10, and three of them work at the head office. Our response to this has been partly to involve the officers in what we do, but also to build the confidence of individuals in the communities to do what the Community Development Officers would have done, and to take greater responsibility for their own development.

A lot has been said about mismanagement of funds, which includes corruption. This problem runs through the whole government structure from the national level to the sub-village level. While the national government is spending billions of shillings to buy and maintain the latest model Land Cruisers, regional and district officials are buying government houses and vehicles at give-away prices.

Meanwhile the ward and village officials do not have even a bicycle to visit their areas of operation. Our response to this is to take a longer-term view by empowering the community, through legal literacy, to enable them to challenge the government and demand accountability. This takes time, but the example of Happiness challenging the government meeting (above) shows what progress can be made.

3. Conclusions

So, with these few examples, what conclusions can we draw about working with weak governments?

- The most important factor from our experience that can make this partnership work is creation of mutual trust. Mistrust can be avoided if each of the partners understands their roles in the development process and shares responsibility. In the democratic process and good governance, responsibility is shared between government and its people with the knowledge and understanding of rights and responsibilities provided through civic education. This helps to build mutual trust between the parties and so assists in the process of partnership creation. It also improves working relations among development partners. Improved understanding of roles and responsibilities of both local government and NGOs in development can contribute to more constructive and productive partnerships.
- In order for NGOs to play their role more effectively in the development process, they should attend council meetings so as to get information which is vital for democratic decision making.
- Councils are required to outsource services where feasible and NGOs should be keen to take up these opportunities. Yet councils appear to be reluctant to outsource for the unfounded fear that they might lose control of resources, rather than taking an opportunity to expand their capability to provide public services. This reluctance, poor understanding of their respective roles, and lack of mutual trust have often weakened the real partnership in development between government and NGOs. To change this situation there must be willingness to cultivate trust and a change of mindset that will do away with negative attitudes. Councillors or technical staff may gain very little if they understand their roles and responsibilities only in isolation. They should be aware of other partners' roles to avoid antagonism and misunderstanding.
- NGOs working in the same district should network to strengthen this partnership through communication and opportunities for collaboration. This would make NGOs and local government true partners who accommodate each other and work together to achieve their mutual goals.
- In order to solve the severe economic crisis which has persistently confronted Tanzania since the 1970s, the Tanzanian government has undertaken various social, economic and political reforms, including a process of decentralization to the regional and district levels.

  These processes are fundamental to implementing the strategy for poverty alleviation. But the focus should be on the key issue of redefining power

relations, changing the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders and working towards a more participatory and democratic culture.

- Debates and dialogue could also enhance understanding between partners and could help to isolate those who have different agendas that could destroy the partnership.

NGOs' role where government is weak: PENHA's support to pastoralists in the Horn of Africa

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1. Introduction

Arid and semi-arid lands cover much of the Horn of Africa, where drought is common and the threat of desertification is widespread. Nomadic and semi-nomadic pastoralists have traditionally survived in these fragile ecosystems with a distinctive economic system based on livestock, and the pastoral livestock sector makes a significant contribution to national economies in the region. However, pastoralist communities are marginalized socially and politically, and their way of life is under threat from several forces, which include war, environmental changes and the privatization of the common pastures on which their herds depend.

The Pastoral and Environmental Network in the Horn of Africa (PENHA) is a UK-registered international NGO that promotes policies and strategies to improve pastoralists' quality of life. It is mainly engaged in managing capacity-building programmes in several countries in the region. Each country programme has a slightly different mode of operation and PENHA's relationships with local partners including governments differ from one country to another. However, one common thread is that in each country PENHA has found Horn of Africa governments to be weak in areas such as governance and institutional support for civil society; and they lack capacity for dealing with environmental problems including environmental degradation and drought.

The account presented here is based on PENHA's operational experience in the Horn of Africa and shows some of the roles that NGOs can play in helping Horn of Africa governments that are weak and lack the capacity to deal with natural and man-made problems facing society.

2. Somaliland

An estimated 55% of Somaliland's population are pastoralists and some 60% of the population depend on the products and by-products of their livestock. However, in recent times prolonged drought and environmental degradation, coupled with other factors including conflict, inappropriate land use policies and lack of capacity to manage natural resources have combined to cause the gradual erosion of pastoralists' livelihoods.

PENHA works in Somaliland as an operational NGO and with funding from the Baring Foundation has recently completed a capacity-building programme for local NGOs, CBOs and the Ministry for Pastoral Development and the Environment. Focal activities have also included micro-credit, environmental rehabilitation and range management.

PENHA's research and operations have revealed general weaknesses in the Somaliland government's ability to meet the challenges facing its people. The Republic of Somaliland is an independent state that broke away from Somalia in 1991. Somaliland lacks international recognition, tools and resources for meeting the primary needs of its people. After years of civil wars and destruction, the maintenance of peace and national security is the main preoccupation of the Somaliland government. This, however justified, renders the government's efforts in development and improvement of material standards of life marginal. The lack of international recognition of Somaliland as an independent state and the government's inability to access bilateral or multilateral funding is a major constraint on the country's development. The general lack of national policy in relation to pastoralists and action to address their needs exacerbates the aforementioned problems and causes the Somaliland people to depend on international NGOs and donor support.

NGOs operating in Somaliland face a number of challenges:

- Years of civil war and strife, leading to a sad loss of human life and destruction of national infrastructure, cross-border conflicts and the fear of losing the newly found freedoms are part of the national psyche and at the forefront of national actions. This causes the Somaliland government to expend much of the limited resources it has on the preservation of national security.
- The country's fragile arid, semi-arid, and sub-humid eco-systems are perpetually affected by recurrent drought and are threatened by desertification, which undermines the productivity of many sectors.
- Land degradation, including diminishing water and rangeland resources and a ban on imports of Somaliland livestock by Saudi Arabia (the main importing country) combine to cause poverty and destitution. The Somaliland economy depends on the livestock sector, which contributes over 80% of national GDP.
- An inappropriate land tenure system, which does not give adequate protection to common land, and the enclosure of traditional grazing areas as private land are having adverse effects on pastoral productive systems that have traditionally been the mainstay of the economy.
- The lack of adequate policies and social service provision and the social and political marginalization of women contribute to Somaliland's problems and needs.

Some of PENHA's aims have been realized in Somaliland through awareness raising and capacity building workshops. For example:

- PENHA joined with the international NGO VETAID and the Ministry for Pastoral Development and the Environment in a workshop to explore how

pastoral communities could be involved in the process of decision making regarding rangeland resource management and utilization. About 70 people attended, three-quarters representing pastoralist communities.

- PENHA and VETAID joined forces to harmonize the Agricultural Act, administered by the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Range Management Act, which is the responsibility of the Ministry of Pastoral Development and the Environment. The two laws were contradictory and confusing, so PENHA and VETAID have proposed a single, rewritten and integrated act. The proposal is now with Parliament for approval.
- PENHA took part in a collaborative study for UNICEF on the status of pastoralist children. This had the significant additional benefit of establishing useful contacts between Somaliland and Puntland pastoralists in the process.[23]
- PENHA took the lead in re-establishing the Ban Awl range reserve with the full support of government and pastoralist users. The reserve is owned and managed by pastoral associations and is proving sustainable. Consequently the issue of range management and rehabilitation is becoming popular and is now embodied in funding policies and government strategies.

3. Eritrea

PENHA works, with funding from the Dutch agency NOVIB, in support of the National Union of Eritrean Youth and Students (NUEYS), which has a strong interest in pastoralism as many of its members are of pastoral origin. Working in this way through a mass organisation is as far as we know a unique approach to pastoralism in Eritrea, where other NGOs have found it difficult to work. Having carried out action research on the impact of war on Eritrean pastoralists, and on problems of pastoral education, NUEYS and PENHA are now working to establish pastoral associations in three districts.

In 1991-98 PENHA conducted a number of policy-orientated research projects in collaboration with Eritrean government ministries including the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Land and Housing, and Ministry of Health and Education, together with the University of Asmara. The research generated data useful for addressing a number of problems.

In Eritrea, PENHA's 1996-97 collaborative research work with the University of Asmara College of Health Sciences and the Eritrean Government's Ministry of Health, entitled 'Health Assessment in Pastoral areas in Eritrea', and its subsequent workshop in November 1997 on the research findings made recommendations that led to the Government's development of health policy for pastoralist areas. PENHA's regional land tenure studies (1995-97) were also incorporated into the land laws of Eritrea and Ethiopia and subsequently used by the Somaliland government for drawing up a pastoralists' land law.

[23] Puntland is a self-declared independent state that broke away from Somalia in 1993.

4. Other countries

PENHA has worked since 1999 to build capacity among NGOs working in pastoral areas of Uganda, both in the Southwest and Karimoja. PENHA's partners include the Uganda Gender Resource Centre and the Nyabushozi Development Association, and other pastoral CBOs and NGOs. PENHA's staff have also acted as a resource to government and international NGOs for the development of pastoral policy.

PENHA has encouraged networking among Sudanese NGOs, provided a secretariat for the Sudan Pastoralist Forum and carried out ethno-veterinary research.

In Ethiopia, PENHA has for several years successfully undertaken a partnership and collaborative work at the Sheno Research Centre, initially with the Institute of Agricultural Research and now with the Agricultural Bureau of the Amhara Regional State of Ethiopia. The first stage of the work involved testing a number of herbs for their effects on parasites in the digestion systems of sheep. This phase of the research was successfully completed and reported in a paper jointly issued by PENHA and the Ethiopian Ministry of Agriculture. Despite political obstacles, PENHA continues to administer a UK National Lottery grant to the Pastoralist Concern Association of Ethiopia, and is represented on the Pastoralist Forum of Ethiopia.

Regional activities include research on pastoralist parliamentary groups that PENHA has carried out in conjunction with the Natural Resources Institute in Uganda, Kenya and Ethiopia.

5. Issues

PENHA's experience working in the Horn of Africa demonstrates the crucial need for NGOs to help weak governments to deal with:

(1) Poor standards of living, poor infrastructure and lack of educational, social, medical and employment facilities.
(2) The need for emancipation of women, which has brought rising expectations of NGO intervention to help the Somaliland government to develop appropriate policies for women's rights.
(3) Material and primary needs (including food, water, housing and support services) for internally displaced people currently living in shacks.
(4) Institutional and capacity-building programmes for government ministries and local civil society organisations including NGOs, CBOs and women's groups. This role must include the facilitation and delivery of training programmes for middle and lower ranking extension staff.
(5) Government development policies including rangeland policy for managing land tenure issues that affect livelihoods.

(6) Environmental degradation and drought mitigation programmes including water collection, storage and management.
(7) Support for government in tackling the proliferation and over-use of *khat*, a plant-based drug that is causing social and mental health problems among a large section of the population including the young and the labour force of several countries in the Horn.
(8) Bridge the information gap between civil society and governments. This includes imparting awareness-raising information and/or challenging prevailing misconceptions about problems such as HIV/AIDS, and help for the development of local and regional networks and information exchanges.
(9) Develop government institutions for environmental management, water conservation, human and animal health, and education.
(10) NGOs must also provide support for relevant government departments/ ministries, local NGOs, CBOs and indigenous groups in the region by facilitating skill exchanges and sharing of experiences, expertise and good practices within and across the Horn of Africa countries. This role must extend to include assisting local NGOs, CBOs and government ministries in acquiring relevant information from sources inside and outside the region.
(11) Provide institutional support for the emergence of civil society organisations in the Horn of Africa.
(12) Help in the development of a network of research associates to undertake studies to inform government departments about prevailing and potential problems and latent and expressed needs.
(13) Help in the development of partnership initiatives between government departments and ministries, local NGOs, CBOs and indigenous groups.
(14) Provide a forum for debate and conflict resolution between government ministries and civil society over water and land tenure issues and environmental management.
(15) In Somaliland, provide the government and pastoralists with support to lobby for the lifting of the livestock ban.

Theme 3:

INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY, OR ENGAGEMENT AT THE GRASS ROOTS?

Advocacy and the disability movement in Angola

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1. Introduction

This paper is based on Disability and Development Partners' experience of working with *Liga de Apoio a Reinsercao dos Deficientes* (LARDEF – League for the Support of the Integration of Disabled People in Angola), and Development Initiatives and Services (DIS) based in Botswana, on the *Twendi* ('Let's go, together') project developed and implemented with support from the Baring Foundation. The project has two main objectives:

- to build the capacity of LARDEF to carry out advocacy and effectively manage its affairs as an organisation
- to support disabled people who are internally displaced as a result of the long conflict in Angola.

The main issue for advocacy is to ensure that the needs of disabled people who are internally displaced are also addressed in programmes to support internally displaced people and communities.

2. Advocacy: approaches and methods

Our understanding of the term 'advocacy' is that it is a process where people demand or ask for change. Struggles for advocacy are usually for rights, recognition and dignity. Examples of advocacy movements are the civil rights movement in the US, the global ban on landmines campaign, the women's movement, movements for indigenous people's rights, and the disability movement.

Approaches to advocacy are as diverse as the challenges and issues calling for advocacy. As much as the fundamentals may be the same, the approach to women's issues is different from advocacy against child labour or the manufacture and use of landmines.

Economic empowerment of disabled people is a good example of advocacy in terms of making society realize the value of disabled people: it changes the way people perceive them. For example, one of the drivers in LARDEF's *Dignidade* income generating projects (co-operatives run by disabled people, who drive three-wheeler auto-rickshaws offering a local taxi transport service in parts of Luanda and Benguela cities) remarked that before he joined the project, his neighbours never greeted him. However, now that he is earning money and making improvements to his house, the neighbours are interested in his affairs

[24] Disability and Development Partners was formerly the Jaipur Limb Campaign: the charity changed its operating name in 2005.

and talk to him as their equal. The name of the programme, *Dignidade*, is the Portuguese word for dignity: in this instance human dignity is being achieved through economic empowerment.

There are many advocacy methods, and these will largely depend on the issues in question and the target group. They include demonstrations, door to door campaigns, use of the arts (street theatre, music, etc.) and use of the media.

We need to look at the complexity of society in considering and choosing the appropriate methods. For example, in Britain, TV can be used widely to target the general public and financial publications are a good way to target the business community. Advocacy at grass-roots level must use grass-roots methods (e.g. by communicating demands through drama or sit-in protests).

In choosing which strategy to adopt, certain factors have to be taken into account such as the political climate, access to basic necessities (sometimes for disabled people it is difficult to talk about rights and accessibility when their basic needs regarding mobility have not been met: it is difficult to carry out advocacy when you are confined to one place), existence of policies, cultural beliefs and practices, and the educational level of advocates and target groups.

3. What makes advocacy a success?

There are seven key factors in success:

(1) Legitimacy: whether the people and organisations that carry out advocacy have the legitimacy to do so.

(2) Skills to explain the issue clearly, at the right time to the right people. You can't go to rural areas and talk about policies and acts of parliament, but when you are talking to governments you must demonstrate a knowledge of these.

(3) Clear definition of the issues. In order to be effective in advocacy there is a need to be clear and precise on what you are advocating for. If it is rights, the right to what? If it is education, why is education an issue?

(4) Understanding the environment within which advocacy is conducted. Under politically repressive governments, lobbying is very difficult and risky. In contrast, in the UK thousands of people campaigned against the war in Iraq, but no demonstrators died or were injured. In a democratic and open society rights are enshrined in acts of parliament, understood to exist and mostly taken for granted. Under repressive regimes, governments often claim to give people their rights, but in practice they are denied.

(5) Creation of alliances – the importance of working together, networking, to make the most of the strengths and comparative advantages of the different partners.

(6) A wide support base: for example, the disability movement relies on its membership to increase the voices for change.

(7) Political will and commitment. Politicians understand advocacy as politics, so rights-based organisations are in danger, because anything to do with making a legitimate demand can be viewed as an assault on the government. Groups that take up advocacy cannot avoid engagement with political processes, but it is strategic to remain non-partisan.

4. The disability movement and advocacy

The disability movement is currently involved in both international and grassroots advocacy activities. In their international advocacy strategies, disabled people have formed networks at sub-continental, continental and international levels to advocate for the recognition of their rights and for inclusion in mainstream activities. This effort has however been affected by the lack of resources and skills for effective advocacy.

Funding for disability activities by international donors in mainstream development programmes has generally been incidental or marginal, and as a result very limited resources trickle down to disabled people's organisations. Opportunities for effective advocacy are lost as disabled people fail to attend and interact with strategic decision makers. Funding for disabled groups' administrative structures is very limited, so that for example in Africa sub-regional structures exist only in the form of committees with no one to follow up on international advocacy opportunities. They do not have secretariats to carry out work on a daily basis.

Examples of successful international advocacy in the disability arena are: the UN Year of the Disabled, the UN Decade of Disabled Persons, the UN Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Disabled People, the Asian Decade of Disabled Persons, the African Decade of Disabled Persons, the current process towards a UN Convention on the Participation, Rights and Dignity of Disabled People and the inclusion of disability in the funding policies of many donor organisations, such as the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and the European Union.

International advocacy, if successful, provides an international framework within which grassroots advocacy may draw its strength, and sets guidelines for demanding conformity: for example, the disability movement has lobbied for the inclusion of disability in the Millennium Development Goals. In Africa there has been a high level of engagement with the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to ensure that social, political and economic programmes identify clearly how disabled people will be among the players and beneficiaries of Africa's development.

5. LARDEF and advocacy

LARDEF is an organisation of disabled people founded in 1997 to champion their cause. Although disabled people's movements started in Africa in the late 1970s, in Angola disabled people only started to organise themselves in 1990, when the government began to allow the formation of private voluntary organisations.

LARDEF's principal objectives are as follows:

- Develop programmes, projects and activities to ensure equal opportunities for disabled people.
- Promote and participate in the full integration of disabled people in society.
- Advocate and lobby for the promotion of the rights of disabled people and the promulgation of supportive laws and policies.
- Support the setting up of small to medium-sized enterprises managed by disabled people to promote employment opportunities.

The organisation has so far operated in two provinces, Luanda and Benguela, and has contact with members in two other provinces, Cabinda and Moxico. It has raised awareness, identified members and supported income generation projects. It has also been involved in integrating disabled people who were displaced by war into their communities with the aim of creating opportunities for them to rebuild their lives.

LARDEF is operating in an immediate post-war society. It came into being on the basis of challenges that disabled people faced and has found itself having to do advocacy in order that long-term changes in the lives of disabled people are achieved.

When Disability and Development Partners started working with LARDEF the partnership concentrated on the establishment of economic support for disabled people. LARDEF was focusing on disabled people's material needs – the need to have jobs, earn regular money and be able to feed and clothe themselves and their families – and also to ensure the (re)integration of disabled people as equal members of society through meaningful and productive work.

Engagement in advocacy was a response to lessons learnt on the ground and information coming from interaction with other organisations of disabled people in the region. LARDEF realised that it could not support all disabled people in the way that it was currently operating (i.e. providing economic and material support) – if it continued doing this, it would only manage to reach a very few people. To reach all disabled people and to create an impact, it had to change the way it worked, embracing advocacy as a tool for achieving their goals.

In order to take its lobbying activities to rural areas, LARDEF has managed to organise disabled people into groups in different communities so that they can easily reach all levels of society. The Twendi project, supported by the Baring

Foundation, has established groups in several rural communities. This process includes capacity-building workshops and training so that LARDEF as an organisation is equipped with skills in advocacy, information on disability rights and an understanding about how the disability movement is organised in other countries and internationally.

Disability and Development Partners' role in supporting LARDEF has been that of facilitation. Disability and Development Partners works to support disabled people in developing countries through programmes with partner organisations for social, economic and physical rehabilitation, research and development, and sharing knowledge and skills. Disability and Development Partners played a role in building LARDEF's capacity, networking and linking with other disability partners within the region and beyond. Disability and Development Partners involved another African organisation, Development Initiatives and Services (DIS), from the very beginning in developing and conducting the capacity-building training workshops for LARDEF and other displaced people's organisations in Angola. Through the facilitation of Disability and Development Partners over the past three years, LARDEF has for the first time become linked to the Southern African Federation of the Disabled (SAFOD) and to the disability movement in Mozambique and the other three Lusophone countries of Africa: Guinea Bissau, Cape Verde and Sao Tome and Principe.

In the process of implementing its work, LARDEF faced a lot of challenges, some external and others internal to the organisation. These included lack of skilled personnel, funds and other resources, infrastructure, information on disability rights and international instruments, and policies on disability. Disabled people – the poorest – had no resources for advocacy; nor was the environment conducive for rights movements.

Despite all these challenges, LARDEF has made quite a significant change in the perceptions of the government – which previously saw disabled people only as ex-combatants or war veterans. LARDEF came into existence as a cross-disability organisation – welcoming people with all types of disabilities. Being ex-military (the majority of the organisation's leaders served in the army), the leadership of LARDEF has been very much part of the government and political structures, respecting the hierarchy and protocols. But now, as disability leaders and advocates on behalf of all disabled people, they have found themselves challenging the very system that they had been part of. LARDEF has proved its impartiality by not identifying with any political party, thus gaining respect from the political leadership of the country.

The concept of advocacy is new in Angola and the country's disability movement is also new. Angola was in conflict for more than 27 years up to 2001, and civil society did not find space to operate. For the disability movement there were no examples to follow, no lessons from the past. It was not possible to criticize the government and there was no middle ground in politics: you were either 'with us

or against us'. LARDEF's advocacy strategy has been very diplomatic and persuasive in nature, however, managing to win support from politicians and senior people in various ministries, such as the Ministries of War Veterans, Social Services and Health. LARDEF has taken part in drafting Angola's new constitution, and a clause on non-discrimination on the grounds of disability has been included, though this is yet to be finalized. The Angolan government has yet to formulate a Disability Act but has been working on a disability policy and LARDEF has been involved in this as well.

At this stage of its development and within the political context of the country, LARDEF cannot afford to be militant, and so it has been strategic in developing a relationship with government. LARDEF has only been going for a short while. Advocating for social and policy change is usually a long process and LARDEF is yet to experience the frustration which may necessitate a change in strategy. LARDEF has a vision where disabled people are equal to all citizens, have dignity and are allowed full participation in society. Frustration may set in when it becomes clear that this vision can not be obtained under current conditions, and different strategies (perhaps of the more militant variety) may have to be employed. Governments can also be very strategic in killing movements by assimilating the very people who are the main advocates: appointing them into paid positions and silencing their voice. There is a saying in Africa: 'When you are eating you can't talk'.

It would be to the advantage of LARDEF not to be identified with party politics, to be politically neutral but to keep engaging with the political process. It is also important to groom new leaders, as disability movements are often led by charismatic people, and once they leave, they leave a vacuum.

6. Conclusions

Advocacy is a tool that we use to achieve change. In the disability movement, and in the case of LARDEF in Angola, it is hoped that once appropriate policies are passed and implemented, once social and cultural practices change, then disabled people will benefit in the following ways:

- Society will accept disabled people as equal citizens.
- Physical barriers will be eliminated.
- Social barriers will be removed.
- Education will be accessible to disabled people.
- Choices will be available to disabled people.

This is the ideal vision. Advocacy is a long-term process and disabled people not only have to take up the specific challenges of disability, but challenge other factors that make them poor.

International advocacy and grassroots engagement in the Congo Basin

Simon Counsell
The Rainforest Foundation

1. Background to the Foundation's work

The Rainforest Foundation was established in 1989 in order to address the problems faced by indigenous communities in the Amazon rainforest – problems of environmental destruction and systematic abuse, including organised violence, theft of land, and denial of basic civil rights. In its first project, the Foundation was successful after some four years in seeing the Brazilian government legally establish a large indigenous territory.

A unique aspect of the Foundation is that we treat human rights and environmental issues as inextricably linked. All our in-country work is carried out by local partner civil society organisations.

2. The Congo Basin

From about 1995 onwards, we expanded our work to other regions of the world, and particularly to the Congo Basin. This is the second largest area of rainforest in the world, and relatively undisturbed; but by the 1990s some worrying trends were already beginning to appear:

(1) Logging companies were moving in from other areas – especially West Africa and Asia, where they had left behind a trail of devastation.
(2) Increasingly, as the Congo Basin countries were 'democratising', development of natural resources was being targeted by international agencies such as the World Bank as a 'quick-fix' means of earning foreign revenue.
(3) Institutional and policy structures to deal with these changes were very weak, and corruption was deeply entrenched at all levels of administration.
(4) A very large rural population, often depending entirely on forest resources for their survival. Taking together shifting farmers, who practice rotational 'gardening' within the forest, and hunter-gatherers – often termed 'Pygmies' – there are perhaps 50 million such people within the Congo Basin.
(5) A very complex ethnic situation, a dismal record on human rights, and a chaotic land-rights regime that all but totally excluded some segments of society from the basis of survival.
(6) Development of civil society lagged well behind advances in democratization.
(7) Many important influences and agents of change were international and outside the region, especially the World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and European Commission.

The two examples that follow, from Cameroon and the Democratic Republic of Congo, show how we have tackled this situation.

3. Cameroon

The Rainforest Foundation started work in Cameroon in 1996. At that time, it was being considered by the international community as a potential success story – and a comprehensive new forest policy had been ushered in by the World Bank in 1994. However, we knew from our own analysis and that of local organisations, that what was really happening was a massive leaching of the country's natural wealth because of illegal logging, graft and patronage, and a total inability and unwillingness on the part of the authorities to control this vast industrial operation.

Forest villagers saw the forests on which they depended falling around them, whilst even the taxi drivers in the capital Yaounde were well aware of the value of the hardwood timber on the vast convoys of lorries which they saw passing through the town on the way to Douala docks each night. It was the biggest open secret that the highest levels of political authority were closely involved in this grand larceny. The environmental damage caused by this, along with government policy, was causing widespread displacement of Pygmy hunter-gatherers from the forest.

Despite the apparent problems, the international donor community invested something in excess of $100 million during the 1990s in programmes for both development of the timber industry and conservation of the forest, and seemed content to overlook the failures of the new regime which they had implemented and supported. Discussions concerning the future of the forests were couched in purely technical terms. Issues such as corruption, distribution of benefits, and participation, were never openly raised, and at best referred to euphemistically – whispers in the corridors. International donors turned a blind eye to blatant abuses, such as illegal logging in supposedly protected areas. Civil society organisations known to have an active interest in such issues were systematically barred from the meetings where they should have been discussed.

One of the first things we did, in 1996, was to put one of the international agencies, in this case, the European Commission, in the spotlight, by exposing the fact that one of the projects it was funding – a road development programme – was likely to lead to environmental destruction and damage, and an increase in illegal logging, would probably lead to yet further abuses of the rights of Pygmy people living in south-eastern Cameroon, and was in contravention of several of the European Commission's own internal aid policies and safeguards. Research into this scandal was carried out by our local partners but published by ourselves, and resulted in wide international media coverage.

This sparked a furious reaction on the part of the European Commission, but prompted the convening of various fora in which it was possible to argue for the

inclusion of locally affected people, local expertise and civil society (something which all major international agencies supposedly support) in the projects and policies affecting them. This allowed for the first ever frank and 'inclusive' discussion of the real problems facing Cameroon's forests. As a direct result of this, the European Commission strengthened the implementation of its environmental and social safeguards, developing a new office in Yaounde dedicated to these issues.

However, it also served to demonstrate that local civil society was informed and capable of presenting well-documented evidence – important in circumstances where the authorities were very nervous and deeply suspicious about the role and purpose of NGOs. Throughout this period, we provided consistent support for the main local NGO, constant back-up in terms of dealing with the international agencies, checking and re-checking that commitments by the agencies were being followed through in practice. Over a period of about three years, we were able to argue successfully for the inclusion of civil society in all relevant policy discussions.

This has been the most dangerous part of the process – where the political space for civil society has begun to open and expand, but where the boundaries are not at all clear; where there is still a strong reaction to non-state actors moving into the scene and beginning to attract attention especially from international agencies and the political power which they represent. In fact, at this time, our local partner suffered repeated verbal and physical threats and robberies of its offices, the director of the organisation was held at gun-point whilst the office was ransacked, there was mysterious tampering with vehicles, and of course, efforts to discredit them. Fortunately, none of this caused any injuries or damage to the organisation's reputation.

As the discussions developed, it became more possible to consider openly the need for tackling some of the underlying problems – illegal logging, and associated corruption. In 2002, this resulted in the establishment of a formal structure in which the international community and the Government of Cameroon set up an independent international NGO monitor for the forest sector – the UK-based Global Witness – which would work in partnership with local civil society. This international independent monitor has 'named and shamed' those involved in illegal forest destruction and corruption, up to the highest levels of authority. This approach has now become a model for tackling similar problems throughout the Congo Basin and more generally in the developing world.

All well and good, and a far cry from only five or six years ago when even the mention of illegal logging would have resulted in arrest or serious harassment. Looking back, one can visualize what has happened in Cameroon as a process whereby, using a combination of international advocacy and local engagement – especially capacity-strengthening for local partners – it has been possible to progressively prise open the political space in which civil society can operate and advocate on its own behalf.

Alongside this support for general capacity-strengthening, we have also supported long-term local work in order to effect policy change.

The entire geospatial basis of the mis-management of Cameroon's forests was established in the official forest zoning plan which had been developed by international consultants funded by the Canadian government during the early 1990s. The zoning of Cameroon's forests affected an area of around 20 million hectares, roughly the size of England. It was done mostly on the basis of satellite imagery, in which most areas showing up as intact forests were zoned as industrial logging concessions. In these areas, traditional rotational farming activities were banned. Within areas zoned for strict conservation (roughly 10 per cent of the forest area), both farming and hunting-gathering were prohibited.

The only areas available to local people were along roads and between the areas designated as production or conservation forests. In many cases, these were already under severe competition from local logging companies, farmers and commercial hunters. Much of the eastern half of Cameroon's forest is inhabited by Pygmy hunter-gatherers, though the zoning exercise included no provision for them – the country's original, indigenous forest inhabitants were effectively 'disappeared' from the forest map. In fact, Pygmies have been forcibly displaced from some of the protected areas included in the map, such as the Dja Biosphere Reserve.

One of the things we learned early on in our work in Brazil was that maps can be powerful tools to show the presence and occupation of land by peoples who are otherwise extremely easy to marginalize or ignore altogether – and to help secure their rights. Applying this lesson in Cameroon, we started a programme, through our local partner organisation, of community-based mapping with Baka Pygmy people, the first time such work had been undertaken with forest peoples in Africa.

Having trained Pygmy 'community cartographers', simple sketch maps were developed, showing key landscape features of significance to local people. We and our local partners are now developing fully digitized versions of these, which can be digitally overlain on the official maps to show where logging concessions, national parks, etc., have been superimposed on lands used by Pygmies, and where they have been displaced and their rights compromized as a result.

In a sense, what we and our local partners have done, through very direct engagement with local people, walking their 'territories' with them, helping them understand the process of mapping and land zoning, has been to equip them with a language that can be understood by the national authorities and the international agencies that have developed the official land zoning plans. What we are now doing, with the support of the Baring Foundation, is to advocate that the local land uses, as shown in the community's own maps, are officially recognized in a revision of the official land-use plans.

4. Democratic Republic of Congo

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is often portrayed as a state where society has broken down – but it appears that it has often only been civil society institutions which have kept the vestiges of society functioning. In some areas, even those worst affected by decades of economic mismanagement and later military conflict, there is a very vibrant civil society.

DRC is supposedly emerging into a new era of peace and stability, and international institutions, especially the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) are trying to hasten the pace of development, growth and integration into the world economy. Natural resources in particular are being targeted for development – including the country's forests, where new laws and 'zoning' are under way.

In some ways, we are witnessing a repeat of what happened in Cameroon 10 years ago, only on a much bigger scale. Under the Bank's prescriptions, some 60 million hectares, that's one-quarter of the entire country, an area the size of France, could be handed out to industrial timber companies in the coming years. This could have profound implications for the 35 million people in the DRC who, according to the Bank itself, depend to some extent on the forest for their survival.

When we first learned of these developments in late 2003, it would be fair to say that not more than a handful of people in DRC – officials in the relevant ministries – were aware of what was happening. Despite the significance of the changes in laws – relating to land tenure, rights and access to essential forest resources, affecting three-quarters of the country's population – there had been absolutely no consultation, and no attempt to assess likely impacts.

Our first task, then has been to try and bring local 'civil society' up to speed with developments, organizing workshops and discussions throughout the country, gathering aims and views on the changes, and trying to feed these local views back into the national political process. Clearly, in such a vast and diverse country with very little basic infrastructure, even this simple information and discussion exercise is a long and painstaking process. This work is also being supported by the Baring Foundation.

However, the whole process of legal reform and zoning of the country's forests was, under the World Bank and UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's plans, supposed to be completed by the end of 2004. So, as well as our local work, there has also been an imperative to confront the problem at an international level, bringing direct pressure to bear on the Bank and other agencies to try and put a brake on the proposed changes until proper consultation has been carried out, and local people have had the chance to participate.

Throughout last year, we engaged the Bank directly, challenging it to explain its plans, which seemed to be directly contradictory to many of its own internal policies and safeguards. We asked repeatedly for an explanation of the developmental rationale of what was being proposed. I would say that the Bank's response to our questions was disappointing – in fact there never was any response. So we upped the pressure, and asked the public to write letters of concern to the World Bank. Simultaneously, the facilitation work with civil society in DRC had resulted in an unprecedented call from over 100 national and local organisations for a halt to the Bank's plans until proper local consultations had been carried out.

We often talk of 'culturally appropriate' communications in our project work, and one of the challenges we faced was how to communicate the urgency of this campaign, when, sadly, the media in the UK and elsewhere seems disinterested in such issues. In DRC, our local partners have developed cartoon books explaining the issues for village people. To promote our international campaigning work in the UK, Europe and North America, one of the things we have come up with is an on-line computer game, the 'Raiders of the Lost Bark', complete with a character called 'Larry the Logger', in which you have to manoeuvre your hero, Congo Jones, past rolling logs, flying chainsaws and burning forest, in order to unplug the logging machine[25]. It's fun, but with a serious edge: the introduction to the game explains the real-life context and, when finishing the game, players are given the opportunity to send an e-mail to the President of the World Bank or sign a petition in support of DRC civil society's demands. In the six weeks after it was launched, more than 300,000 people logged on to our website and played the game. Through it, some 10,000 new people each day are learning about the threat to the Congo Basin forests; many of them are taking action in support of DRC's forest people.

There have been some interesting developments as a result of all this. In June, the World Bank hosted a video conference, chaired by its President James Wolfensohn, to discuss the future of DRC's forests. For the first time ever, Pygmy people were able to put their concerns directly to Mr Wolfensohn. Following this, the Bank hosted a national forum on forests, which took place in November 2004 in Kinshasa. Again, through the support provided by the Baring Foundation, we were able to ensure that local communities, civil society and NGOs were well informed and able to fully participate in this forum. The result was a unanimous call from both local and international NGOs for a moratorium on any further industrial logging in DRC's forests.

[25] http://www.rainforestfoundationuk.org/s-Games.

5. Conclusions

To conclude, here are what I think are some of the key lessons.

(1) We need both international advocacy and engagement at the grass roots. International advocacy without local engagement runs risks of promoting inappropriate advocacy strategies, whilst local engagement on its own risks missing the big picture and the big opportunities for policy intervention. Find and use techniques that can bridge the gap – community-based mapping can do this.

(2) International advocacy can be used to open political space in which local actors can operate. One specific way of doing this is to insist on cross-conditionality, for example, between sectoral programmes and the opening of fora ('multi-stakeholder' groupings). This can be a slow process – which will not necessarily run at the same speed as the policy events which you are trying to influence. However, such events tend to run in cycles – and we have viewed each event as preparation for the next cycle.

(3) We need to form alliances with other international actors – for example, in order to avoid security risks for grass-roots organisations in countries such as DRC, some international advocacy is best undertaken by international human rights and development organisations that are not associated with local NGOs. In some cases, such alliances need to be informal and at least cryptic in terms of external perceptions. The primary consideration has to be the protection of local partners.

International advocacy and engagement at the grass roots: the campaign against child trafficking in West Africa

Romana Cacchioli
Anti-Slavery International

1. Introduction

This paper reflects upon how Anti-Slavery International and its partners have balanced the inevitable tensions in the face of limited resources and capacity when aiming to achieving maximum impact and long-term sustainable change at the grassroots in relation to child trafficking and the worst forms of child labour whilst seeking to pursue sub-regional and international advocacy goals.

Let me begin with a brief background to this project. In 1994 Anti-Slavery International published its first report on child domestic work and its links to trafficking in Togo. Since then we have investigated and published reports on Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Niger. These studies would not have been possible without the close co-operation and expertise of our local partners in the region. Children in the region are recruited into domestic service from as young as six and, as well as suffering exploitation in terms of hours worked and the pay they receive, many of them are subject to physical, psychological and sexual abuse.

The problem of trafficking of children within West Africa has intensified over the past few years due to the increase in migration from rural to urban areas and the economic disparities between poor and relatively rich areas and countries within the region.[26] Children are at particular risk because of their eagerness to move to areas of opportunity and their inability to defend themselves or to assert their rights once they have moved to new areas or countries. This is particularly true of child domestic workers due to their isolation in employers' homes.

2. Project origins and approach

In 2001/2 Anti-Slavery International ran a project with partner NGOs from Togo, Benin, Niger, Ghana, Burkina Faso and Gabon to highlight the problems of child trafficking, particularly into domestic service, and to promote networking and co-operation between local NGOs. The project was successful, setting up the first network of its kind in the region addressing these issues and producing an agreed set of standards and good practice in the form of a Code of Conduct for use in advocacy work with employers, government bodies and other civil society and international organisations.

[26] Countries of origin have poverty rates that are among the highest in West and Central Africa where inequalities are increasing and standards of living continue to decline, whilst countries of destination enjoy comparatively prosperous and stable economic and social conditions making them attractive for child trafficking: *Child Trafficking in West Africa, Policy Responses* (UNICEF April 2002).

Thanks to the Baring Foundation, in 2004 the network began to implement a three-year project, which combines advocacy at the local, sub-regional and regional levels. Drawing upon the significant and varied experiences of partners, the network seeks to promote awareness and campaign for the end of child exploitation particularly in domestic work as well as identifying strategies to combat child trafficking in West and Central Africa.

Our partners are all small grass-roots organisations with varying expertise and capacity. They came together initially to share their experiences and found that because of the nature of the issues they were addressing, advocacy had to be approached from a national and sub-regional level as well as a regional/ international level if we were to succeed in reducing the levels of exploitation and child trafficking.

As child trafficking within the region occurs both within countries and across borders it is crucial that the governments concerned co-operate closely in seeking solutions to this illegal trade; that national legislation should include internal and trans-national trafficking and protect the human rights of the trafficked person; and that states provide adequate child protection measures as well as ensuring safe and consensual repatriation of victims and their re-integration on returning to their homes.

In addressing child trafficking and the worst forms of child labour we are faced with huge problems. Our own research and that of other organisations suggest that trafficked children come from predominantly poor, agricultural backgrounds and have generally little or no schooling before being trafficked. Most are promised that by going to the city or abroad they will gain some form of education or vocational training which they can then use to earn money to send back to their parents. Reports also suggest some degree of family involvement in the transaction. Poor parents may encourage their children, particularly their daughters (in order to earn money for their marriage trousseau); or they may receive money, often in good faith, from traffickers promising to find their children work or training opportunities.

Within this context network partners agreed that the first year of the project should be dedicated to raising awareness at the grass roots, particularly within recognized sending communities, to highlight the risks that children face.

In seeking to optimize the funds available to us our strategy has been to pursue several advocacy goals by complementing our partners' knowledge and outreach on the ground with Anti-Slavery International's long-standing and widely acknowledged international advocacy and campaigning experience.

At a partners' meeting in January 2004 we identified the following advocacy goals:

At the national level:

- Increase public awareness at the grass roots on the dangers of child trafficking and its links to exploitative child labour by promoting safe migration mechanisms and good working conditions for child workers as elaborated in the Code of Conduct.
- Strengthen NGO and national government co-operation in working towards clearly defined laws on criminalizing human trafficking and child labour, including the harmonization of national legislation and states' obligations under international instruments.

At the sub-regional level:

- Promote the adoption and harmonization of child protection mechanisms and anti-trafficking legislation throughout the sub-region, which protect the human rights of trafficked persons – in line with the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) Plan of Action.[27]

At the regional and international level:

- Increase awareness of child trafficking and its links to exploitative child labour. Advocate for international and peer pressure on States to ratify and domesticate international human rights and labour standards.

So how do we go about discouraging families from sending their children away from home when conditions, particularly in rural areas, have worsened considerably over the past few years? How do we encourage employers to treat their child labourers in an appropriate manner? How do we ensure that children are able to leave unacceptable situations? And finally how do we persuade or oblige states to co-operate with each other and comply with their human rights treaty obligations to protect children from exploitation and abuse?

3. The Code of Conduct as an advocacy tool

Child domestic workers are employed within an informal family environment and are not for the most part integrated as a professional group within conventional working systems. Similarly, the terms, norms and standards with respect to labour generally imply the integration of child labour into the normal labour laws, whereas the context in which children work is a social system which is neither determined by the laws nor included in national policies concerning the well being and fundamental rights of children.

Research and discussion of this problem resulted in the preparation of a Code of Conduct for the treatment of child domestic workers and child victims of trafficking.[28] Discussions centred around the need to set minimum standards with respect to:

[27] A Declaration and a Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons were adopted at the annual ECOWAS Summit held in Dakar, Senegal, December 2002. The Plan of Action calls for the speedy signature and ratification of the UN Convention on Trans-national Organized Crime (CTOC) and the Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Member States are to take specific measures, including criminalizing trafficking in persons and support for victims, promotion of awareness-raising activities, co-operation between border control agencies and sharing of data between ECOWAS countries and the United Nations.

[28] The Code of Conduct and Recommendations are an extract from the full report of the sub-regional project against child domestic work and the trafficking of children in West and Central Africa, which is available in French and English at www.antislavery.org

- the age of the child and his/her capacity to carry out the tasks required and the nature of those tasks
- the treatment of children
- working conditions
- terms of employment
- hazardous work
- working environment
- methods of recruitment
- responsibility of parents, employers and members of employers' families and the rural communities from where children are recruited

Our strategy, particularly in the first year of the project, was to campaign around the Code of Conduct with the objective of raising awareness and promoting better conditions for children's departure from their homes and in their eventual workplace. In developing the Code, NGOs drew upon international standards, particularly the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990), UN Convention on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1989) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (1999). The participation of policy makers, employers, parents, and particularly children in discussions was considered indispensable to finding solutions for child labour, especially where child work is part of the social system which is not for the most part governed by law or included in national policies concerning the well being and fundamental rights of children. The Code of Conduct sets out recommendations and guidelines to parents, employers and governments and above all informs children of their rights within the workplace.

4. Advocacy at the grassroots

Our partners have varying degrees of experience and capacity. Therefore each was encouraged to develop their own national advocacy programme to address the varying needs and contexts on the ground.

A few examples demonstrate some of the strategies partners are using to reach some of the most at-risk communities. Enfants Solidaires d'Afrique et du Monde (ESAM) in Benin regularly tours these communities using theatre and song to draw local people's interest. It has found that theatre is one of the most useful methods of communicating, particularly where literacy levels are low. Former child domestic workers (CDWs) are members of the theatre group and they lead the debate following performances giving an account of their experiences. They have found the response from local people very encouraging as they begin to learn about the dangers and seek to find ways to circumvent the risks to their children.

At the national level ESAM is participating in an advisory group to the Ministry of Justice on a draft anti-trafficking bill. It is also part of a consortium of NGOs making links with neighbouring Nigerian NGOs and government departments from both countries with the objective of improving information sharing, identifying cross-border prevention strategies (better immigration controls) and setting up mechanisms for the safe return of trafficked children.

Partners l'Association de lutte Contre le Travail des Enfants au Niger (ALTEN) and Organisation Pour le Travail des Enfants au Niger (OPTEN) in Niger and Groupe de Recherche–Action pour un Développement Endogène de la Femme (GRADE-FRB) in Burkina Faso began their campaigns by bringing together local NGOs working on child rights to form national coalitions. Several meetings were held to discuss a strategy for generating national debate around the dangers of child trafficking and exploitative child labour. The national media were encouraged to attend the launch of the Code of Conduct. The NGOs also called for a formal consultation mechanism to be put in place between government and NGOs. In both countries the government responded positively. We are hopeful that this co-operation will lead to a better understanding by governments of the need to define regulations on child labour and the movement of children. In October, GRADE took its mobile campaign vehicle to some of the poorest rural areas, using posters, tee shirts and badges to engage with rural populations in their own languages.

Association Mondiale pour les Orphelins et les Enfants Abandonnés (WAO-Afrique) in Togo, the most experienced of our partners, secured funding from Plan International to translate the Code of Conduct into several local languages and will collaborate in a series of national radio programmes for children. WAO Afrique pursues a strategy to foster community responsibility, working closely with religious and community leaders as well as the press to encourage a sustainable and self-enforcing approach to ensuring respect for children's rights. WAO-Afrique has also set up a national coalition of NGOs, which meets regularly with government ministries and international NGOs to press for anti-trafficking legislation and for the creation of child protection mechanisms in line with Togo's treaty obligations. WAO-Afrique has fostered a good relationship with the press, particularly the printed media, which regularly carry features and investigate child trafficking and child labour abuses.

In Guinea our least experienced partner Association Contre l'Exploitation des Enfants et des Femmes (ACEEF) decided to put its resources into mapping the extent and conditions of child domestic work and its links to child trafficking in and around Conakry. ACEEF will be sharing the results of the research with the appropriate government ministries and other NGOs in order to develop common strategies for improving the situation of children in the most abusive environments.

5. Regional and international advocacy and the links with grassroots work

Anti-Slavery International is the oldest human rights organisation in the world and our reputation enables us to play a pivotal role as a bridge-builder between NGOs, inter-governmental bodies like the International Labour Organisation, and human rights bodies such as the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. We make this expertise available to our partners by providing training in advocacy, media and various human rights mechanisms and by providing a platform for them to raise their issues.

As there is no specific budget allocation for international advocacy under the grant, the network agreed to use funds available for the yearly partners' meeting to coincide with sessions of the African human rights mechanisms. In 2005, we plan to attend the session of the African Committee on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, where we will provide training on practical, concrete knowledge of how to use African human rights treaties and enforcement mechanisms, including state reporting. Partners will also learn about the advantages of preparing shadow reports and the possibilities available to them in applying African human rights law at the national and international level. Anti-Slavery International has regularly used this strategy of combining partner attendance at international fora with training, for example, before the UN Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, for the following reasons:

- to provide access to international mechanisms for local NGOs, who would not normally have the resources for this;
- to provide experience in preparing and making submissions;
- to provide guidance in lobbying their own and other state representatives;
- to enable partners to meet other NGOs working on similar issues, to enable them to network and share valuable experiences and strategies.

By increasing the capacity of small NGOs to understand the links between work at the international and national levels, partners are able to advocate with greater authority for the domestic implementation of international standards. Addressing issues as a sub-regional network offers some protection to NGOs, particularly where states are suspicious of NGOs or where they are unwilling to engage or feel defensive. Regional and international advocacy enables us to constructively engage without specifically targeting the failures of one particular country. Although local-level understanding and action by children, parents and employers is essential to any sustainable end to the exploitation and trafficking of children into domestic labour, it is also essential that governments give the issue much higher priority and that governments across the region have a similar understanding. It is for this reason we believe that it is not international advocacy or grass-roots work alone, but both that are needed.

Conclusions and recommendations to funders and policy makers

Theme 1: building capacity where civil society has broken down

(1) There is no single approach to capacity building in unstable situations or indeed any other situations. Approaches must be appropriate to the local context, pragmatic and sufficiently flexible to respond to circumstances that may change rapidly.

(2) It is vitally important to get the fundamental *processes* of planning, implementation and assessment right, to ensure that an intervention is relevant to local needs and sufficiently responsive to changes in the operating environment. Involvement of all the relevant stakeholders – in particular, beneficiary communities – in this is essential.

(3) The realities of work on the ground – for example, the physical dangers of working in countries affected by conflict, the lack of the most basic facilities and infrastructure – are often invisible to international donors and policy makers. Grass-roots reality can be masked by layers of formal reporting. More face-to-face and informal contact with local organisations would help to break down these barriers.

(4) The impulse to be innovative in development funding should not divert attention from the widespread and continuing need for support in the basics of organisational development, for example, management and financial systems, or computer skills.

(5) The provision of 'portable' skills is particularly valuable in situations where beneficiaries and their organisations may have to move at short notice. Nevertheless, the lack of basic facilities and material resources is a severe handicap to local organisations in many places and should not be neglected by those providing external support.

(6) Literacy is of immense value in building the administrative capacity of community organisations, as well as boosting their confidence; and the demand for literacy training is enormous. Greater effort in this area would yield considerable dividends in both short and long terms.

Theme 2: the role of NGOs where government is weak

(1) All civil society organisations, and their projects, operate in relation to government in one way or another, and have to position themselves in relation to government policies, structures and actions. The space for civil society to function may be limited and contested in many societies and under different types of governmental regime, but there is almost always a role that it can play.

(2) Problems are most likely to arise where there is no common understanding of the role of civil society and the space it occupies in relation to government. Whilst this is obviously a problem under authoritarian regimes and during conflict, it is also a major issue in countries emerging from conflict and authoritarian rule.
(3) Mutual trust between government and civil society is an essential element in effective programming. Many governments welcome NGO involvement in particular issues and the technical expertise they bring.
(4) Post-conflict reconciliation and resolution of other psychological consequences of conflict are areas where civil society organisations that have not been party to those events can be highly effective in engaging with communities and other institutions. Here there is space for them to operate in.

Theme 3: advocacy, or engagement at the grass roots?

(1) Agencies must be involved in both: this view was stated unequivocally by all the partner organisations at the seminar.
(2) No project takes place in isolation from higher-level policies and other, socio-economic and environmental, forces. The need for advocacy to tackle underlying causes should be recognized.
(3) In reality, the boundaries between implementation and advocacy are much more fluid than project documentation and funding proposals reveal. Successful implementation of projects often depends on numerous processes of negotiation between many different groups and institutions: these continue and evolve over the course of the project. Agencies applying for grants do need to explain their advocacy work more clearly, but donors should also strive to understand the necessity for advocacy work and the nature of its links to field projects.
(4) National and local government are the prime targets for advocacy in most instances, and key partners in achieving change; but a multi-track approach is usually required to engage all the relevant stakeholders in resolving complex problems.
(5) Regional-level advocacy is often necessary because many problems are not confined within national borders. Yet regional initiatives can be expensive to establish and maintain, and will require long-term support to achieve their maximum impact.

Other issues arising from the International Programme's experiences

(1) Development organisations should give much more attention and assistance to those displaced by long-running conflicts, for whom displacement has become a semi-permanent condition.
(2) The psychological impact of instability on the confidence of communities as well as their willingness to invest their time, efforts and resources in development initiatives, should be recognized as a potentially serious constraint on community work.

(3) The ending of conflict brings many new challenges as well as opportunities. The need to rebuild homes and livelihoods is often acute and urgent if a country is not to slide back into instability and violence. This appears to be a relatively neglected area of development assistance and it may be that both the challenges and the opportunities are not sufficiently well understood.

(4) Vulnerable groups often face multiple problems arising from, for example, lack of skills, natural resources or economic opportunities, inadequate education or healthcare facilities, and denial of fundamental human rights. It is therefore natural for NGOs to adopt holistic, multi-track approaches to reduce their vulnerability although there is a risk of taking on more than they can manage.

(5) Evaluation of organisational capacity building work is very difficult, for several reasons, including its multi-faceted nature, the length of time needed for capacity-building processes, and the often intangible nature of change. In unstable or rapidly changing situations, this can become even harder. Donors assessing the likely results of a proposed project need to be aware of the difficulty of prediction in such contexts.

(6) Funding agencies – especially private ones – are not always good at sharing lessons that they have learnt about working on the various issues and problems they are helping to overcome through their grant-making. There should be more learning and sharing within the donor community.

Appendix: Agencies funded by the Baring Foundation International Programme, 2001-3

Information provided by the agencies as background material for participants at the International Programme workshop and seminar on 18 and 20 January 2001.

ANTI-SLAVERY INTERNATIONAL

www.antislavery.org

Anti-Slavery International, founded in 1839, is the world's oldest international human rights organisation and the only charity in the United Kingdom to work exclusively against slavery and related abuses. We work at local, national and international levels to eliminate the system of slavery around the world by:

- Urging governments of countries with slavery to develop and implement measures to end it.
- Lobbying governments and intergovernmental agencies to make slavery a priority issue.
- Supporting research to assess the scale of slavery in order to identify measures to end it.
- Working with local organisations to raise public awareness of slavery.
- Educating the public about the realities of slavery and campaigning for its end.

Anti-Slavery International works effectively towards achieving our goal of a slave-free world by researching and publishing information on the issues central to our work: debt bondage, forced labour, forced marriage, the worst forms of child labour, human trafficking and traditional slavery. Results from research undertaken are then brought before international bodies in order to promote laws to protect those exploited by these practices.

Anti-Slavery International's work has produced real change. Throughout the last century, the organisation was involved in many successful campaigns, such as those to stop the abuse of rubber workers in the Belgian Congo and the use of child slaves – Mui Tsai – in Hong Kong.

In the 21st century, our success continues:

- In 2003, following the first national survey of slavery in Niger, which we conducted with our local partner Timidria, the Government introduced a new law against slavery with sentences of 30 years in prison for offenders. Within six months of this measure over 200 slaves were freed.

- In 2002, after years of pressure from Anti-Slavery International working with local organisations in Nepal, the Government passed a law declaring bonded labour illegal.
- In 2001, we launched a campaign against human trafficking, which has successfully raised awareness among decision makers and the public and led to increased action to end this modern-day slave trade.
- In 2000, Anti-Slavery International initiated a new programme with local partners in six West African countries to end the cross border trafficking of children, leading to the first anti-trafficking network of its kind in the region.

DISABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

www.disabilityanddevelopmentpartners.org

Disability and Development Partners was founded (as the Jaipur Limb Campaign) in 1992 and registered as a charity in 1995. It is based in London. We do not have offices or staff in the countries that we work in because we only work through partnerships with local organisations. Our work is supported by UK donor agencies, charitable trusts and foundations, campaign groups, churches, companies and many friends and supporters.

Disabled men, women and children are among the poorest and most vulnerable in society. We work with partner organisations to bring social and economic benefits to disabled people in developing countries, especially those who have lost limbs or the use of limbs through war, accidents or preventable diseases like polio.

Our programmes address disabled people's basic needs, rights and livelihoods. Working together with our partners, we research and develop programmes that create opportunities for people with disabilities and their families so that they can take control over their lives and join the mainstream of society as equal and valued contributors.

We currently support projects on income generating schemes for people with disabilities, their families and communities; partner capacity building; training; physical rehabilitation; the development and promotion of appropriate rehabilitation technology; disability awareness; and networking between our partners in different countries to share experiences and expertise. We are working with partner organisations in India, Mozambique, Angola, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and Nepal.

EDUCATION ACTION INTERNATIONAL

www.education-action.org

Education Action International was established in England in 1923 as Student Relief. Its original mission was to assist refugees from central European nationalism in continuing their education and careers. In the 1950s it evolved into World University Service (UK). In June 2003 Education Action International was adopted as the operating name to reflect the current goals and activities more closely.

We see education as the key to tackling the root causes of poverty, building self-reliant communities not dependent on aid. Our experience shows that investment in education is essential to the reconstruction of fragile communities emerging from years of war.

We believe in working with others to increase the impact of our work. We work with small grass-roots organisations, skilled professionals and experienced practitioners so that we are always learning, and we stay in touch with the needs of the people we serve. We use this knowledge constantly to review and improve our work and that of our partners.

Education Action International supports people affected by conflict to realize their right to education. Members, trustees and staff believe that education is a fundamental human right and an essential factor in enabling individuals and societies to develop. We also believe that education and skills are amongst the most important (and portable) assets for people forced by conflict and oppression to move, often repeatedly. Accordingly, Education Action International works with indigenous organisations to help refugees, internally displaced people and societies affected by conflict to gain access to, and expand, education. We generally work with southern NGOs and, where conditions permit, local education authorities, which focus on equitably improving access to education and quality of teaching and governance. We also work with refugees in the UK to help them realize their rights to continue/complete their education or training and gain employment.

Our particular concern is the long-term impact of conflict and displacement on the education rights, aspirations and expectations of displaced people (particularly in the poorest communities). Outside of externally monitored settlements people often accept any provision, rather than attempting to improve that provision. We support educators from affected communities who are working to fill some of the most serious gaps in education services.

We currently work with educationalists in Sudan, Uganda, Egypt, Peru and Palestine on medium to long-term projects in organisational development, national educational policy development, adult literacy, curriculum development, teacher training, child rights awareness and improving access to education for poor and marginalized groups. Internationally, our approach is to work with partners to help identify strategies for contributing towards the Education For All goals. We also hope to ameliorate some of the negative effects of national Education For All planning on access for girls and disabled pupils.

Our overseas programme covers Africa, the Middle East and Latin America. Wherever we work, our programme falls naturally into three main areas:

- developing good quality, basic education
- improving literacy amongst women and within marginalized communities
- using education to bring about positive change

Our UK Programme provides specialist training for employment for refugees as well as services to health professionals hoping to retrain or adapt existing qualifications. We run regular job search courses, an innovative mentoring scheme and business start up courses. We also run an outreach service taking advice and guidance out to colleges, refugee community groups and into people's homes making sure that women, refugees with disabilities and younger people are not excluded. We offer a range of grant schemes to help meet the costs of study and retraining.

ICA:UK AND ICA TANZANIA

www.ica-uk.org.uk

Both ICA:UK and ICA Tanzania are statutory members of the Institute of Cultural Affairs International which is a global network of 25 independent and autonomous organisations carrying out research, demonstration and training concerned with the human factor in world development. ICA aims to act as a catalyst for people in a variety of contexts and circumstances to take active responsibility for their own personal, community and societal development.

ICA:UK comprises an expanding network of around 70 individuals and families, living and working in a diverse range of settings across the country. Activities are implemented under the auspices of ICA:UK, a company limited by guarantee registered as a charity. The company is governed by a Board of Trustees, most of whom are returned volunteers. The mission of the organisation is 'to enable individuals, organisations and communities to bring about change in pursuit of a humane and sustainable future for all'.

The company currently employs five full time and part time staff, who develop and expand ICA's programme and network in Britain, in line with its mission and strategic plan. To accomplish this, it aims to catalyse and facilitate contributions of time and expertise from ICA Associates from among the wider network, on a voluntary and/or contract basis.

Activities are divided between national, international and organisational, with the placing of the activities being determined primarily by the location of their impact. National activities include training in ICA facilitation skills and methods (known as the Technology of Participation), provision of facilitation services, and the development of a youth participation programme. International activities also include the provision of training and facilitation, in addition to the Village Volunteer sponsorship scheme linking individual donors in the UK to staff members of ICA Kenya, and the Partnership Programme which supports the development and growth of other ICAs (and under which the grant from the Baring Foundation was raised).

ICA Tanzania was established in 1998 and is registered as a company limited by guarantee, operating on a not-for-profit basis. The organisation now has a staff of 14 people, based in the main office in Moshi and the two field offices in Mto wa Mbu and Handeni. Through their efforts, ICA Tanzania is reaching around 700,000 people through three main programmes:

- The Kisongo, Manyara and Makueni Integrated Development Programme works with groups in Monduli District (predominantly with the Maasai people) to develop their capacity both as active, self-supporting entities and as catalysts for development in the wider community. It also engages with the wider community in issues such as legal and functional literacy, indoor air pollution and HIV/AIDS.
- Strengthening Participatory Local Development in Handeni District, Tanga Region focuses on working with women's groups in the district, strengthening their capacity in leadership and management, and supporting them in developing income generating skills. HIV/AIDS is also being addressed in the wider community.
- The Novella Tanzania Project brings together ICA Tanzania, Unilever, The World Conservation Union and ICRAF to support farmers to improve their livelihoods through collecting the nuts of the Allanblackia tree for processing into margarine and other edible oils.

In addition, ICA Tanzania supplements its grant income by providing facilitation and training services both nationally and in other African countries.

PASTORAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK IN THE HORN OF AFRICA (PENHA)

www.penhanetwork.org

PENHA was established in Britain in 1989 by a group of research and development workers from the Horn of Africa: it gained charity status in 1993. Its primary aims are:

- To empower pastoralist communities and their institutions to play a full role in their development.
- To influence development policy and development programme design to foster sustainable livelihoods among pastoralists.

During its early years PENHA concentrated on fostering links between researchers on pastoral development in the Horn of Africa, and was able to commission original research and circulate papers. Following the collapse of the Mengistu regime, PENHA relocated its main office to Addis Ababa. However, in 1998, its Executive Director, Chair and one staff member were declared persona non grata as a result of their Eritrean origin, and PENHA was forced to relocate to London. At roughly the same time, PENHA re-oriented the main thrust of its activities from research to capacity building for pastoralist NGOs and CBOs in the Horn countries. PENHA has for a number of years been engaged in managing programmes of capacity building in several countries of the Horn (Somaliland, Eritrea, Uganda, Sudan and Ethiopia) and each country programme has a slightly different mode

of operation and relation to local partners. However, one common thread is that in each country PENHA has a local country chapter that guides programming in that country.

PENHA has successfully facilitated the delivery of training courses for middle and lower ranking extension staff from government ministries, NGOs and CBOs in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somaliland, Sudan and Uganda; developed a network of research associates (mostly in the region); organised workshops, conferences, research studies and undertaken advocacy on behalf of Horn of Africa pastoralists; contributed to the emergence of many local pastoralist organisations, helping to create local and regional networks and information exchanges; developed partnerships with research institutions, government departments/ ministries, local NGOs, CBOs and indigenous pastoral groups in the region; acted as a forum for debate on pastoralism within the Horn of Africa; conducted policy orientated researches and contributed to the development of pastoralist policies;

PENHA's activities encompass all areas of pastoral livelihoods issues including land tenure, animal health, environmental management, water conservation, human and animal health, education and conflict resolution.

PENHA has found it difficult to realise its visionary project of an independent regional NGO. Not only has it had to confront the harsh political realities of the region, but it fits uncomfortably between the categories of international and national NGO, and has found it frustratingly difficult to get funding for very worthwhile programmes: too small to interface easily with donors at headquarters level, but not regarded as a national NGO for the purposes of country-level decision-making.

THE RAINFOREST FOUNDATION

www.rainforestfoundation.org.uk

The mission of the Rainforest Foundation, UK (RF UK) is to support indigenous peoples and traditional populations of the world's rainforests in their efforts to protect their environment and fulfill their rights. All of the RF UK's work is implemented through local partners. We believe in building meaningful partnerships with non-governmental organisations and indigenous rainforest communities and associations. We assist them in demarcating their traditional territories, securing their land rights, establishing community forestry, improving their livelihoods and upholding their basic rights. Almost all of our work aims to improve our partners' capacity to better manage and fund their work. We currently support and manage project activities in Peru, Democratic Republic of Congo, Republic of Congo, Gabon, Cameroon and Madagascar.

Internationally, we work to influence and change government policy and practices that undermine indigenous peoples' rights and lead to further destruction of the rainforests. In the UK, we produce information and educational resources to further the public's knowledge about rainforests and their indigenous inhabitants, and encourage them to make a positive difference.

The RF UK is an autonomous body with 'sister' organisations in the USA, Norway and Japan. In the UK, there are six members of staff and four volunteers. Overseas, RF UK employs one Congolese man. Foundation-supported overseas projects currently employ approximately 20, full-time equivalent, professional local staff, plus approximately 40 local technicians and animators.

REASON PARTNERSHIP

www.reasonpartnership.com

Reason Partnership was founded in 1981, under the name Richmond Fellowship International. It was originally conceived as the overseas department of the Richmond Fellowship, a charity established to provide care in the community to people with mental health problems in England.

The primary purpose of Richmond Fellowship International was, in effect, to 'franchize' overseas both the name, Richmond Fellowship, and the particular model of care the Richmond Fellowship promulgated in the UK. This model of care was based on the establishment of half way houses wherein staff and clients would work together to create a therapeutic environment designed to 're-socialize' clients to the extent that they could begin to live independently in the community.

From 1981 to the late 1990s, Richmond Fellowship International met with apparent success, with Richmond Fellowships established in France, the USA, Mexico, the Caribbean, Costa Rica, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Israel, Malta, India, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong and Australasia. However, this apparent rate of success hid the fact that the 'international fellowship' was extremely fragile. The reasons for this fragility were two-fold. Firstly, Richmond Fellowship International split from its 'parent' organisation, the Richmond Fellowship, in 1991/2, thereby reducing its access to funding for the international operations. Secondly, and more importantly, the 1990s showed that the model of care being franchized to developing countries was inappropriate, except in those countries where Western, Anglophone values and interpretations of mental illness were extant. Thus, by the late 1990s the Richmond Fellowships in France, Mexico, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, Pakistan had collapsed, whilst Israel, Malta and the USA achieved complete independence. In addition, the Richmond Fellowships in India, Hong Kong, New Zealand and Australia formed an independent 'forum', believing that London was providing them with insufficient 'leadership'.

In 1999, the charity received a grant from the Baring Foundation to bring representatives of all the Richmond Fellowships to London. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss issues of ethnic and cultural appropriateness concerning the Richmond Fellowship model of care. The meeting had a cathartic effect on the international fellowship, exhibiting a deep split between poor countries, lacking the social welfare infrastructure necessary to support half way houses, and the wealthier countries, who either had such a supportive infrastructure, or could charge fees to their clients sufficient to cover the core costs of such institutions.

Following this meeting, it was decided that the focus of the charity should be less on building an 'international fellowship' treating everyone alike, and more on developing more appropriate mental health interventions in countries where resources were scarce. The relationship had to become one of equal partnership where, together, we identified the most vulnerable and, together, designed the most appropriate response to meet their needs.

This approach was adopted in 2000 and continues today. In 2004, the charity changed its name from Richmond Fellowship International to Reason Partnership, to cement the changes made. This has resulted in some of our former franchize partners choosing to remain aloof from the changes made, but has opened up opportunities for the charity to work with new partner organisations, adopting new approaches to meeting needs and accessing potential new sources of funding. Where before the charity affected the lives of only a handful of clients in any one year, we are now in a position to affect the lives of thousands of poor people through strengthening community support systems and structures, affecting government policy on the psychological needs of communities in difficult circumstances and dealing with the special needs of vulnerable children and offenders.

SOUTH SUDAN WOMEN CONCERN

www.refugeesonline.org.uk/sswc

South Sudan Women Concern (SSWC) was formed in the UK in 1993 by a group of Sudanese women with the aim of alleviating poverty and advancing education and training among refugees in Britain and Africa. Initially it focused on the needs of refugees in the UK, where it provides education support and welfare advice, but since 1997 it has been working with displaced women and their families in South Sudan, where there has been a civil war for many years. SSWC is registered with the SRRC (Sudan Relief and Rehabilitation Commission) and has permission to operate in the New Sudan as an indigenous organisation. SSWC has a governing body of seven, a team of six volunteers and four staff including session workers in the UK; and 39 staff and workers in South Sudan.

The UK programme has education as its main objective. It is focused on the provision of education support to Sudanese refugee children. This targets the teaching of the core school subjects, i.e. Maths, English as a foreign language, and Science. In addition to these subjects, the mother tongue is taught and a cultural programme executed. The aim of this combined educational programme is to build the children's self-esteem and self-confidence so that they can integrate smoothly into mainstream schools in the UK. The project has been active for the last 10 years. It has received funding from the BBC Children in Need Appeal and The City Parochial Foundation. Progress has been very good. Students who attended the Saturday school have achieved very good GCSE and A-level results. By 2002, 15 students supported by the project had graduated from universities in the UK and obtained employment as accountants, engineers and scientists. The project continues to attract more refugee children and their parents, encouraged by the progress of previous students.

The Africa programme forms an important part of SSWC's work. Its activities bring together South Sudanese women leaders and the grass roots in exile and in the displaced camps. SSWC is seen as part and parcel of the South Sudanese Women's Movement in Sudan and outside. Women in Sudan refer to SSWC as 'our organisation'. Its projects include training support, capacity building of 20 women's groups, food security and health promotion (with a particular focus on reproductive health).

TIGRAI DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

www.tdaint.org

The Tigrai Development association (TDA) was founded in 1989 among the diaspora during the Ethiopian civil war, as an apolitical, non-profit, tax-exempt humanitarian organisation with chapters and support groups in Ethiopia and abroad. In October 1992 TDA moved its headquarters to Mekelle, the capital of Tigrai, the northernmost region of Ethiopia, to work closely with the people of Tigrai, the end users of development programmes. Today TDA has become an internationally recognized association with hundreds of thousands of members residing in the remotest areas of Tigrai and elsewhere on the globe.

TDA has a vision of a prosperous Ethiopia free of poverty and its mission is to be a strong development arm that supports the development efforts of the people of Tigrai. The areas of intervention include: education (with special emphasis on primary education), basic health services (focusing on maternal and child healthcare) and targeted skills training for income generation (to achieve food security for people living in drought-prone areas), all with active community participation.

To effectively utilize the available resources pooled from different sources, TDA has established an organisation structure and operational working manuals which make it transparent and accountable to its supporters and the general public at large. TDA's partners and supporters in its development endeavours include USAID, DFID, EU, Menschen Für Menschen, DANIDA, SIDA, CIDA, GTZ, ESRDF, REST, PACT, the UK National Lottery, Banyan Tree Foundation, Comic Relief, UNICEF and the Baring Foundation.

TDA employs 215 persons in different capacities at its headquarters, branch offices and liaison office in Addis Ababa. It has formulated co-operative and productive working relationships with the community, government line offices, donors and supporters.

TDA has developed a three-year strategic plan to guide the successful implementation of its projects and development programmes in the areas of capacity building, promotion of health services and skills training for income generation.

International charities in unstable areas of the world find themselves both filling the gaps left by weak governments in terms of providing services as well as making spaces for those same governments to hear the voices of the poor and vulnerable.

This report brings together a collection of nine essays on such projects which have been funded by the Baring Foundation in sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America since 2000. It is based on a seminar held in London and introduced by a key note speech by Sir Crispin Tickell. The editor, John Twigg considers the implications of this body of experience for other funders and for the British government.

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