



Civil Society - A Strong Pillar of Democracy

The commitment of civil society to justice and political participation around the world

Imprint

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Foreword

There is a long tradition of providing funds to strengthen civil society organisations; however, there is currently a boom in funding provision. At the same time, the last few years have seen a number of changes in the way funding is provided, a transformation that has been felt at various levels. Both the funding environment and the actors themselves have changed. Today, civil society organisations need a higher level of technical skills to plan, coordinate and implement their projects. Moreover, they are required to fulfil their reporting and financial obligations, and the increasing expectations of diverse states and donors to provide impact-oriented projects.

Furthermore, expert knowledge, an understanding of the political landscape, as well as detailed knowledge of the actors and specific contexts are essential if these organisations are to successfully fight poverty and properly position themselves in a diverse and internationally networked civil society. Civil society organisations then need to have an understanding of the complex relations of world trade, climate change and other conditions that affect the lives of the poor, and take these into account in their respective contexts.

Political reform has led to further changes for civil society. Movements for democratisation in many countries have opened up new opportunities for local civil society; the process of decentralisation occurring in many Latin American countries provides a good example. At the same time, however, in many places government intervention limits the scope for action available to civil society organisations. This leads organisations to perform a balancing act that requires an understanding of the political situation, courage and commitment.

Furthermore, the demands of civil society partners towards Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service (Brot für die Welt – Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst) and other donors have also changed. Our partners now call for strategic partnerships – and they are right to do so. At the same time, we are now receiving far more applications for funding aimed at strengthening civil society.

Clearly, we must ensure that we are ready for these changes. We must revise our structures and approaches and if they are not ready for this challenge, we need to adapt them. Over the last few years, strengthening civil society has become our most important funding priority. Now is the time to critically review our understanding of the roles of “donor” and “recipient”, as well as the way tasks are distributed between the North and South. It is time to further develop our concept of strengthening civil society funding provision and to find out where we ourselves need to change in order to respond meaningfully to the present and future challenges.

This study would not have been possible without the dedication of Erika Märke and the support of Michelle Peña Nelz. It marks the beginning of a process of discussion with partner organisations about our future cooperation as actors of civil society. It goes far beyond an inventory of the current situation of civil society in presenting many exciting options for further strategic planning and opportunities for cooperation.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Dr Claudia Warning
Executive Director of Bread for the World –
Protestant Development Service

Introduction

The trend towards civil society – The study's most important findings... at a glance

Bread for the World - Protestant Development Service aims to help *“empower those who are poor, disadvantaged and oppressed for the betterment of their living conditions out of their own strength and in their own responsibility [and] enable to people to participate in decision-making processes by strengthening civil society”* (EED 2003).

Consequently, strengthening civil society is an important priority for support: it absorbs around one third of the funding we provide. Sixty-two percent of our partners are church-related or Christian organisations; however, we also work together with secular civil society organisations and those from other faiths towards this common goal.

Civil society: a constructive critical partner and participant

Our partners view their role as “watchdogs” - organisations that both critically accompany political processes and provide important input. They are committed to the poor and disadvantaged in their communities and stand up for these people's rights and interests. They engage in tackling poverty, marginalisation and unjust structures. Democratic legitimacy for them is a prerequisite for professional political participation. Together with grassroots organisations, our partners strive towards sustainable development that is based on peace and justice and the integrity of creation.

Democratic space is both shrinking and expanding

Since the beginning of the 1990s, the global importance of civil society has increased substantially. At the same time, the scope for democratic action by civil society has constantly been changing. In many parts of the world, critical development NGOs and human rights organisations are being obstructed, criminalised and persecuted. Despite this, in many places processes of democratisation and decentralisation have opened up new opportunities for participation, and civil society is now involved - more than ever before -

in political processes at the local, national and international level.

Civil society work is conducted “on and behind the front line”

Civil society organisations strategically and effectively use opportunities for political participation and influence. They participate in the development of laws and constitutional reform, influence government policy at local and national levels, participate in planning and implementing state and communal budgets, and monitor governance and the adherence to human rights laws. Accordingly, these groups follow a variety of strategies: they lobby governments and international organisations; they produce national “shadow reports” for UN human rights organisations, advise parliaments and government agencies, are being appointed as members of official committees, boards and government commissions, and provide gender and human rights training to governments and police upon their request.

On the other hand, civil society organisations also work “on the front line”: they are present on the streets with the people whose interests they represent, and take part in campaigns, protests and boycotts. Of particular importance is the strategic integration of political participation with processes of empowerment and of strengthening the self help potential of communities at the grassroots level.

Skills, sustainable structures and networks are essential

Capacity building and developing organisational structures and networks are among the most essential measures of support that are being provided to strengthen civil society. Ninety percent of reviewed projects received support for capacity building, and seventy-three percent were given funding to develop civil society organisations and networks from the local to the international level. Civil society organisations are well networked both according to issues and at a more

general level. They cooperate in various ways with public experts, politicians, judiciaries, police, media and professional associations, universities, research and educational institutions, as well as with unions, chambers of commerce and business associations.

In the areas relevant to development, these groups have gained significant thematic and conceptual knowledge, policy and legal skills, such as in international human rights (particularly in economic, social and cultural human rights), in agriculture, food security, land rights, gene technology, world trade, climate and environmental issues, education and health as well as many other issues. The role of the women's movement in civil society needs to be strengthened; development and human rights organisations need to further improve their gender competence.

Safeguarding “good governance” in civil society organisations

One of civil society's most important roles is to stand up for democratic principles such as participation, transparency and accountability. The majority of organisations are not only committed to ensuring these basic principles are adhered to by governments; they also commit themselves to “good governance” as part of their own values and performance. They take this responsibility seriously, and as a result, attach great importance to their decision-making and management structures. They practise participatory processes, transparent financial management procedures and qualified systems of planning, monitoring and evaluation.

In many countries civil society organisations have initiated processes of critical self-reflection in which they analyse strengths and weaknesses, as well as discuss standards of governance. In some regions standards have been established and mechanisms of voluntary selfcontrol have been developed. These include e.g. codes of conduct, quality assurance systems and guidelines on corruption.

Civil society - between exercising influence and becoming co-opted

Civil society's increasing importance and intensified political participation have brought with it a wide spectrum of new opportunities. The international processes associated with UN human rights treaties, with the focus on impact orientation of development cooperation (Paris Declaration, development effectiveness), with environmental and climate-related questions, as well as with the debate on the sustainability of the dominant model of development (Rio+20) have contributed extensively to this. Civil society organisations have become as much critical counterparts as equal partners to governments and international organisations.

However, they have also experienced the dangers inherent to participatory processes: they may lead to organisations losing some of their independence, or can create a gap between their policies and the perspectives of the people they seek to represent. Consequently, civil society organisations call on governments and international donors to respect the views and interests of the disadvantaged as being brought to the table by civil society, and to take these into account in policy decisions. At the same time, civil society feels responsible not only to criticise unjust structures and the dominant development model, but also to provide sustainable alternatives founded on justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Chapter 1

Debates, trends and potentials – The study on the funding priority “Strengthening civil society”

Providing support to the partners in their commitment against poverty and for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation has always formed an important part of Church development work. Our aim has been to strengthen people’s ability to help themselves by building competences and civil society structures. People are enabled to assert their rights, to follow their own visions of development, and to gain access to political participation. Consequently, funding empowerment processes and strengthening civil society has been a priority for Bread for the World – Protestant Development Service and its predecessor organisations from the very beginning.

In 2009, this funding priority absorbed the largest share of funds for the first time. Since then, it has absorbed around one third of total funding. This funding covers a broad spectrum of activities including the development of civil society organisations and networks, strengthening political participation, empowerment through competence and strategy development, and the realization of civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights. At the same time, funding has also been provided to processes of democratisation and decentralisation, to conflict resolution and management and peace building initiatives, to legal advice programmes and to organisations monitoring governments.

A broad empirical basis

The current publication is based on a study of the Protestant Development Service (Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst/EED) funding priority “Strengthening civil society” (Märke 2012). The study evaluated our funding between the years 2008 and 2010. This included 267 projects in 52 countries that received financial support, as well as 45 professionals seconded to partner organisations and selected individuals who received scholarship grants, including alumni who went on to work in a relevant area after completing their further education or training. In addition, 40 EED partners from 23 countries, including two that op-

erate worldwide, were asked for their opinions on the scope available for democratic action, the role of civil society, and the opportunities and limits to political participation. Two trips to India and Peru were used to discuss these questions in workshops, and discussions took place with partner organisations and individuals from politics, the media, science and business. In addition, literature and current discourses were also analysed. The following presents a summary of the results of this extensive empirical investigation.

The study focuses on the developmental role and relevance of civil society today. It deals with current debates, demonstrates the trends and dynamics as well as potentials and challenges to the work of civil society. It discusses the way civil society reflects upon its own role, identity, and democratic practices, its relationship to the state and the private sector, and its contribution towards alternative development. Furthermore, the study demonstrates how development and human rights organisations ensure that disadvantaged groups and their interests are provided with a voice in politics, society, legislation and jurisdiction even under adverse conditions. It also provides a perspective on how civil society engagement, as an important element of a vibrant democracy, can be made stronger, sustainable and more effective.

Chapter 2

The participation of those without power – The role of civil society in church development work

There is a long tradition of strengthening civil society in church development work. From the very beginning church development services have been committed to empowering disadvantaged people and their organisations, to promoting their participation in development, and to contributing to global structural change. These ideas were set out in a statement first published in 1973 by the Evangelical Church in Germany EKD: *“Christian responsibility to the world means that the Church cannot avoid the calls for structural change and political and economic participation of the powerless”* (EKD 1973).

Empowerment and political participation

Consequently, strengthening civil society, which is based on the long standing tradition of empowerment, became a key strategy in world-wide cooperation between church development services and their partners. This strategy is more than merely a “sector” in the funding programme; it influences all areas of cooperation, whether rural or urban development, health, education or other fields. Examples of this can be found in numerous Protestant Development Service (Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst/EED) publications, for example the brochures *“Stadt und Land im Fluss”* (2011) *“Right to Future”* (2010), *“Keine Almosen, sondern Rechte”* (2007).

Part of EED and its partners’ understanding of development is that a strong civil society is a prerequisite for sustainable development in providing people with the opportunity to participate in social structures and processes: *“The connection with political work at the local, national and even international level is becoming ever more important. The better these approaches are interlinked, the likelier real structural change becomes. This is the only way the fight against poverty, marginalisation and injustice can be won”* (EED 2010).

Civil society based on these premises clearly plays an important role in church development work, in particular in the context of the necessary “return to life” to which the Evangelical

Church in Germany committed itself in 2009 (EKD 2009).

Defining civil society

The concept of civil society can be interpreted in numerous ways. Accordingly, it has been regularly redefined throughout its history, and is interpreted differently in contemporary development policy discourse. EED uses a definition that is firmly grounded in its ecumenical and development policy mission statement. The mission statement sets out EED’s aim as to help *“empower those who are poor, disadvantaged and oppressed for the betterment of their living conditions out of their own strength and in their own responsibility... [and] enable people to participate in decision-making processes by strengthening civil society”* (EED 2003).

EED’s work is aimed at a broad spectrum of civil society initiatives at diverse levels of society, which are either organised by disadvantaged people, or work with such people. Their shared goal is to strengthen the ability of the poor and marginalized to help themselves, assert their rights, and participate in political processes; to address poverty and its causes, and work for justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

Clearly, churches as well as church-related or Christian organisations are obvious partners for the church development service. However, EED equally cooperates with secular development organisations and those from other faiths. As a result, EED works together with an entire range of actors including community based organisations (CBOs), social movements, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), professional institutions, networks, fora and special interest groups. Civil society is, therefore, regarded as opposite to state and private sector.

The role of church and Christian organisations

Nearly two thirds (almost 62%) of EED partners in the analysed funding priority were church-

related or Christian organisations or organisations with Christian orientation. This includes organisations directly associated with the church, such as the Indian church development agency Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA), as well as organisations whose aims or programmes are influenced by the church or people associated with it, such as the Ethiopian NGO umbrella organisation Consortium of Christian Relief and Development Association (CDRA). We also work together with organisations whose work is based on Christian values, such as our long-term Brazilian partner Instituto Brasileiro de Análises Sociais e Economicas (IBASE). The strong presence of organisations with Christian background in this funding priority clearly demonstrates the important role such organisations play in empowering people, strengthening their organisations and enabling them to contribute to a sustainable future.

Chapter 3

Democratisation and repression – The development of democratic space for civic action

Faced with continued political, economic and cultural globalisation, many current development policy debates focus on the role and relevance of civil society. Some recent analyses have concluded that throughout the world scope for civil society to take democratic action has been shrinking, and that the political, legal and institutional framework in most countries has changed for the worse. They argue that the growth in importance of international civil society, which occurred particularly during the 1990s, has been met with a massive backlash: social movements and human rights organisations in particular are seen to be faced with government repression and obstruction. Such analyses emphasize the moves away from democracy, and the persecution of people and organisations critical of the government in many parts of the world. According to them this can largely be attributed to 9/11 and the resulting “war on terror”, but also to the massive global crises of recent years¹ (the economic and financial crisis, climate crisis, food crisis). However, many analyses also clearly demonstrate the strength of the civil society initiatives that have emerged throughout the world, and the leverage they are able to apply to win back more scope for action and create new opportunities.

Counter trends

The study “Strengthening Civil Society” comes to the conclusion that during the last years new restrictions as well as greater opportunities for civil society action have developed. Hence, there seems to be no uniform global trend. Instead, “political space” seems to change dynamically: progress and setbacks occur, and the scope for democratic ac-

tion has had to be defended and fought for anew continuously. EED supports its partners to strategically use the opportunities provided by political participation, and lobbies, together with its partners, for the safeguarding and expansion of democratic space.

Surveillance and a “climate of fear”

A total of fifty-eight percent of the projects reported that they had recently faced new restrictions on their work. They are located in all 52 countries included in the study; furthermore a few worldwide projects as well as Asia-wide projects are affected. The spectrum of restrictions is broad: the most common complaint by partners was an increase in the administrative regimentation of their work, including stricter registration requirements, financial controls, taxation, visa requirements, or reporting and accounting. At the same time, recent years have seen many countries put laws in place that curtail or more strictly control civil society engagement.

Furthermore, although they are relatively small in number, the range of partners that have experienced repression, paramilitary or state violence and criminalisation (such as some in China, India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines) is still alarmingly high. Almost one quarter of our partners reported such experiences. The problems they face range from threats, intimidation and defamation, to arrests, abductions, evictions, and even murder. In some countries, partners deplore a “climate of fear” and a “culture of impunity”. The “fight against terror” is often used by governments as an excuse to put pressure on human rights and development organisations, and to persecute and criminalise them. Clearly, this not only impedes their work, but often publicly discredits it.

Restrictions, obstructions and threats of this type do not only occur in countries with authoritarian regimes or dictatorships; they are also practised in relatively stable democracies. Conditions

¹ For example, see: CIVICUS (2010). *Civil Society: The Clampdown is real*. Johannesburg, SA; ACT-Alliance (2011). *Shrinking political space of civil society action*. Geneva; van der Borgh, C. and Terwindt, C. (2009). *Political Space of NGOs*. Utrecht; World Movement for Democracy, last published as: *Statement on the International Day of Democracy*. September 2011; Africa Civil Society Platform on Principled Partnership, *Strategic Plan 2011-2014*; GKKE (2012): *Handlungsräume werden der Zivilgesellschaft nicht geschenkt* (working title). Published by: Gemeinsamen Konferenz Kirchen und Entwicklung (GKKE) on the “political space of NGOs”. Part of the GKKE-Schriftenreihe, Bonn and Berlin.

Building civil society - CEOSS (Egypt)

Poverty, social inequality and (religious) extremism threaten the fragile political and social arrangements in Egypt and block developments towards more democracy and participation. In Egypt many people construct their identities in terms of traditional, pre-democratic and religiously-influenced identities. In contrast, the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services (CEOSS) promotes the idea of a mature, democratic citizen, who not only has rights, but also the responsibility to strive for a tolerant and inclusive society for all citizens. The relief and development agency of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church has been intensively involved in Egypt's internal debates on reform for many years.

The decades-long rule of President Mubarak has led many people to feel unable to take political action. Consequently, this development agency motivates people to get involved in long-term in politics. In order to do so, the "Forum for Intercultural Dialogue", which was initiated by CEOSS, brings together numerous opinion-forming groups and key people from public life to dis-

cuss important social issues. This has led sheikhs, priests, academics, media professionals and artists to meet at the local, regional and state level.

During these seminars the future leaders of religious communities in particular openly discuss civil rights, gender justice and democracy with representatives of civil society organisations. At the same time, media experts train these young people in communications skills. Every year around fifty seminars and workshops take place in which they learn to discuss and resolve conflicts without violence.

These opportunities for dialogue offer participants a safe space where they can address sensitive issues that rarely form part of public debate in Egypt, such as religious freedom, Muslim—Christian relations and HIV/AIDS. These activities are supported by dialogue in the Arab region and the western world. This includes German—Egyptian exchanges that are organised by CEOSS and the Evangelische Akademie Loccum.
Internet: www.ceoss.org.eg

such as these are most likely to develop where vested interests of politicians or private sector are at stake due to the resistance of local people. Examples include disputes over resources, such as land, water, forests and minerals; or disputes over major infrastructure projects, such as dams, motorways and power stations.

Organisations faced with these kinds of problems react with various strategies: they try to find solutions through talks with governments, parliaments, police and military, they work on building national and international networks, they increase their professionalisation and further improve research and documentation. They take legal action, intensify public relations initiatives, link political dialogue to campaigns and protests, and provide security training to their staff. In particularly

threatening conditions, civil society organisations reduce their political visibility by taking on a low profile and attempting to appear less overtly political, by using informal networking channels, by practising forms of "quiet diplomacy", or by turning to fields such as environmental protection and community development, which the authorities often view as less "objectionable". These examples demonstrate the creative manner in which human rights and development organisations deal with such obstructions and threats.

Democratisation and political participation

At the same time, new areas for civil society political participation have opened up in recent years. Seventy-one percent of our partners reported that they have seen a rise in the political partic-

ipation of civil society. Of these eighty-five percent noted a general increase in the importance of civil society: thirty-two percent mentioned processes of democratisation and decentralisation, and twenty-three percent had noted positive changes in their respective government's policy towards political participation. Development and human rights organisations are now taking part in consultative bodies and processes of political policy formation, e.g. as participants in hearings, or as members of parliamentary committees, governmental commissions and advisory boards, at both the local and the national level.

Whereas previously civil society participation was more likely to be conducted informally and sporadically, today it is often more strongly institutionalised and, thus, of more binding character. In many countries participation by civil society in consultative or even decision-making mechanisms is now legally and structurally anchored. The intensification of political participation by civil society has led to the development of new hybrid forms of representative and participatory democratic structures. Wherever civil society actors undertake lobbying and consultations with governments and parliaments, as well as actions "on the front line", boundaries become blurred.

Chapter 4

Civil society as a “watchdog” and critical participant – The role and identity of civil society

One key conclusion of the study is that despite the diverse ways in which civil society is involved in development and human rights work the vast majority of these organisations share the commitment to promote the interests of disadvantaged and marginalized groups and to fight against poverty and injustice. Most Civil society organisations view themselves as the representatives, voices and advocates of people who have no direct access to decision-making processes and structures. They believe that one of their most important tasks is to enable people to develop their own structures, acquire knowledge about their rights, and develop the skills to represent themselves in dialogue with government agencies, authorities, parliaments and the courts. On the one hand these organisations act as “change agents” and critical participants, on the other they are “watchdogs” and constructively criticise the state, private sector and international organisations. As such, they are an important element of democracy; and whether they are interpreted positively, or viewed as a disturbing factor, their presence never goes unnoticed.

Professionalism and democratic legitimacy

Civil society has changed over the last two decades. The increased importance of civil society, which was triggered by the UN World Conference on Women in 1985 and the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, has led to greater internal differentiation over the years. Increasing participation in political and technical processes at all levels has led NGOs to become more professional. Some NGOs have developed into issue-based expert and lobbying organisations, which are mostly dominated and staffed by middle class intellectuals. This has led to discussions within civil society about identity and self-image, relationship with grassroots level, as well as democratic legitimacy regarding the people whose interests these groups seek to represent.

Politically, the role of middle class intellectuals is viewed ambivalently: they are seen as both part of the problem of poverty and distributive justice, but also as potentially part of the solution.

Importantly, the study shows that by linking political engagement at the national or international level with work at the grassroots level, development and human rights organisations are likely to be in the position to develop their professional involvement in political processes, while ensuring vibrant democratic relations with local people. However, lobbying groups and other professional organisations that do not work at the grassroots should not necessarily be viewed as aloof from it. Some of them consciously uphold their links to local people and and people’s organisations to strengthen their own democratic legitimacy. However, this should not be equated with a “mandate” in the narrower sense of the word. Practising such linkages is particularly typical for issue-based organisations and social movements, such as those of indigenous people, women, small farmers, the landless, and people living with disabilities. The debate on professionalisation and civil society’s role and identity has also led to a discussion on the role of voluntarism and active citizenship.

Replacing state and political parties?

Partner organisations experience the “spirit of voluntarism” as an authentic expression of social commitment. Unpaid voluntary work can be an important driving force behind political change. However, most partner organisations are also clear that voluntary work must not be allowed to replace the state’s responsibility for the common good. For example, partners insist that the state must guarantee access to education and health for the poor.

In the long-term, civil society should not take over genuine state responsibilities. Nevertheless, in areas where state structures have fallen apart and severe conflicts occur, such as in the DR Congo, civil society institutions find themselves taking over the functions of the state for a long period of time. Only after working state structures have been (re)created can these tasks then be returned to the state without harming the people. As a result, many civil society organisations themselves try to contribute to the reconstruction of such structures.

Monitoring government policy and budgets - GMD (Mozambique)

Grupo Moçambicano da Dívida (GMD), the “Mozambican Debt Group”, was founded between 1996 and 1997 as a network of NGOs, trade unions, farmers’ associations, religious and academic institutions and individual academics, students and journalists. Since 2005, GMD has been registered as an independent NGO and now has 102 members, made up of 53 organisations and 49 individuals. The Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM), which is also an EED partner organisation, is a founding member.

The GMD originated out of the discussion on Mozambique’s foreign debt, and since its very beginning has called for the complete cancellation of the country’s debt. Today, the Mozambican Debt Group – which is well-known by the government, donors and other NGOs – uses a far broader approach than its name might suggest: it also concentrates on fundamental questions of state budgeting, the fight against poverty, as well as economic and social development.

GMD’s current focus is on the way in which the Mozambican government uses its resources, and how these could be better used to achieve a demonstrable reduction in poverty at the local level.

As early as 1999, GMD began expanding its work to the entire country by promoting regional groups. Since then, Núcleos Provinciais (associations) have been formed in all of Mozambique’s provinces, and these work together with the national secretariat; and although they are not subordinated to it, the secretariat still supports these associations. GMD is a member of the Observatório de Desenvolvimento, a national forum for civil society organisations that monitors the implementation of state programmes of poverty reduction.

GMD’s current strategy is based around four goals. More than simply monitoring policies aimed at fighting poverty GMD seeks to influence state action in the sense of good governance, and this includes increasing public resources, influencing the ways such resources are used; debt, the effectiveness of development cooperation, and decentralisation and local governance. In addition, GMD seeks to monitor economic and social development (such as macro-economic policy, national production, employment, and human capital) as well as government policy on issues that cut across policy boundaries, such as HIV/AIDS, gender or climate change.

Internet: www.divida.org

In countries with weakly developed party-political systems NGOs may even tend to act as replacements for political parties (e.g. in Peru). This has led to a discussion as to whether such a role is compatible with the nature of civil society. New democratic uprisings and forms of political participation, such as the Arab Spring, the Occupy movement, and digital networking have led people throughout the world to discuss current and future relations of participatory and representative democracy. These are signs that forms and expressions of democracy are in transformation, challenging civil society to review and adapt its strategies.

Between opposition and loyalty

In lobbying, advocacy and consultative processes with governments, parliaments, and private sector, civil society organisations constantly face the challenge of preserving or compromising their independence, autonomy and critical distance. Many partner organisations have experienced that intensifying participation makes it increasingly difficult to tread the fine line between exerting influence and losing independence. In countries with a high degree of political decentralisation and a dense network of diverse participatory structures civil society organisations continually need

to reassess their own roles. In countries with “left-wing” governments, many of which developed out of resistance movements and liberation struggles or civil society opposition movements, such as in Bolivia, it can be particularly difficult for civil society to take up critical positions. In such cases, organisations often find themselves caught between loyalty and critique: there is always a danger that an organisation might be defamed or even criminalised by the government, the public, the media, or its own members.

New actors emerging

In the last few years various new actors have begun to change the face of civil society. Corporate foundations, which work in the grey area between private sector and civil society; state-controlled non-profit organisations, and NGOs that start up commercial enterprises (e.g. in India) are now blurring traditional boundaries. As a result, identities and roles are changing. In some countries processes of reflection and discussion are underway that touch on the questions of identity and self-concept and will influence future strategies.

Chapter 5

Tackling the causes of poverty and marginalization - The political strategies of civil society

Civil society development work by EED partner organisations is aimed at ensuring that the rights, needs, and development aspirations of disadvantaged social groups are taken into account. This is seen as a contribution to the democratisation of societies, which itself requires scope for democratic action if it is to flourish. Partners aim at empowering people to assert their rights, and strengthening their self-help potentials and their bargaining power.

Politicisation and globalisation of civil society

With the onset of globalisation in the 1990s it became clear among wider civil society and the partners in church development work that promoting self-help without tackling the causes of poverty and marginalisation was no longer an effective means of fighting poverty. As a result, ways needed to be found to influence national and international politics for a more sustainable development model in harmony with nature, for a more just distribution of resources, and for the observance and realization of human rights. Consequently, in addition to specific self-help and development projects being undertaken at the grassroots, development NGOs, human rights organisations and emerging social movements became increasingly political.

Since the 1980s, civil society has become more and more visible at the international level. The UN World Conference on Women, held in Nairobi in 1985, was one of the first events that civil society was able to use to elicit and sustain a worldwide response. This conference became the focal point for a diverse range of women's NGOs from throughout the world. The UN "Earth Summit", held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, was a second milestone in international civil society. Ever since, civil society has been using the public arenas provided by international conferences and processes associated with state and multilateral actors such as the UN, FAO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, OECD, G20 and so on for their lobbying and advocacy. With the World Social Forum, which was founded in 2001, civil society developed its own

global platform bringing together a broad spectrum of social movements, networks, NGOs and action groups under the banner "Another world is possible".

Along with the discussions on human rights and climate change, over the past few years the international debate on development effectiveness has been particularly important to civil society. The 2005 Paris Declaration, the 2008 Accra Action Agenda and the decisions made at the Busan Conference in 2011 led to a far-reaching debate on democracy, political participation, governance, transparency, accountability and the impact of development cooperation (OECD 2008, 2011).

In this context important tools for the promotion of transparency and political participation have been introduced. The principle of "mutual accountability" for instance - which means the obligation of accountability between governments - has been extended to include "domestic accountability", which commits governments to be accountable within their own countries, also towards civil society. The status of civil society actors in participatory structures and processes has been enhanced. However, civil society actors complain that many of their most important concerns have been left out of the final resolutions taken. Examples of this include the decision to stick to the focus on growth as the driving force of development despite urgent pleas by civil society; in their view questions of justice and the fight against poverty were sidelined.

The diversity and integration of strategic approaches

Over the last two decades civil society organisations have increased their political participation at all levels. This has contributed towards processes of decentralisation and democratisation, to the rule of law, as well as to the global visibility and audibility of indigenous peoples' and women's movements. The study clearly demonstrates the diversity of strategies that have been developed by civil

For the rights of indigenous peoples worldwide – Tebtebba

Tebtebba is an international NGO that was founded in 1996 by representatives of indigenous peoples to strengthen their skills and develop an independent, coordinated representation of their interests, particularly at the global level. The NGO was founded in response to the way decisions made behind the closed doors of multilateral agencies such as the World Bank or international companies dramatically affect the environment and the perspectives of indigenous peoples.

Furthermore, during the 1990s many representatives of indigenous communities lacked knowledge, contacts and access to participatory mechanisms at the international level. Similarly, discussions on indigenous rights were mostly conducted by non-indigenous people. Since then Tebtebba has done much to promote the concerns and perspectives of indigenous peoples in national and international policy and secure their rights. The name “Tebtebba” comes from a language spoken in the Philippines, the country where the organisation is based, and describes a form of consensus decision-making aimed at leading to action.

At the local level, Tebtebba provides training for indigenous communities, organises civil society dialogue and supports lawyers in litigation. At the same time, Tebtebba also conducts research in the fields of traditional knowledge, biodiversity, indigenous forest management, climate change and gender issues.

In 2007, the United Nations adopted the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) that defines minimum standards for the protection of indigenous peoples’ rights. Since then, Tebtebba has ensured indigenous peoples – and governments – are informed of their rights and respective obligations. At the international level, Tebtebba is involved in the implementation of UNDRIP guidelines for the UN Environment Programme, the UN Development Programme, and the World Bank. The organisation also has special consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). In recent years Tebtebba has intensified its advocacy work on climate change and this has led to the inclusion of indigenous rights as part of the agreement on forests in the UN Climate Convention.

Internet: www.tebtebba.org

society over time. Civil society organisations advocate the implementation of civil, political, economic, social and cultural human rights. They participate in the development of draft legislation. They advise on and contribute to the formation of state and international policy and monitor accountability, transparency and good governance. Civil society actors are as much constructive counterparts and participants in joint processes as critical watchdogs and opposition, and consequently constitute a constitutive element of a vibrant democracy.

The different approaches of building, strengthening and linking civil society structures at various levels, of competence development, of implementation of rights-based approaches and of

supporting local people’s self-help potential are often combined strategically. The key strategy underlying EED supported programmes in the field of “strengthening civil society” encompasses empowerment, lobbying and advocacy work, and ensuring that authorities, government agencies, parliaments and courts adhere to national and international charters of rights.

Influencing national legislation to implement universal human rights

Despite often being confronted with very difficult conditions, this approach has secured civil society a number of achievements over the last few years. One important example are legal changes.

Corporate Social Responsibility - Bench Marks Foundation (South Africa)

The Bench Marks Foundation (BMF) was launched in 2003 by Anglican Archbishop and Nobel Peace Prize winner Desmond Tutu. In the context of continued globalisation, BMF reminds companies of their social responsibilities and calls on them to act in a socially responsible manner. The foundation thoroughly examines business practices; documents crimes against nature, and the effects of a company on the local population. BMF publicly criticises questionable corporate practices and in particular focuses on large South African mining companies and the retail sector.

The foundation criticises the effect mines have on local people and the environment. Repeatedly conflicts have occurred over access to water, land rights and land usage; and legal action has been taken due to acidic discharges entering waterways. Although mining companies do have social programmes, local communities are generally viewed as disruptive elements by these companies and not as partners. The BMF documents such situations, ensures communities are

informed of their rights, advises them on how to ensure rights are maintained, and how to organise campaigns. The foundation has contacts to the media and mobilises churches to support these issues. At the same time, BMF tries to create a platform for dialogue between mining companies and the people they affect, whilst ensuring government agencies are also involved in the talks.

In the retail sector, BMF focuses on the expansion of South African supermarket chains into neighbouring countries including Malawi, Zambia, and Swaziland. On the one hand, the foundation criticises working conditions, as workers are not paid enough to cover their living costs; on the other hand, the foundation highlights the ways the aggressive policy of expansion forces small local farmers out of business, as the supermarket chains do not sell their produce. In the light of the study's sobering results, BMF supports the creation of ethical business standards and is committed to ensuring they are adhered to. *Internet: www.bench-marks.org.za/*

In many countries, development and human rights organisations have contributed to legislative and constitutional reforms. This includes laws on the right to food, the right to freedom of information and association, and the right to decent and adequately paid work, as well as various laws to abolish discrimination against women including laws regarding equal status, reproductive rights and combating violence against women. Furthermore, civil society organisations have strongly influenced national legislation on the rights of indigenous people, children, and people living with disabilities, laws on land reform, on political decentralisation and on the introduction of the principle of subsidiarity in basic social services.

Civil society participation in legal reform processes is also being used to remind governments of their responsibilities to fulfil the human rights

obligations they accepted by signing international human rights treaties. In countries where new NGO laws and so-called anti-terror laws were under preparation, civil society was very active countering attempts to reduce the scope for democratic action.

Shaping government policy and state budgets

Issue-based and sectoral policies at the national and international level are a further important focus of the work of civil society organisations. Over the last few years, perspectives from civil society have found their ways into the peace, education, health, agricultural and economic policies of numerous countries. They can also be found in national strategies and programmes on HIV/AIDS, water policies, state debt relief and poverty reduction strategies. Wherever democratisation

Participatory budgeting and influence on public policy - CEDEPAS (Peru)

Since 1990, CEDEPAS (the Ecumenical Centre for Promotion and Social Action) has been active in rural regions of the Peruvian Pacific coast and the Andean highlands. Its work in northern Peru demonstrates that the fight against poverty and its causes can be more successful when citizens are involved in political decisions at the local level.

At first CEDEPAS had a social and an economic focus; the organisation wanted to convince people living in village communities to take their fate into their own hands, instead of waiting for the state to provide help “from above” in the form of improvements to school buildings or health centres. As a consequence, CEDEPAS began ensuring villagers had the skills to analyse local problems and small-scale projects so that they could implement their own solutions. In conjunction with this, CEDEPAS also focused on the promotion of dynamism in local agriculture, which was based on small-scale farming practices. In order to do so, the organisation provided technical advice and money for irrigation systems, and this helped diversify production and increase yields. As a result, households were better able to provide for themselves and sell more produce.

In 2001, the return of democracy to Peru led to the strengthening of the municipal level and increased citizen participation in public policy.

Local government now has more responsibility, and although it also has more financial resources, it often lacks the knowledge of how best to use these resources. CEDEPAS adapted to this situation by developing a political component to its work and broadening its approach: in order to end the neglect of rural areas, new forms of cooperation between government agencies and social initiatives were developed.

More and more citizens’ committees, producers’ associations, women’s groups and young people’s initiatives began taking part in debates on municipal budgets. Mechanisms have now been established that enable citizens to check whether decisions on investments have actually been implemented. This has led local people to realise they have rights, instead of being petitioners. Now the authorities and the administration use public resources more transparently and efficiently. However, CEDEPAS is currently faced with a further challenge: to ensure the organisation is able to work in a wider framework, and not just locally. Consequently, the organisation promotes fora and other mechanisms that bring together the state, citizen’s groups, and private enterprise to develop perspectives for regional development that sustainably use natural resources, and ensure a just and democratic future in places such as Cajamarca, La Libertad and Piura.

Internet: www.cedepas-centro.org

and decentralisation has occurred, civil society actors now participate in the planning of local and national budgets. In many Latin American countries, such as Peru, civil society participation in planning and monitoring communal budgets has a longstanding tradition.

Monitoring the rule of law and good governance

NGOs also take on a monitoring role to ensure that the police and military adhere to the princi-

ples and processes associated with the rule of law, protect human rights and take action when rights are violated. They observe elections, and they monitor transparency, accountability and anti-corruption mechanisms at government level.

Participation in international politics and human rights work

Multinational actors such as the UN, ILO, WTO and the World Bank are lobbied at the in-

ternational level by professional institutions, nationally and internationally-based NGOs, social movements and other interest groups. Their main focus is the protection of civil and political human rights, economic, social, and cultural rights; and the rights of women and indigenous people. Other issues that are at the forefront of civil society work at the international level include international political strategies regarding food security, biodiversity, biotechnology/genetic engineering, water, climate and global economic issues.

Civil society organisations participate in conferences and in associated preparatory and post-conference processes (for example on development effectiveness and Rio+20), in human rights monitoring mechanisms (such as the Universal Periodic Review in Nepal) and international transparency initiatives (such as the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative). They also organise their own global platforms (e.g. the World Social Forum) and produce shadow reports on the national implementation of UN human rights treaties. In some cases they have been able to convince private sector corporations to change corporate policy and introduce social, environmental and developmental criteria; one way of doing this has been to confer social or ecological awards and conduct ratings.

The challenges of political participation

The scope and variety of these examples demonstrate the intensity of civil society participation in public policy formation and political decision-making processes; clearly, civil society participation does make a difference. However, current systems of participatory democracy have weaknesses that could jeopardise the success of such participation. For example, participatory structures and processes are often quite informal: in many countries participation still has a weak structural, legal and procedural basis; it takes place irregularly, and is often poorly equipped with resources. Furthermore, the bodies in which civil society organisations participate often have no clear mandate, nor powers and procedures. The results of

these bodies are usually not even binding and civil society members cannot enforce their implementation. Sometimes there is a lack of political will and appreciation on the part of government towards non-state actors, and occasionally the outcome of joint consultations are overruled by decisions made elsewhere. Clearly in this area there is an urgent need for improvements.

Chapter 6

Professionalism and networking - Developing skills and structures in civil society

With growing participation of civil society organisations in political processes demands for specialist organisational knowledge, professionalism and improved structures have also increased. This has led to funding competence building and the development of structures becoming one of the church's most important ways of strengthening civil society. The study has shown that this support has borne fruit. Expertise and competences in development policy have been built, and the structures used for cooperation and networking within civil society have become more diverse and complex, both horizontally (across issues) and vertically (within a single issue). In particular, NGOs lobbying governments and multilateral institutions as well as those who are regular members of advisory boards and expert panels at the national and international level have become more professional.

Diverse contacts to experts, politicians and society

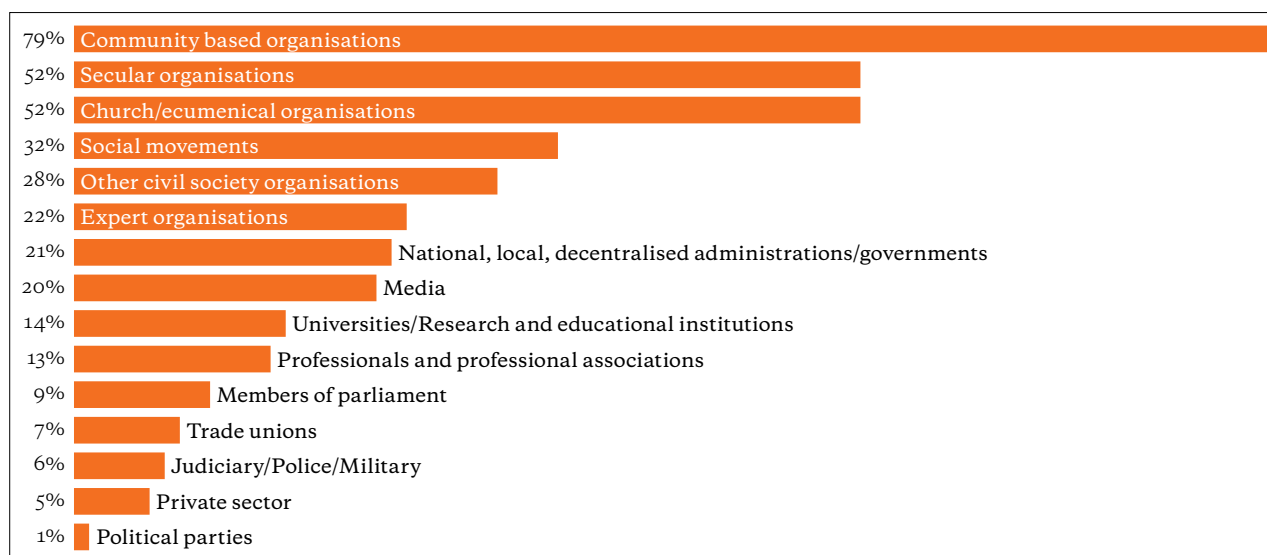
Civil society has numerous links to experts, politicians and a broad spectrum of social actors. Development and human rights organisations no

longer merely work with other NGOs, grassroots organisations, churches and social movements such as indigenous, women's and environmental movements; they also have links to specialist organisations and associations from various thematic fields and sectors (including law, health, education, agriculture and so on) as well as to the media, universities, research and educational institutions. They are in dialogue with trade unions, chambers of commerce, trade associations, government institutions and administrations, members of parliament and the judiciary. Dialogue with the police and military is actively sought after in human rights work in particular.

Diversification of skills

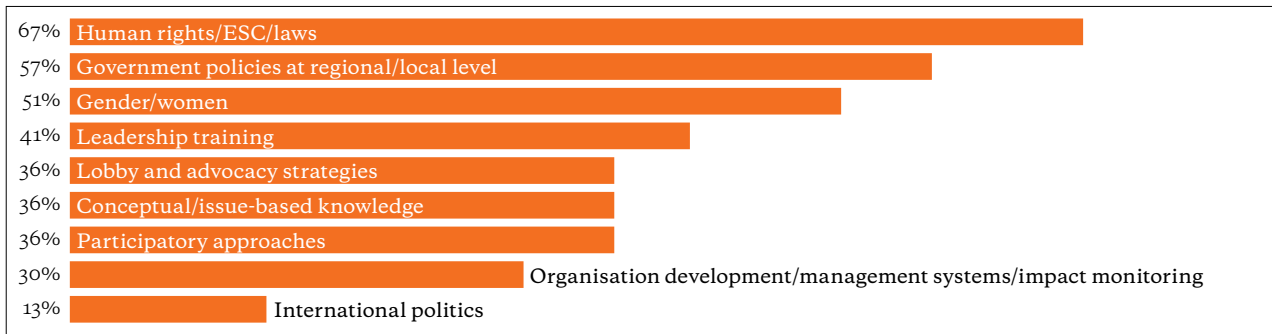
This broad range of cooperation and networking has further enhanced civil society competences. The study demonstrates the large range of competences among our partners. Today, many development and human rights organisations are competent in law or are networked with solicitors who provide them with expert advice. Consequently, organisations can now petition for

Figure 1: Cooperating actors of EED Partners in percentage of projects



Total number of projects: 267. Multiple answers were possible.

Figure 2: The contribution of EED partners towards strengthening civil society: building competence in various fields



Total number of projects: 242. Multiple answers were possible.

human rights in court, and take legal action in cases of human rights violations.

Research, investigation and documentation have provided civil society organisations with in-depth knowledge of economic and environmental issues, as well as in various special fields such as biotechnology, agriculture and HIV/AIDS. Organisations have acquired the skills to deal with the mechanisms of state budgeting and regional development plans, the proceedings of international conferences and the techniques of preparing shadow reports for UN bodies. Government authorities and parliaments now ask civil society institutes and NGOs for expert advice and training. In some countries, NGOs are requested to train police and military personnel to raise awareness of and deal with human rights questions.

The challenge of institutional knowledge management

However, most civil society organisations realise that they need to continually develop their skills in the face of constantly changing challenges and new insights. This highlights the requirement for good systems of institutional learning: knowledge is often individualized and/or concentrated around senior management. Staff turnover, inadequate staff development strategies and non-participatory structures prevent knowledge from being

systematically developed, shared and used at the institutional level. The limited resources available to small NGOs and community based organisations in particular mean they are often not in a position to provide for institutional capacity building. As a result, the development of institutional knowledge management systems is one of the challenges facing many civil society organisations.

Additionally, civil society organisations also have to deal with the problem of “brain drain”: highly qualified personnel from civil society are often offered lucrative jobs in international organisations, governments and the private sector. Although this may open up new avenues and opportunities for individuals, it clearly also means that civil society organisations lose these people and their skills.

Professionalisation and differentiation

The study demonstrates that professionalisation usually leads to a stronger differentiation within civil society. This applies especially to the relationship between NGOs and grassroots organisations where professionalisation can lead to fragmentation and a loss of trust. Values, organisational cultures and working approaches may drift apart, making confidence building measures particularly important. In these situations, it is essential that key actors from civil society initiate reflec-

Structural development and networking - CASA (India)

CASA (Church's Auxiliary for Social Action) is the relief and development organisation of twenty-four protestant and orthodox churches, and EED's largest partner organisation in India. The organisation is active throughout India in rural programs that combat poverty by organising and networking poor and marginalized groups (in particular Adivasi and Dalits), by strengthening their political participation, especially their participation in local government, as well as lobbying and advocacy activities.

To promote fundamental change in the situation of India's indigenous people, CASA provides help that goes beyond material support aimed at safeguarding livelihoods. CASA ensures that people learn to represent their collective interests, that they are informed of their rights, and that they are able to assert their rights self-confidently vis-à-vis the state. A few years ago the Indian government granted autonomy rights to India's indigenous population. However, many people have still not heard about this. Consequently, one of the aspects of CASA's work has been to inform people of their opportunities for political participation.

In addition to its own programs, CASA also works together with local NGO fora in numerous

Indian states, such as Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkand. These fora in turn cooperate closely with local grassroots movements. By funding such collective forms of cooperation ("package programmes") more than 100 small NGOs and 1000 grassroots organisations in India as well as their networks at district and state level are being supported in their rights-based work. The resulting civil society organisations campaign successfully for the rights of India's poor, in particular their rights to natural resources and to Government welfare and employment programmes.

In the state of Orissa, for instance, 18 NGOs have formed grassroots organisations in rural districts. Since 2004, this has led to the formation of hundreds of self-help groups for women, village development committees and professional associations in 350 villages: almost 455,000 people have been reached by these grassroots organisations. They call on the state for transparency, accountability and good governance. The 18 NGOs have now formed a forum that participates in the development of legislation in Orissa, and has enabled the large number of Adivasi to benefit from a Government employment program.

Internet: www.casa-india.org

tion and dialogue processes. Opportunities should be provided to reflect on each other's roles and self concepts, to resolve conflicts, to develop common aims and strategies which ensure that NGOs and grassroots organisations work in a cooperative and complementary manner.

Horizontal and vertical networking

Civil society has also witnessed changes to vertical and horizontal networking. In the 1990s, national non-issue-based umbrella organisations played an important role in many countries. Nowadays however, according to most partners in-

terviewed, the main focus is on issue- or sector-related networks. Networks focussing on rural development, food security, small scale industries, world trade, environment, climate change, or on indigenous peoples' and women's rights exist in all parts of the world. These groups are often vertically networked - meaning they are interlinked between the micro, meso and macro level. Due to their specialisation many networks have become knowledgeable and influential in their fields. They perform diverse functions ranging from concept and policy development, joint lobbying and advocacy, dialogue and exchange, capacity building, as well as coordination and quality management.

In the face of this strong tendency towards issue-based specialisation, the challenge is to develop more general joint policy positions, for instance on national budgets or poverty reduction strategies, or on policies of multilateral actors such as the G20 or Development Effectiveness agenda. The solutions provided to this problem vary from country to country. In some places, such as India, new hope has been placed on national non-issue-based umbrella organisations, whereas in countries such as Peru, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the solution is sought in more pragmatic, temporary alliances with changing memberships. Whatever the case, there is a clear trend towards better networking and coordination. This is also clear from the high percentage of EED partners organised in complex models of cooperation: diverse networks, fora and various kinds of platforms make up one quarter of our partner organisations within the funding priority “Strengthening civil society”.

In-depth knowledge and viable, independent structures are essential elements if civil society is to act as the driving force for democracy, and elicit changes in development policy that benefit disadvantaged people. Consequently, capacity building and the development of organisational structures and networking will continue to have high funding priority.

Chapter 7

Working apart, or working together? The relation between the women's movement and civil society

Women's organisations worldwide play an important role in the implementation of human rights, in conflict management and strengthening potentials for peace, in lobbying and advocacy, as well as in development policy research and theory building. They contribute in numerous ways to enhancing the skills of and developing civil society. However, the study shows that civil society still fails to sufficiently recognise and benefit from this potential.

Engaging for human rights and value change

The majority of our partners agree that women's organisations provide an important impetus for discussions on justice, peace and sustainable development. Within civil society, women's organisations are often viewed as vanguards when it comes to raising greater awareness of women's rights, children's rights, the rights of indigenous people, and people who are discriminated against due to characteristics such as ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. Women's organisations are often valued due to their significant contribution towards encouraging public debate about the rights of poor and marginalised groups, which have now also become the focus of scientific research, national legislation and international policy. The women's movement has also provided important contributions to the debate on development alternatives. In many places, women's organisations campaign for a fundamental change in values centred on quality of life, dignity and justice, peaceful and constructive cooperation and a way of life safeguarding the integrity of creation.

Impetus for gender justice and good governance

Although women's organisations are viewed as important actors in civil society, there are a number of fields in which there are still too few vibrant cooperative relations between them and other civil society organisations. Specific analyses and concepts, which have been developed in feminist research and the women's movement, remain relatively unknown in parts of civil society. On the other

hand, the study also demonstrates that women's organisations are valued for providing momentum on important issues within civil society. On the one hand on questions of governance, such as critical self-reflection, transparency and accountability. On the other hand in developing expertise in gender justice and gender-sensitive programming in NGOs and social movements. Civil society organisations stress that it is often women who inspire them to address questions of social competences, such as the style of leadership, teamwork and skills in conflict resolution. As a result, women's organisations contribute directly and indirectly to the further development of civil society work.

"Women's issues" vs. "men's issues"?

Nevertheless, in some areas women's initiatives and other civil society organisations seem to be working next to each other, instead of with each other. The study indicates that there is still a tendency to differentiate between "women's issues" ("soft" issues) and "general" civil society issues ("hard" issues), in which men are more likely to be engaged. Gender issues, as well as women's or children's rights are frequently dealt with by women's organisations, and are rarely treated as core issues by other NGOs. Similarly, there are too few women's organisations that focus on issues such as world trade, biotechnology and debt. "Issue-related" gender mainstreaming could help overcome these differences resulting in "mixed" NGOs were taking up so-called "women's issues", and women's policies and feminist perspectives becoming part of general issues. At the same time, more women's organisations should be supported in tackling general civil society and development policy issues.

Gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment

The study also shows that women are still under-represented at top management level of civil society organisations. Women's empowerment programmes, the promotion of female executives

The women's movement and civil society - GWAVE (the Philippines)

Gender Watch Against Violence and Exploitation (GWAVE) is a women's organisation located in the province of Negros Oriental in the Philippines that raises awareness of gender justice and non-violence and provides legal, social and psychological support to the victims of sexual and domestic violence. GWAVE conducts advocacy and networking, and as such contributes towards the development of an effective, gender-sensitive legal system that secures the rights of women and girls affected by violence.

GWAVE set up a pilot project a few years ago that encourages men to take part in the organisation's work. A grassroots organisation in the municipality of Amlan for men and boys called Men Against Violence Association now raises awareness of non-violence, supports gender justice and a different view of masculinity. The group also calls for an end to violence against women, and argues that the concept of "sustainable masculinity", which is based on partnership, needs to replace the idea of dominance.

Since it was founded, 700 men and boys have taken part in workshops run by the project. The workshops inform men about anti-violence laws and the role of violence in a patriarchal society. Many of the workshops' participants are local councillors, local government employees, or po-

lice officers. These seminars, which are for and run by men, have increased the acceptance of anti-violence legislation. One example of their success was provided by a member of the local council who stated that it was not always easy to behave in a gender-sensitive manner as "*for most men it is normal to get drunk in bars and have fun with younger women*". However, the workshop led him to discuss his own understandings of masculinity, role models and behaviour towards women together with friends, colleagues and neighbours. The pilot project is now due to be extended to other districts.

GWAVE is recognised as a professional organisation that reduces violence against women, and promotes gender mainstreaming. The police and social service institutions are now increasingly sending girls and women who are victims of violence to GWAVE. Furthermore, legal decisions are now more likely to fall in favour of the victims. The organisation provides staff training at the request of government agencies and municipal institutions. Local governments are now making more resources available for legal cases and the education of victims of violence. At the same time, other institutions and NGOs are now increasingly turning to GWAVE to learn from their successes.

Internet: <http://gwave.webng.com/>

and greater awareness within civil society could help reduce this imbalance. Development and human rights organisations continue making efforts to further strengthen gender competences within civil society. Although much has changed over the last 20 years, some organisations still lack awareness, political will and adequate knowledge of gender justice. This is reflected in their organisational structures as well as in their programmes. The experiences of many organisations show that they have been able to bring about change by introducing gender strategies and plans for their implemen-

tation. At the conceptual level, mainstreaming approaches from feminist research and theory development could provide an important momentum for debate within civil society. Clearly, intensifying cooperation would be beneficial for both women's organisations and civil society as a whole.

Chapter 8

Good governance in civil society organisations - Transparency and accountability in civil society

The study shows that one of civil society's most important goals is standing up for democratic principles, such as participation, transparency and accountability. Whereas most civil society organisations are committed to ensuring that governments comply with these principles, they are also clear about their own responsibilities to ensure good governance in their own organisations. They are well aware that their own democratic legitimacy and effectiveness as well as their acceptance and appreciation by society depend on how far they conform to the same requirements they place on state institutions.

This responsibility is taken seriously

The majority of civil society organisations take this responsibility seriously and place great importance on their own decision-making and management structures. They believe in participatory processes, transparent financial management and qualified planning, monitoring and evaluation systems. In many countries, civil society organisations are subject to strict reporting and accounting requirements by both the authorities and foreign donors. This is reflected within their internal structures, which need to satisfy these requirements. In many parts of civil society, accountability is understood even more comprehensively: it refers to the responsibility of development and human rights organisations to be accountable to the people whose interests they represent at the national and international level.

Bad governance makes vulnerable to crises

There is a long tradition of discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of civil society structures of governance, particularly among NGOs. If organisational structures and management systems are not developed alongside the ever more complex challenges they face, if participation and accountability are lacking, or if corruption is at play, institutional crises are far more likely. In order to avoid collapse, organisations faced by these conditions need restructuring. Structures of good

governance are particularly important in countries with limited scope for democratic action, or in countries in which development and human rights organisations are persecuted and their work is obstructed. Administrative weaknesses, shortcomings in financial management, and violations of reporting obligations in such countries are often used as pretexts to ban or withdraw work permits from organisations or even criminalise them.

Governance standards are being further developed

Civil society organisations are aware of these problems. In many countries, organisations have initiated processes of critical self-reflection, in which strengths and weaknesses are analysed and standards of governance are discussed. Some of the most important challenges include the presence of strong supervisory bodies with well defined mandates, a clear separation between the legislative and executive functions, and ensuring functioning management systems and processes of accountability (planning, monitoring, evaluation, financial management, and knowledge management).

At the same time, the following are also essential: transparent and participatory decision-making structures, concepts for staff development and leadership training, as well as gender strategies together with clearly defined implementation plans and adequate monitoring systems. In some countries, standards have been developed by civil society, and mechanisms of voluntary selfcontrol have been put in place, such as the "Code of Conduct" in Ethiopia or the "Quality Assurance Mechanism" in Uganda.

In recent years, issues of transparency and accountability have become a matter of public interest especially in the context of the debates on development effectiveness triggered off by the so-called Paris Agenda. However, the debate on this within civil society can be traced back to the 1970s.

Chapter 9

Development cooperation in transition – The impact on civil society

Development cooperation with and within civil society is undergoing change. Over the last two decades, civil society development work has become more political and professional. The study shows that these changes have led to further differentiation within civil society and in the “division of labour”. Alongside grassroots development work, some NGOs are now more politically engaged - at the local, national or even international level. Often, smaller community based organisations have taken their place and now run their own projects at the grassroots level. Many NGOs nowadays link grassroots work with policy dialogue, lobbying and advocacy with governments and international organisations.

Integrating self-help with political participation

In places where it has been possible to integrate these various levels, civil society’s potential impact has been significantly increased. Local development programmes can be backed up by influencing the political context. Local people are in a better position to assert their economic, social and cultural rights if their concerns are effectively represented at the national and international level.

Many EED partners follow the approach to combine strategically grassroots work with political participation, be it in their own programmes or through networking with other actors. In their experience this combination leads to more sustainability in developing self-help potential, to better chances of securing human rights and to more influence on the political context. EED supports this approach as it is particularly well-suited to tackling the structural causes of poverty, and ensuring values of justice and human dignity are built into policy decisions.

Integrating lobbying and protest actions

Throughout the world these opportunities are being intensively and creatively used by civil society. This is being done most successfully in places where a trustful relationship exists between grassroots initiatives, lobby organisations and social movements. This is the case in many countries,

particularly where the focus is on specific common interests. However, the study has shown that in some cases, mistrust and mutual reservations may first need to be overcome. On the one side there are the activists “on the front line” who protest on the streets and organise campaigns. Some NGOs view these people as committed but lacking professionalism.

On the other side there are the “professional” NGO lobbyists “behind the front line”, who advise expert committees and parliaments, and are politically active at international conferences. Activists often view these people with mistrust. They regard them as “conference lobbyists” without grassroots linkages, and consequently question their legitimacy. The partner organisations that took part in the study stated that confidence building and efforts towards collective strategies are essential in such situations. EED supports cooperation between these diverse actors and various complementary approaches as an essential contribution to strengthening civil society.

Respected as an equal partner by many governments

Over the last few years international donors and their funding policies have undergone profound change; this has led to new challenges for civil society. As an example, the Paris Declaration, which initiated a process for increased aid effectiveness in state development cooperation, has also led to far-reaching consequences for NGO work. Be it policies of state budget support, the planning and implementation of specific development projects, accountability or impact monitoring mechanisms, civil society is nowadays regarded as an important counterpart by many governments. Cooperation between the Governments and non-governmental development and human rights organisations has become more intensive. The underlying expectation is that funding, thus, will be used more effectively and efficiently, and consequently that development policy aims are more likely to be met. This has led civil society to take on a new, important role. For this to be fulfilled, skills and viable structures are clearly essential.

Pre-fixed agendas vs. “people’s ownership”

Civil society actors have also experienced the pitfalls of political participation: it may result in organisations losing their independence and their rootedness with the people they seek to represent. In an effort to increase effectiveness, there is a trend among some governments and multilateral organisations to predefine and fix the development agenda, not only on a state-to-state level, but also in providing funds to civil society. Today it is a common practise by Governments and multilateral donors to offer funds through a “tender system”, whereby NGOs have to compete for funds pre-earmarked for specific issues or sectors.

Over the last few years, this has placed northern development NGOs and their partners in the global south under increasing pressure to demonstrate measurable “development successes” in specific pre-defined sectors, while at the same time levels of funding have been decreasing. This often leads to problems and to the plans of the people affected by these policies and projects being pushed into the background. Grassroots perspectives, participatory and integrated approaches, as well as long-term people-owned processes, constituting key elements of empowerment and structural change, are being undermined by these dynamics.

Sometimes, civil society organisations find themselves acting as implementing bodies for state programmes and so take on a role that goes against their self concept. Furthermore, an increasing amount of work and other resources goes into meeting the highly complex requirements of project planning, management and impact monitoring. This absorbs extensive organisational capacities which could have otherwise been used for conceptual tasks. Clearly this poses a particular problem for smaller community based organisations. The study has shown that if these organisations are to be in a position to meet such requirements, advice and training is essential.

Consequently, EED’s partner organisations argue that the changes occurring in international development cooperation should be addressed in the

policy dialogue between government and civil society. Furthermore, they argue that sustainable development successes can only be achieved if the people themselves plan and implement processes of change. Top-down pre-defined and fixed agendas will not provide such sustainability. Instead, if international development cooperation in combating poverty and injustice is to become more effective, it has to be ensured that local people and their organisations have control over planning and maintain process ownership. The role of politics should then be to provide the necessary space and support to the people.

Chapter 10

Space for thought – Visions of alternative development from civil society

Civil society cannot restrict itself to criticising the dominant model of development and the structures that cause poverty and injustice. It is clear from the study that civil society organisations feel responsible to go beyond this envisioning alternative development models. In view of a failing growth model, most EED partners feel it is high time for new ideas, visions, and alternative approaches. It is not limitless growth, but quality of life that should provide a means of measuring successful development.

Consequently, development must focus on values such as justice, dignity and the integrity of creation. Civil society has been contributing to these debates, for instance with the Latin American concept of “a good life” (*buen vivir*) (Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung 2011), with the idea of a “solidarity economy” (Embsdorf/Giegold 2008), and in the context of the highly controversial construct of a “green economy” (UNEP 2012), which is central to Rio+20.

A “crisis of vision” and a lack of “space for thought”

There is currently an intensive debate among civil society organisations as to whether these approaches constitute genuine alternatives, whether they are realistic and how they could be translated into concrete policies and strategies. The study shows that many partner organisations complain that in recent years work on alternative development models is given less importance than in previous decades. Some partners even talk of a “crisis of vision”. Consequently, there is an ongoing debate about whether intensifying political participation in numerous processes and bodies at the local, national and international level might be taking up too much time, thus, pushing fundamental questions regarding values, objectives and rationale of development into the background.

Many development and human rights organisations argue that there is a lack of “space for thought” in which such questions could be discussed and alternatives be systematically developed. They are calling for the creation of such

spaces, to spur debate and to undertake action research and policy development. They are calling on donors to provide the necessary resources to create these spaces. Clearly, civil society development work should not be limited to “projectitis” and reformist efforts, but needs to contribute to fundamental structural transformation and value change.

Alternative development approaches exist

Many partners regard it as important to analyse and document existing alternative development approaches more thoroughly, to further conceptualize them, to publicise them widely, and to influence politics accordingly.

In some countries, alternative development approaches exist, particularly initiated by women’s and indigenous organisations, small-scale organic farmer’s associations and grassroots groups involved in rural development (see for example the EED partner Tebtebba, page 18). Such examples demonstrate, at the micro level, economic and social systems with their own structures of production and marketing, anchored in a culture of community planning, collective responsibility and mutual support. People following these approaches are not aiming at Western style growth and consumption, but striving to improve their quality of life, to preserve the natural environment, and to ensure a decent and dignified community life.

Consequently, the focus of these approaches is not merely an economic one; there is often also a political, social, cultural and spiritual dimension. This may include access to health and education, sustainable resource management and disaster risk reduction, questions of gender justice, methods of civil conflict management, as well as inter-religious and inter-ethnic dialogues. Communities rely on their own skills and make sure their rights are respected. In times of global crises, such models often prove relatively resistant to the effects of deregulated financial markets and unpredictable world trade, as they are mainly based on self-reliant systems and local or regional markets. They demonstrate that alternatives to the growth model

can be viable, if there is political will and a conducive environment.

Demonstrating alternatives to the growth model

One consequence of the study then could be to analyse approaches of this kind, further conceptualize them, and introduce them into policy dialogue and lobbying. Many civil society organisations regard such existing alternative models at micro level as an important basis for the systematic conceptualization and operationalisation of visions such as that of *buen vivir* (“a good life”). They should be on the agendas of international meetings such as Rio+20, where state, multilateral and civil society actors jointly search for alternatives to the dominant growth paradigm. They could provide important arguments in the controversial debate on a “green economy” and its potential to end poverty and ensure sustainability. Is it enough to “green” the world economy and use resources more efficiently, or do the crises in the growth model demonstrate that even “green growth” is too narrow? Would a “green economy” ultimately perpetuate “the commercialisation of life”, as argued in the final declaration of the 2012 World Social Forum, or does it offer an opportunity to make development sustainable? It remains to be seen whether civil society has the visionary potential to go beyond a critique of the dominant development model providing viable alternatives to the growth paradigm.

Annex I

Africa

1 Context

Concerning poverty and human development Africa, seen from a global perspective, is still far behind on the standards of the Human Development Index (HDI): out of the 45 sub-Saharan African countries only 7 are Medium Human Development (MHD) countries (with Botswana ranked 98th in first place). The large majority (34) are Low Human Development (LHD) countries, including Zimbabwe, which in the global ranking came last and was ranked 169th (UNDP 2011b).

Globally there are 42 LHD countries, 34 of which are in Africa. In contrast, the World Bank ranks 19 sub-Saharan countries as Middle Income Countries (MIC), 7 as Upper MIC (UMIC) and 12 as Lower MIC (LMIC) (World Bank 2011a). High growth rates in countries such as Ethiopia and South Africa can mainly be attributed to economic liberalisation, which primarily serves the needs of industry, large scale agriculture and infrastructure projects. South Africa is considered a UMIC country and is one of the G20 states. According to the homepage of the G20, in 2011 in the countries represented two thirds of the global population produced around 90% of global GDP and accounted for 80% of global trade. Consequently it is one of the most important industrialised or newly industrialised countries in the world. At the same time, the distribution of income in South Africa is highly unequal: South Africa's Gini coefficient is 57.8, and it is ranked 123rd in the world (UNDP 2011d).¹ According to the UN, around 35% of the South African population live in poverty. Economic growth alone, therefore, says little about the living conditions of the majority population. An overview of the classification of countries according to the World Bank and UNDP indices (HDI and Gini) can be found at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/hdi/> and <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SI.POV.GINI>.

If we look at African economic development it becomes clear that this continent, with its rich

resources such as raw materials, biodiversity etc., is moving more and more into the focus of international economic interests. This is both evident in the EU's Africa policy and China's and India's growing influence in Africa. Strong international financial donors are demanding a new African "green revolution" aimed at modernising and globalising African agriculture. This could seriously endanger the food security and existence of small-scale farmers. Land grabbing by multinational corporations and foreign governments, as well as dwindling water resources continually reduce the poor's access to essential resources. According to the research service of the German parliament (Wissenschaftlicher Dienst des Bundestages) the important rise in food prices since 2007/2008 has been accompanied by a boom in investments in agricultural land. The latest estimates encompass 51.4 million hectares of African land (Goesser 2011).

The UNEP's Africa Water Atlas remarks that the amount of water available per capita on the continent is decreasing and that only 26 out of 53 African countries are likely to fulfil the MDG goal of halving the share of the population without sustainable access to drinking water by 2015 (UNEP 2010). The effects of global climate change and the excessive exploitation of resources are becoming more and more significant. At the same time, increasing political destabilisation and potential for conflict and violence is particularly strongly felt in central and western African countries. 2011, for example, the UN registered an alarming increase in the number of mercenaries (in Libya, Sudan, South Sudan, DR Congo, Somalia, Ivory Coast and Madagascar), whereby mercenaries are sometimes hard to distinguish from private security companies. Political observers refer to this as a "new scramble" between China and the West (mainly France and the US) for Africa's huge land and natural resources (Dieterich 2011).

Political development is quite complex. Africa is home to a broad field of political systems; from relatively stable democracies mainly in eastern and southern Africa (for example South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, Botswana and other countries) to more or less autocratic or authoritarian formal democracies (such as Ethiopia, Gabon, Senegal, Liberia) and parliamentary monarchies (Lesotho).

¹ A Gini coefficient of 0 represents total equality, a coefficient of 100, absolute inequality.

There are also repressive, authoritarian systems with dictatorial elements (Zimbabwe), military regimes with one-party-systems (Eritrea) and failed states (such as Somalia). Whilst military dictatorships and one-party systems were widespread in Africa until the 1990s, today mixed political systems dominate the political landscape, as do formal democratic elements such as elections, a division of powers, a certain degree of the rule of law, and federal and presidential elements. Erdmann and von Soest refer to such mixed political systems as “electoral authoritarianism”. They argue that such regimes are typically built on the “usual instruments of repression”, “an abundance of resources”, “neopatrimonialism” and “limited electoral competition” (Erdmann/von Soest 2008).

On the other hand, there are countries where decentralisation processes and certain openings for civil society participation got underway (e.g. in Mozambique). It remains to be seen how the new “scramble for Africa” on the one side and the “Arab Spring” in North Africa on the other may influence the development of democracy and the space for civil society involvement.

2 The development of civil society

What are the overall trends?

The partners that were interviewed from Ethiopia, Mozambique, Uganda and Zimbabwe reported growth in civil society organisations and increased importance mainly in the areas of lobbying and advocacy, human rights and peace. However, there have also been a number of problematic developments. South African partners, for example, point to a weakening and fragmentation of civil society over the last 10 years, partly due to decreasing funds and a loss of leadership. They argue that unsuccessful attempts to visibly influence government policy have also led to a certain degree of disillusionment.

At the same time, they report that there has been an increase in the strength of grassroots

movements since 2010. They also note a growing gap between NGOs and the government, and the evolvment of new partnerships between government and business that do not work in the interests of the poor. Another problem they see is that NGOs and community based organisations are dissolving due to lack of funds, poor financial management and bad governance. In general they point to a “depoliticisation of development”. In Zimbabwe too, in spite of increasing numbers of civil society organisations, civil society is actually becoming weaker. This is due to brain drain, both at the technical and management level, decreasing funds, high running costs, fluctuation and government repression, including intimidation and arrests.

Overall, in many African countries there are gradual developments towards a civil society capable of influencing political processes, demanding accountability from governments and international institutions, and in some cases even being capable of demonstrating alternative paths for development. Be this as it may, factors such as authoritarianism, bad governance, interference and repression still weaken civil society in many countries. Nonetheless, the feedback and the interviews in general show a growing self-confidence and feeling of a new beginning and politicisation, combined with a strategic flexibility in dealing with adverse and changing conditions.

How has civil society adapted its goals, priorities and strategies to the current context?

Most of the partners that were interviewed emphasised that work with government departments and agencies on different levels is intensifying and becoming more professional.

Simultaneously there is also a trend towards other types of action, such as when civil society organisations repeatedly experience that political dialogue is not producing results. Some partners from South Africa for example have begun returning to protests and civil disobedience as strategies and seek support among community based organisations and social movements. They perceive this as a consequence of their frustrating experiences with existing legal structures for political participation, and allege that the government often only

uses these structures to gain civil society support of government policy.

Many NGOs agree to far-reaching compromises with governments for access to funds (consulting assignments, subcontracting). Moreover, partners complain that funding by aid agencies from the north is often bound to particular issues (such as HIV/Aids and climate change); consequently, the agenda is being increasingly set by outsiders. Therefore in the eyes of these organisations, civil society in South Africa is becoming increasingly divided into three main categories: rights-based NGOs with a focus on lobbying and advocacy, NGOs that act as “service providers”, and community based organisations and social movements. They argue that this differentiation weakens civil society.

Civil society’s capacity to deal with difficult conditions is impressive. For example, even in Zimbabwe’s repressive political climate civil society manages to pursue political and human rights approaches. On the one hand they try to strengthen the political and rights-based character of their work in the areas of human rights, peace and conflict resolution, lobbying and advocacy, monitoring of government policies and elections. At the same time they intensify their humanitarian work, crisis and disaster prevention and management, in HIV/AIDS, and in psycho-social measures.

Ethiopian civil society is also confronted with massive repressions by the government. Implementing political and human rights approaches seems extremely difficult under such conditions. Therefore, partners speak merely of a shift from emergency relief to anti-poverty programmes as main characteristic of reorientation of civil society work.

To sum up, despite the various conditions it faces, civil society strives for greater political participation, rights-based approaches and a stronger focus on the grassroots and anti-poverty programmes. Yet doing so means being repeatedly confronted by limitations and external influences that weaken civil society, as well as a lack of political will and sometimes even severe government repression.

How has civil society’s influence on government policies, national legislation and international agreements evolved?

Despite their quite self-critical assessment of civil society’s political influence, the partners also supplied many positive examples of successful participation in political processes. Most partners actually argued that there is even a trend towards increasing influence for civil society, especially in the areas set out in the following.

- **Legislation:** Important examples of contributions by civil society to legislation in Africa include: NGO legislation (Ethiopia, Zimbabwe), laws combating violence against women (Mozambique, Zimbabwe), laws decriminalising abortion (Mozambique), freedom of information legislation, children’s and disabled people’s rights (Nigeria) and constitutional reform (Zimbabwe). These examples led partners from Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda to conclude that the overall influence of civil society on legislation has increased in their countries. This does not hold true for Zimbabwe and South Africa.
- **Issue-based and sectoral government policies:** Civil society has successfully participated in the drafting of government policies in health, agriculture, micro-finance, water (Ethiopia), the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) (a shadow report was produced by civil society in Mozambique), HIV/AIDS (Nigeria), disability policy (Zimbabwe), organic farming (South Africa; in planning) as well as peace policy (Uganda). Whereas South African partners saw no changes in their overall influence, greater participation in drafting government policies in various areas was experienced by organisations in Ethiopia, Mozambique, Nigeria and Uganda.
- **State budgeting:** Over the last few years civil society has become increasingly involved in budget planning and monitoring as well as training members of parliament (for example in Mozambique and Uganda). Even under the repressive conditions prevailing in Zimbabwe civil society organisations have still been involved in questions of govern-

ance, accountability, and preparing and holding elections.

- **The international level:** Numerous examples of the participation of African civil society organisations in several on-going international processes were named. Among these were various processes related to human rights issues (Mozambique, Zimbabwe), the debates concerning the Paris Declaration/Aid Effectiveness Process (Mozambique), climate change and the UN Declaration on HIV/AIDS, the dialogues on securing basic social services (Ethiopia), alternative urban development/habitat (South Africa), EPAs, the international campaign against the proliferation of small arms (IANSA), the UN MDG campaign, WCC campaigns on UN advocacy and the decade against violence (Uganda Joint Christian Council). Although it did not provide details, the Nigerian partner also spoke of civil society activities at the international level.

These examples clearly show that in spite of frequent, difficult experiences and adverse conditions civil society organisations intensively use structures and opportunities for political participation both nationally and internationally.

Can civil society influence private sector?

The possibilities of influencing the private sector decisions are described as very limited. Still, a few examples do exist, such as the timber industry in Mozambique and mining in Zimbabwe where civil society organisations have at least been able to reduce the impact of socially and/or ecologically questionable developments. The Ethiopian partner speaks of some “good experiences” although these were “badly documented”. However, in general there seems to be stronger reservations towards dialogue with private sector actors than towards negotiating with government or other organisations.

Has civil society become stronger or weaker?

The majority of interviewees agree that civil society has been strengthened in their countries. Nonetheless, half of the participants mention areas where civil society has also become weaker. This is in line with constantly changing and often

counter-directional trends in in the political context and civil society’s strategic approach to deal with these changes.

3 The development of democratic space

Have laws and administrative requirements changed affecting the work of civil society?

In the last few years the majority of the countries covered introduced laws aimed at better controlling civil society organisations. These laws have especially affected civil society organisations working in the area of human rights and/or with rights-based approaches. Laws have been specifically interpreted and used in ways that make the work of politically “undesirable” organisations more difficult, or by relating their actions to terrorism or activities that threaten national security. The partners in Mozambique and Nigeria stated that the legislative framework for NGOs has not worsened over the last few years.

In contrast, the partners in the four other countries (Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Uganda and South Africa) stated that stricter laws have been enforced or attempts to introduce such laws could be blocked until now by civil society protests. The Ethiopian partner mentioned the following consequences of the new NGO law: repressions are particularly experienced by NGOs fighting for the rights of minorities, there are less projects for the rights of women, children and people living with disabilities, there are new constraints on creating consortia, less exchange and cooperation, and existing laws and administrative regulations are now interpreted in ways that are unfavourable to civil society organisations.

Uganda has also passed a new NGO law leading to restrictions for civil society. In Zimbabwe the NGO law and the Public Order and Security Act (POSA) are used as a legal straitjacket and constant threat to restrict the activities of civil society. Registrations and work permits are denied with or without reason. The abolition of the Zimbabwean

currency at the height of the crisis in 2008 was used as an excuse by the government to plunder the accounts of civil society organisations. At the same time, NGO field programmes were banned for several weeks. So far, the introduction of South Africa's "Protection of Information Bill", designed to curb the freedom of information, has been blocked by resistance from civil society.

Are civil society organisations currently obstructed, persecuted, criminalised or subject to paramilitary violence?

The partners from Mozambique, Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia and Uganda mostly argue this is not the case. However, partners in South Africa have experienced the violent eviction and prosecution of homeless squatters. Generally, the partners estimate that state and paramilitary violence has decreased in their respective countries. The only exception is Zimbabwe, where intimidation, house searches, arbitrary detentions and acts of violence by war veterans, youth militias, the police and military remain frequent. Still, the level of violence is currently lower than during the run-up to the last elections.

Everywhere where space for civil society is reduced - whether by means of law, by institutional hurdles or at an informal level - civil society unites and often successfully maintains or even enlarges its scope for action. In Ethiopia for example new legal forms are being developed to enable the registration of new consortium models. Nearly all interviewees stated that they used stronger networking and capacity building, and intensified dialogue with government representatives and parliamentarians, wherever this is possible, as counter strategies to the restrictions placed upon them. All agreed that civil society networking has increased and that it is a prerequisite for the defence of scope for action and the prevention of persecution.

Have new structures and processes been introduced that broaden the political participation of civil society?

Even though civil society's work is often obstructed by new laws, administrative requirements or illegal and sometimes violent acts, a counter

trend can also be observed. Over the last few years, governments in many countries have established new structures and processes for civil society political participation, and these are used intensively. The Ethiopian partner argued that progress has been made as civil society organisations are now able to access bilateral and multilateral financing facilities, and two representatives of civil society represent NGOs on the board of the state Charities and Societies Agency (CSA). However, an official forum for government representatives and NGOs is still urgently required.

In Mozambique civil society participates in PRSP forums and other regular consulting mechanisms. Similar mechanisms also exist in a more or less binding form in Nigeria and Uganda ("Client Charters"). In South Africa there are discussions about establishing an "Urban Forum". This has been inspired by urban civil society groups and is aimed at providing space for public and civil society institutions to jointly discuss new, inclusive ideas for urban development. Even in Zimbabwe, where the climate for civil society is extremely hostile, civil society has successfully fought for leeway for political participation, such as in constitutional reform or the reconciliation commission.

How does civil society use the existing scope for action?

Nearly everywhere civil society develops strategies to make better use of opportunities (or loopholes) in political, legal or institutional frameworks. In Ethiopia, for example, civil society aims to strengthen cooperation with the government, restructure for creating a viable national civil society umbrella organisation, broaden its member basis, improve its image and gain better access to development cooperation funding. Civil society in Mozambique is also intensifying its cooperation with government ministries and is involved in consultations with members of parliament and government officials. In Nigeria civil society particularly concentrates on monitoring the state budget and public MDG projects. In Zimbabwe the strategic focus is on networking and public relations based on well-informed research and documentation. There was no additional information on this aspect from Uganda or South Africa.

4 Internal challenges, strengths and weaknesses of civil society

There is a high degree of critical self assessment among the partners. Most pointed out their own weaknesses in different areas and were willing and interested to develop alternatives and implement necessary changes. What follows is a summary of the most important areas for change.

Alternative models for development: Is civil society still visionary?

The partners who were interviewed agreed that civil society's visionary potential has weakened. According to them there are few research approaches and discourses on alternative concepts to the dominant development model, let alone visions or utopias. South Africans particularly criticised that civil society currently "has hardly any visions and is basically part of the mainstream".

Furthermore, they stated that new visions were needed that did not attempt to revive socialist ideas, but instead were based on the de-growth movement, holistic approaches and the experiences and views of indigenous peoples and the feminist movement. As a platform for civil society and the government, the new "Urban Forum" proposed by the South African partner DAG will be working on alternative pathways to development from the perspective of marginalised people.

Coherence: How well does cooperation work within civil society?

Over the last few years, scarcer funds in many countries have strained cooperation within civil society. As a consequence, some activities are being done more than once; there is unilateralism and a lack of reciprocal consultation.

Competence: Is civil society sufficiently qualified?

Partners see sufficient professional skills particularly in the classical fields of development co-

operation: health, education and agriculture. They criticise, that increasing issue-related conditionality of international development funding may tempt organisations to implement programmes without sufficient professional knowledge, as they will gain funding.

In the area of lobbying and advocacy, civil society has successfully expanded its knowledge and experience over the last few years. This particularly includes strategies to influence legislation and the rule of law, to use the structures of participatory democracy, for social mobilisation and creating solidarity, for public relations and for a more intensive use of the media.

Still, all interviewees recognised the need for further developing civil society's expertise. Although institutional learning and exchange between civil society organisations does partly exist, it is becoming more and more difficult due to the competition over ever scarcer funds, as described above. Frequently, good systems of institutional knowledge management are needed, as they ensure quality and continuity in spite of fluctuations in personnel. Over the last few years, a lot of work has gone into professionalisation, mainly among NGOs.

Impact: Have the efforts towards strengthening civil society borne fruit?

The effects of civil society work are most visible and measureable in in concrete development programmes at the grassroots level. Furthermore, in many ways civil society has contributed to shaping the political, economic, legal and institutional framework in the interest of the poor and the marginalised. However, these contributions are not always adequately documented according to current impact monitoring standards; suitable monitoring mechanisms are often lacking.

Governance: What about participation, transparency and accountability in civil society?

All of those interviewed saw deficits and potentials for improvement in this area. According to some this has already led to a loss of public trust in their society. As a consequence, civil society

in some countries has adopted policies of voluntary self regulation, such as the Code of Conduct in Ethiopia and the so-called Quality Assurance Mechanism (QuAM) in Uganda.

Institutional sustainability: is the work of civil society secured in the long-term?

The profound changes in the funding policies of northern donors have led to serious problems for civil society. These changes are marked by a general cutback in funding, issue-related conditionality of funding and withdrawal of donors from certain countries and long-term partnerships. Because the partners are highly dependent on these funds, these developments lead to serious crises and even potentially threaten the existence of some civil society organisations. As a consequence, many organisations are now working on strategies to mobilise national and other resources. All of the interviewees saw this as a great challenge.

Changes in the composition of civil society: What role do new actors play?

Over the last few years civil society has become more diverse in many countries. In some countries there is strong criticism that some NGOs are heavily financially dependent on governments and private companies because their most important sources of income are consultancy work and projects for the state and/or private companies.

Other civil society organisations believe this compromises these organisations' independence and endangers cohesion within civil society. A further challenge lies in the decentralisation of northern donors, which leads them to open offices in the south and sometimes even found their own agencies there. This has led to role conflicts, competition over funds and new control mechanisms, all of which have markedly changed the existing concept of partnership, but also the character of local civil society itself.

Partners from Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa reported problems with the changing role of donors, whereas partners from Ethiopia, Uganda and Nigeria were indifferent to such changes or viewed them positively.

5 The role of churches, Christian and secular organisations

In Africa the churches are over proportionately involved in strengthening civil society. Around 74% of all partners in this area are church or Christian organisations, or organisations built on Christian values, or members in associations of Christian and secular organisations. The high proportion of partners from church and Christian civil society organisations in the investigated funding areas reflects the traditionally great importance placed by the churches on development cooperation and human rights work on the African continent. At the same time this shows how much emphasis African churches put on the empowerment and political participation of marginalised groups in their societies and go far beyond the "classical" fields of work of the church in education and health.

The role played by Christian churches and Christian organisations within civil society differs depending on the national context, as well as their own power position and ideological orientation. At the same time, they are not normally monolithic blocks but consist of diverse elements, factions and currents. Depending on the level of repression of a given political regime, there are often differences between the positions of the official church and members of Christian grassroots groups. Church/Christian organisations are considered important to Mozambican and Zimbabwean civil society due to their engagement in human rights and social justice concerns, conflict transformation, peace, good governance, sustainable development, environment and food security issues. Furthermore, in Zimbabwe, the work with evicted people, victims of violence and people affected by HIV/AIDS, as well as spiritual support in a system characterised by repression and violence were mentioned positively.

In contrast, civil society has criticised the Zimbabwe Council of Churches for many years because of its lack of critical distance to the government. In post-apartheid South Africa churches'

role and relevance in civil society has reduced due to their uncritical positions towards government; however, particularly in urban areas they have started again to link up with social movements and rights-based initiatives.

6 The role played by civil society umbrella organisations

There are only very few countries in which NGO umbrella organisations exist that cover multiple sectors and/or issues; and there are only a few cases in which they are viewed as strong, representative and politically effective. National groupings of NGOs were portrayed positively by partners from Ethiopia and Uganda. In Uganda, all of the large civil society organisations are represented in the national NGO forum. The forum plays an important role as a coordinating body, for capacity building, joint advocacy and quality assurance and promotes cooperation. In Ethiopia the Christian network CRDA acts as a national umbrella organisation for all large Christian and secular civil society organisations. Given the limited democratic space available in Ethiopia, it plays an important role in representing civil society interests vis-à-vis the government. Interviewees from Zimbabwe and South Africa, in contrast, stated that their national umbrella organisations (NANGO and SANGOCO) were rather weak and uncritical of the government. There are issue-based or sector-related forums and networks in many countries. Such groupings fulfil important tasks in coordination, dialogue, capacity building, joint lobbying and advocacy, and promote synergies and quality assurance. Astonishingly, the functions of being political watchdogs and of organising joint actions/campaigns were mentioned less often.

7 The role of the women's movement

Without exception the women's movement was attested an important role in the respective nation-

al context in general and within civil society itself. The movement is credited with turning women's rights and gender justice into an issue for legislation, government policies and civil society.

The interviewees said women brought a more "humane" perspective to civil society work, strengthened cohesion, stimulated gender-sensitive planning, helped with good governance, transparency and accountability, and sometimes brought with them a more socially competent form of leadership as well as frequently showing more bravery and civil courage.

However, women remain under-represented in leadership positions while taking on an over proportionate part of the work at the grassroots level.

8 The relationship between NGOs, community based organisations and social movements

It seems that with increasing political participation and the changes in donor policies in some African countries a process of differentiation has taken place within civil society. The best relationship seems to exist in the context of practical development programmes at the grassroots level (HIV/AIDS, children, agriculture, environment).

Apart from that, to a certain degree community based organisations and social movements distrust NGOs, compete with them for funds and fear instrumentalisation (for example: in order to gain funding).

Furthermore, they are also worried about infiltration by government because NGOs now work in many organisations and processes together with government representatives. There is a clear desire to discuss these issues and build trust. In Mozambique the increasing collaboration between NGOs, farmers' and women's groups as well as with unions (on the provincial level) was especially emphasized.

9 Collaboration with other civil society actors

Cooperation with universities and research institutions as well as with professionals from different areas (especially law and health) has increased nearly everywhere, leading to a considerable enhancement in the professional quality of civil society work.

10 Expectations towards EED and ACT Alliance

There is a firm call for EED to maintain its current understanding of partnership and its orientation towards the perspectives and needs of people in the global south and their related civil society organisations. This includes integrated grassroots approaches, long-term support of empowerment processes, refraining from issue-related conditionality of funding and a strengthening of institutional sustainability. Funding was viewed as crucial in the following areas:

- dialogue, exchange, networking and cooperation;
- lobbying and advocacy in the south as well as vis-à-vis the German government (also by EED itself);
- human rights and development work;
- capacity building: methods and instruments for lobbying and advocacy, communication, research and documentation, staff development, management training, strategies for resource mobilisation, and impact-oriented PME-systems capable of capturing and reflecting processes of social and political change;
- good governance within civil society: ethics, accountability, transparency;
- strengthening institutional sustainability: continued contributions to institutional budgets,

not only to project costs, and viable models of endowment funds;

- improved coordination (internally and with other APRODEV members) to harmonise policies and procedures.

Overall there were few expectations connected with ACT Alliance. Most partners continue to associate ACT mainly with emergency aid. Individual partners expressed their hope that ACT could help improve the conceptual and organisational integration of development cooperation and emergency aid.

Annex II

The Asia-Pacific-Region

1 Context

For a better understanding of the challenges faced by civil society in the Asia-Pacific-Region in the areas of development and human rights it is useful to remember that Asia is the largest continent and is home to 4 billion people or roughly 60% of the global population.

In this very large region there are huge differences in levels of development. Whilst the region boasts the most important emerging economies, it is also home to the majority of the world's poor. China and India alone, the two regional economic giants, are home to 1.37 billion people who live on less than 2 USD per day. From a global perspective, this encompasses 55% of all people living in relative poverty (World Bank 2012).

The polarisation between the poor and the rich is extreme. Of the 34 countries constituting the greater region of South Asia, East Asia and the Pacific listed by the World Bank, 24 are Middle Income Countries (MIC), six of which are UMIC (among them China, Malaysia and Thailand) and 18 are LMIC (including India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, the Philippines and Vietnam) (World Bank 2011b).

Four (China, India, Indonesia and South Korea) are members of the G20: the group representing the leading industrialised and emerging economies. Two of these (India and China) are upcoming donor countries, mainly to Africa. The effect of this, especially within the MICs, is that the gap between the rich and the poor is increasing (India has a Gini coefficient of 36.8 and is ranked 134, China has a Gini coefficient of 41.5 and is ranked 101) (UNDP 2011d).

The poor's access to essential resources (land, water and forests) and basic social services (education, health) is decreasing (for example in Indonesia and India). Identity politics (ethnic, religious) or the fight against terrorism, especially when politically instrumentalized by governments, often fuel conflicts over resources. Although five of the Asian countries that the EED works in are designated as MICs (China, India, Indonesia, the

Philippines and Pakistan) they are nonetheless ranked third out of the four human development categories for MHD countries. The HDI ranking of the four LIC countries in which the EED works (Cambodia, Burma, Bangladesh and Nepal) are, in spite of their significantly weaker economic position, relatively similar to the MIC countries (UNDP 2011b). The UNDP's Gender Inequality Index, places the main growth countries (India, Pakistan and Indonesia) in an even worse light (UNDP 2011a).

Economic development in the region is marked by high growth rates, globalisation, liberalisation and privatisation. Civil society is often confronted by large industrial and infrastructure projects, partly financed by international credit, and there is a general openness towards foreign investment. Furthermore economic development in the region is confronted by inflation, unemployment and corruption. Among the most frequent civil society is concerned with are conflicts over resources, the displacement of people, and human rights violations.

There is a large range of political systems, from the authoritarian regime in Cambodia, to mixed forms such as the federal elective monarchy in Malaysia, the constitutional monarchy in Thailand, the former military dictatorship in Myanmar (which recently began moving towards democratisation), and countries with a long tradition of democracy such as India. However, even within formal democracies there is often a huge gap between the ideal and reality on the ground, particularly in regions with intense conflicts over resources and power. Therefore, even within democratic countries there are areas marked by a weak rule of law, as well as state repression and paramilitary violence.

Due to these conditions civil society in the Asia-Pacific region faces great challenges. On the one hand the large potential for economic and political power means more and more international donors are withdrawing from countries such as India and China. This is not only true for bilateral development cooperation but also partly for non-government development cooperation. On the other hand, there are still massive problems related to

poverty, marginalisation and discrimination, conflicts and human rights violations not only in LIC but also in MIC countries. Consequently, civil society definitely needs continued international support and cooperation to deal with these problems.

2 The development of civil society

What are the overall trends?

Given the context, the space for civil society work varies broadly between continued or aggravating restrictions and repressions on the one hand and on-going or emerging processes of democratisation and decentralisation on the other.

To better control the work of civil society organisations Bangladesh, for example, is planning a new NGO law. In China the secret services have intensified their monitoring of civil society organisations and there are restrictions on foreign travel. Furthermore, the Chinese government is working on legal regulations to allow for letting people “disappear” if “national security is at risk”. In India both the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) and visa regulations have been tightened. Furthermore, a reform of tax legislation is underway which would also affect civil society organisations having been exempted from taxes so far. Partner organisations in Indonesia complain about difficulties with registrations. In many countries (and certain sub-regions) government agencies persecute, intimidate or even threaten human rights and development organisations working with rights-based approaches.

Nonetheless, in nearly all countries new opportunities have begun opening up. In Nepal and the Philippines several new human rights networks have been founded who are not impeded in their work. In India representatives of civil society organisations have been appointed to Standing Parliamentary Committees, as well as to the National Advisory Council and the State Planning Commission. In Indonesia civil society is also represented in the National Planning Authority. In

Myanmar a general process of democratisation has begun, opening up new possibilities for civil society. Tendencies towards positive “deregulation” are also present in China. Furthermore, in other countries in the region, new structures and processes for participation have also been created.

The overall conditions for civil society organisations also differ within individual countries and civil society organisations are affected to different degrees depending on the nature of their work. Yet even small cracks in authoritarian and repressive contexts are used creatively by civil society.

How has civil society adapted its goals, priorities and strategies to the current context?

Even though the overall conditions and options vary from country to country, there is a clear trend towards further increasing politicisation of civil society. Lobbying and advocacy, political participation and awareness building as well as a strong move towards rights-based approaches, networking and building new alliances have become the main priorities.

In countries with a long democratic tradition and strong civil society such as India, civil society is becoming increasingly complex. In view of the growing gap between rich and poor, many civil society organisations - including most EED partners - (even established church development NGOs) primarily focus on lobbying and advocacy for civil and political as well as economic, social and cultural human rights. They monitor government actions, accountability, transparency and governance in general and revive linkages with community based organisations and social movements. The latter is mainly a consequence of civil society’s self-critical reflection on questions of identity and legitimacy, in other words, which includes the key question of being rooted at the grassroots level.

At the same time, other organisations follow a more technical approach to development cooperation, often in the sectors of health and education. In these sectors NGOs increasingly cooperate with government and private sector companies who benefit from contracting civil society organisations having specific expertise as well as good linkages

with local people. On the basis of such contracts NGOs provide consultancy and other services.

But also under authoritarian regimes such as China or - until very recently - Myanmar,¹ where civil society is weak or hardly existent, organisations have developed strategies to efficiently use and even expand the small spaces available to them. Typically they work as small, low-profile organisations, cooperate in loose, informal networks, use “quiet diplomacy” and, at least officially, focus on less “objectionable” issues such as environmental protection and community development.

In countries such as Indonesia, where processes of decentralisation have recently begun, civil society uses these to interlink work at the local and national level.

How has civil society’s influence on government policies, national legislation and international agreements evolved?

Even though there are many complaints over stronger restrictions and repression, all interviewed partners agree that there has generally been a move towards increased political participation at the local, sub-regional and national levels over the last three years. They also state growing effective influence of civil society on government policies and legislation, sometimes with direct or indirect repercussions at the international level, especially in the area of civil, political and ESC rights. The following examples document the scope of political participation of civil society organisations in various countries from the Asia-Pacific region.

- **Women’s rights, gender justice:** In most countries civil society organisations (and especially women’s organisations) took part in the drafting and discussion of national laws and government policies to tackle domestic violence and human trafficking (for example in Indonesia), of government reports or shadow reports for the UN Committee on the Elimination

of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the introduction of a gender perspective in the national budget and multiannual government plans as well as a quota for women in parliaments.

- **Legislation:** Civil society organisations in various Asian countries have helped draft and pass legislation related to environmental protection, food rights, land rights, right to information rights, right to decent and adequately paid work, laws against child abuse/child pornography, revisions to anti-terror legislation, implementation of decentralisation laws, debates on new NGO legislation, and constitutional reform processes.
- **Government policies and national budgets:** Civil society in many countries in the Asia-Pacific region helped develop, reform and monitor government policy in education, infrastructure and the economy (building of dams, mining) and governments’ poverty reduction strategies. In some places they also participated in the discussion of draft national budgets.
- **Strengthening and monitoring the rule of law, prosecution of human rights violations:** In many cases civil society organisations have successfully fought for the revision of court verdicts, the release of people who had been illegally detained; prohibition of unethical medical practices, criminal law reforms and the establishment of special fact-finding and mediation bodies (truth and reconciliation commission, commissions to deal with the problem of “disappeared persons”). They have been asked to train and advise staff of government authorities to respond better to people claiming their rights and to victims of human rights violations (for example in India).
- **Governance:** Civil society initiatives to monitor governance are common (for example in India, Nepal and the Philippines), as are initiatives to fight corruption in state bureaucracy and within civil society (for example in Bangladesh).
- **International Agreements:** There are many examples of successful civil society lobbying and advocacy initiatives that have helped push

¹ Myanmar has recently begun a process of democratisation, opening civil society new possibilities.

governments to ratify international human rights agreements. Civil society organisations have also ensured states comply with their obligations and human rights agreements (for example through shadow reports). Examples here are women's and children's rights, rights of indigenous peoples (UNDRIP), rights of people living with disabilities, climate protection, the UN conventions against torture and against racism, as well as several ILO conventions.

Can civil society influence private sector?

All interviewees stated that their direct or indirect influence on private sector companies is very limited. Many civil society organisations have experienced that company decisions hardly ever take into account their demands to respect the rights of disadvantaged groups. Nonetheless, during the last three years there have also been some examples of successful civil society initiatives in this area:

- **China:** Campaigns leading to the closure of factories harmful to the environment, influence on bank policies (bank ratings, "green credit").
- **India:** helping to stop the establishment of "Special Economic Zones",² pushing through the nationalisation of vaccine production, contributing to the development of company guidelines for voluntary self-regulation, as well as taking part in negotiations with companies involved in processing medicinal plants from northeast India.
- **Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar:** Monitoring labour and environmental standards by civil society, partially under difficult conditions.

In some countries, such as India, there has been a trend over the last few years for companies to create their own "social" or "development foundations" implementing education, health or income-generating projects. On the one hand, they

demonstrate their willingness for greater corporate social responsibility. On the other hand, according to many of the interviewees, human rights and development organisations from civil society observe that this weakens the efforts to defend the rights and demands of the people affected by industrial and infrastructure projects.

Has civil society become stronger or weaker?

It is not surprising that this question is answered very differently depending on the political context and the kind of civil society organisation one asks. In some areas civil society has become stronger, in others weaker. Overall the feedback, especially the concrete examples of political participation and its impact, indicate that civil society actively and creatively makes use of all of its opportunities, particularly where governments attempt to obstruct the work of an ever bolder civil society.

3 The development of democratic space

Most interviewees argue that there is both shrinking and expanding space. New constraints are occurring mainly in countries that traditionally have strong civil societies (for example in India), and these constraints are interpreted as a reaction to the strength of a well organised civil society. In more authoritarian contexts even small openings are viewed positively and taken up by civil society organisations. In nearly all of the countries governments ask for civil society's expertise and invite organisations to participate in political processes.

Still, interviewees complained that often civil society organisations are being hand-picked by government and that advisory bodies with civil society members can usually only make recommendations. The results are often non-binding and their implementation depends on the government's political will. Often, the positions of civil society are not being taken into account. Many partners also saw a risk of being used to boost legitimacy. Nonetheless, all partners see the existing struc-

² Defined economic zone within a country for the production of goods for export. Usually companies are exempted from duties and taxes. Labour legislation does not fully apply, especially minimum social and labour rights standards and unions are banned, etc.

tures for political participation as important progress and these opportunities are used intensively.

Have laws and administrative requirements changed affecting the work of civil society?

In some parts of the region there are attempts to tighten civil society's legal, institutional and administrative framework. In some countries revisions to NGO-laws are either planned or underway that offer governments greater possibilities to control, obstruct or dissolve critical civil society organisations. This is especially the case in Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Cambodia. In Cambodia, apart from the "Law on Associations and NGOs" that regulates the work of community based organisations, NGOs and networks, two further laws targeting unions and cooperatives are in planning. China plans to legalise the "disappearance" of people in cases where "national security has been threatened". Signs of "deregulation" in China and the enforcement of a law on the right to information in India are positive developments.

In the whole region there has been a clear increase in administrative restrictions to the work of civil society organisations. In many places this includes tightening visa regulations, stricter reporting and accounting standards and terms of registration. Also, applications for government funds have become more complex (applicants have to present service offers for tendered projects), there are special approval requirements for research projects, conferences, training programmes, demonstrations and so on. In most countries civil society organisations actively fight against such regulations, because they consider them arbitrary and very vaguely defined. Such regulations are frequently used to make life more difficult for critical organisations with rights-based approaches.

Are civil society organisations currently obstructed, persecuted, criminalised or subject to paramilitary violence?

In most countries in Asia different forms of obstruction and repression continue to exist or have even aggravated over the last few years. According to partners repressive tendencies and human rights violations occur more often when massive

economic interests related to minerals, land, water and biodiversity are at stake. The obstruction and repression they faced included illegal arrests, surveillance by secret services, denial of foreign travel permits, obligations to provide detailed reports to local authorities and the police, threats, intimidation, defamation and legal proceedings based on false accusations, inhibiting work with internally displaced persons (IDPs), monitoring and limiting their right to freedom of movement and the withdrawal of registration permits. In some countries or sub regions civil society organisations experience a "climate of fear" and a "culture of impunity" (for example Cambodia and Myanmar). In especially critical situations civil society strategically and tactically reacts to such threats by preemptively "flying below the radar".

State and paramilitary violence against civil society organisations is frequently aimed at preserving political power and privileges or occurs when economic interests related to large-scale resource or infrastructure projects are at stake. Mostly this is directed towards critical human rights activists and members of social movements, journalists and lawyers. Attacks have included violent evictions, abductions and even killings. Local protests are often met with military or paramilitary violence under the guise of combating terrorism and safeguarding national security. It is local people caught up between the conflicting parties who usually suffer the most.

Over the last three years, EED partners in many countries in the region have been affected by restrictions, repression or even violence (in China, India, Indonesia, Cambodia, Myanmar and the Philippines). Mostly they decided against closing down their activities and instead developed a more assertive approach. This has included intensified dialogue with the government, improved national and international networking, further professionalisation of their work and an intensive and competent use of legal instruments.

Depending on the respective national context, further specific strategies were developed in different countries. In Indonesia for example they engaged in dialogue with more moderate groups, building new political alliances and a more in-

tensive use of the media and pressure groups. Frequently, the only option for partners in China and Myanmar continues to be maintaining a “low profile”, as mentioned above. In India (mainly in north eastern and central India) the spectrum of strategic options has broadened significantly over the last few years. Remarkable is the recourse to the international level: this includes cooperation with specialised UN organisations and offices (e.g. the Special Rapporteur on Indigenous Peoples, bodies dealing with violence against women, with “extrajudicial killings” and so on), or with the EU and members of the German Parliament. In India civil society organisations are investing more in public relations, in-depth research and documentation, and legal proceedings (law suits in accordance with the right to information, use of the instrument of “public interest litigation”). In Cambodia the focus is on national and international lobbying and advocacy and the dissemination of legal information, in some cases civil society organisations have also organised staff security trainings. In the Philippines, especially in conflict areas, there are now even a few attempts to conduct dialogue with the military.

Have new structures and processes been introduced that broaden the political participation of civil society?

In contrast to the numerous constraints mentioned above, there is also a counter trend of growing opportunities for action. Frequently public hearings are among the new participatory structures and procedures for civil society that have been introduced by some governments. Here are some of the examples of this expansion in opportunities that were mentioned by the interviewees: in India members of civil society organisations took part in Standing Parliamentary Committees, in the National Advisory Council and National Planning Commission. In Indonesia as well civil society is now invited to the National Planning Authority. In Nepal a network of civil society organisations regularly takes part in the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), the mechanism to monitor adherence to human rights. In a conflict-ridden area in the Philippines civil society was invited to participate in the recruitment process for an important state position for the first time.

How does civil society use the existing scope for action?

In all of the countries in the region civil society organisations intensively use even the smallest spaces and opportunities to enlarge their field of action and defend themselves against new constraints. Over the last few years they have strongly diversified the instruments which they employ.

The degree of networking has increased everywhere. In Nepal, for example, networks for the rights of marginalised groups (indigenous peoples, Dalits, Madheshis, women, people living with disabilities) have developed over the last five years, and collaboration with doctors, lawyers and unionists has become more intensive. In the Philippines more and more “networks of networks” are being created most of which are centred on certain issues or sectors; civil society is expanding at all levels (provincial, national and international).

Civil society organisations everywhere have increased lobbying and advocacy (even in China organisations have, for example, begun monitoring the social and ecologic impact of Chinese foreign investments). Civil society organisations have also improved their expertise and professionalism, strengthened community based organisations (capacity building, networking), created new coalitions at the national level (Nepal) and strengthened collaboration with the government.

Where openings for participation in state level planning and policy development exist a number of improvements were achieved over the last few years: in some cases sporadic and informal meetings have developed into legally anchored consultative mechanisms or mechanisms for participatory decision-making. In places where government is decentralised civil society organisations often participate at all levels (local, regional and national). As described in detail above, civil society takes part in national budget planning and sector policy development, in legislative procedures and constitutional reform as well as in the design and monitoring of national strategies to eradicate poverty. Furthermore, it is member of national human rights commissions, truth and reconciliation commissions etc.

At the international level (UN, WTO, G20 etc.) one finds specialised and highly qualified professional and lobbying organisations, social movements, interest groups and international networks of marginalised groups such as women, indigenous peoples, small farmers and landless. Women's organisations in particular draw up shadow reports on the implementation of women's and children's rights and the rights of people living with disabilities, that are then presented to the respective UN commissions (CEDAW, CRC and/or CRPD). Environmental organisations participate in international debates on climate change and human rights organisations have recently begun participating in the UPR mechanism. NGOs from the Philippines particularly point to their participation in UN initiatives such as the Non-Violent Peace Force, the International Initiatives for International Dialogue, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the International Monitoring Team.

4 Internal challenges, strengths and weaknesses of civil society

Alternative models for development: Is civil society still visionary?

From the point of view of the interviewees there is a great need to develop alternatives to the dominant model of development. A set of partner workshops held in India in August 2011 came to the same conclusion stating that there are too few approaches and discourses on alternatives. They critically observed civil society becoming increasingly absorbed by processes of political participation, including the claiming of rights, monitoring government actions, lobbying and advocacy on numerous commissions. According to them, this leaves little room to think and debate about alternative models and visions of development.

Similarly, the changed funding policies of most NGO donors and governments, with their highly complex requirements and their focus on projects

with quick results, have led long-term processes and visionary thinking to be pushed further into the background. From the viewpoint of the partners it is important that alternatives incorporate the perspectives of small-scale farmers, the women's movement (especially feminist organisations), indigenous people's movements and the unions. They argue that the development of alternative models will require capacity building, research, a critical analysis of the global economy and the conceptualization and documentation of existing examples. Furthermore, they articulated the need for a debate on value change, the importance and implications of a clear commitment to grassroots-orientation, the key role and scaling-up potential of organic small-scale agriculture based on domestic rather than export markets, the commitment to environmental and gender justice, as well as on models of political participation.

Coherence: How well does cooperation work within civil society?

Overall, interviewees stated that collaboration and networking within civil society had improved over the last few years. This may be linked to civil society's increased importance and the greater possibilities for political participation, as well as the experience that cooperation increases impact. Nonetheless, fragmentation and division is also a problem, and especially in cases where the understanding of the role and self-concept of civil society and its relationship to the government and private sector diverges and new actors appear on the scene. Interviewees agreed that cooperation must continue to be improved, especially with regard to the joint use of financial and other resources and regarding the development of long-term perspectives and joint strategies.

In many countries in the region the relationship between NGOs and community based organisations is particularly seen as in need of improvement. The increasing professionalisation of NGOs over the last few years seems to have slowly created a divide between them and community based organisations. Often this is accompanied by distrust and fears, and reflected in different organisational cultures and approaches. In part this is also true for the relationship between NGOs and

social movements. The interviewed partners see a need to bring such different civil society organisations closer together. NGOs should therefore rethink their role vis-à-vis community based organisations, avoid dominant behaviour, strengthen the self-reliance of the grassroots, respect and promote the motivation and authenticity of local people instead of suffocating them with “professionalism”, but also refrain from creating false hope. This implies turning away from welfare-based approaches and instead empowering the poor and marginalised people to assert their rights and gain access to resources.

From the point of view of the interviewees, it is clear that more effective participation means continually strengthening the coherence of civil society activities at the different levels, in different sectors, for a variety of issues and amongst different actors.

Competence: Is civil society sufficiently qualified?

The more Asian civil society has taken part in the design of policies, laws, and critically accompanied government actions over the last few years – whether because it was asked to do so or on its own initiative – the more qualified it has become in certain issues, as well as in the fields of law and politics. Civil society now also handles lobbying and advocacy mechanisms better than during the 1990s. Faced with continuously changing and ever more complex challenges, training is constantly needed to further enhance capabilities. Furthermore knowledge is often bound to individuals instead of institutions.

Fluctuations in personnel, which have increased over the last years due to head-hunting by government and private companies, means knowledge is easily lost. The interviewees therefore stated that institutional learning must be promoted. At the same time, exchange between organisations also needs to be improved, for example, through joint trainings, workshops and seminars. Whereas this appears to be practised quite intensively in southern Asia (Bangladesh, Nepal and India, but also in the Philippines), Indonesian partners complained of a lack of coordination, infrastructure

and resources in this area. Organisations following rights-based approaches stated that further qualification and professionalisation in law was needed. Small NGOs and community based organisations generally see competence building as a great challenge, as they are affected more by brain drain, whereby competent leaders are attracted to larger organisations offering more attractive conditions.

Impact: Have the efforts towards strengthening civil society borne fruit?

According to the interviewees the work of civil society is quite effective. This is also clear from section 5.4.2, which lists numerous cases in which government policy and legislation have been influenced. On the other hand such successes are often countered by restrictions on opportunities, and political decisions that ignore the needs of civil society. Still, it is clear that in spite of unfavourable conditions the efforts of civil society are increasingly yielding results in many Asian countries, although these often go unrecognised. The interviewees therefore believe that it is necessary to improve public relations strategies, (further) develop appropriate methods and instruments for the qualitative and process-oriented assessment of impacts and documentation, and conduct trainings accordingly. For this the necessary resources should be made available.

Governance: What about participation, transparency and accountability in civil society?

All interviewees stated that this was a great challenge, and that action was needed. The Indian and Nepalese partners particularly recommended the self-assessment of internal practices. They argue that it is important to develop a culture of mutual trust and openness in civil society that goes beyond a small circle of people. They also view this as an essential means of regaining public esteem and access to new sources of funding. In Bangladesh a number of civil society organisations have established a Code of Conduct; however, its implementation is slow.

Cambodian partners complained of corruption within civil society, which led them to introduce their own system of certification for civil society

organisations a number of years ago. Partners in China also criticised irregularities and the misuse of funds, especially by the increasing numbers of “QuaNGOs” that are being founded by private sector companies. Their lack of transparency, it was argued, could throw a bad light on civil society as a whole. All interviewees expressed a clear will to further develop their systems and structures to improve governance.

Institutional sustainability: is the work of civil society secured in the long-term?

The problems connected with securing the institutional sustainability of civil society organisations have grown in Asia over the last few years. This is mainly due to the cutbacks in international and national development funding and changes in donor policies. Asia has been hit especially hard by this, because there are four MIC countries in the region from which international donors are slowly withdrawing. Institutional stability and self-determination of civil society organisations is being weakened by reduced financial means, the trend towards short-term project funding, the end of institutional funding and the introduction of issue-related conditionality.

The hitherto dependency on northern NGO donors was actually combined with great freedom of action for the partners in the global south as well as self-determined agendas, until the end of the 1990s. This relative “autonomy” is now threatened to be replaced by new dependencies on national governments, private sector companies and international donors whose funding practices are subject to complex conditionalities. This has sparked obvious fears among the partners. They emphasized the importance of mobilising new funding sources without losing control over their own agenda.

Further professionalisation and qualification of their work is seen as an important prerequisite for this; for example, it could enable partners to earn money through consultancy services. On the other hand, Indian partners have begun to think again about the need to revitalise the “spirit of voluntarism”, the principle of unpaid social involvement anchored in Indian tradition.

Changes in the composition of civil society: What role do new actors play?

In most Asian countries the number of civil society organisations has increased over the last few years. On the one hand, civil society initiatives have mushroomed as a result of growing self-confidence and the increasing importance of civil society participation. On the other hand, new “social organisations” or “quasi-NGOs” are being founded by governments and private sector companies. Whereas these do not play an important role in Indonesia, Nepal and the Philippines, interviewees in India and Cambodia argued that they often weaken civil society as they occupy the spaces of “genuine” NGOs and drain resources. In Bangladesh they only play a role in micro-credits.

Another important factor that has contributed to changes in civil society in some Asian-Pacific countries has been the decentralisation of northern aid agencies. Over the last five years nearly all APRODEV members as well as other NGOs from the north have established regional offices or even started their own organisations in the partner countries and shifted their complete work to them. In Asia this is particularly the case in India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal and Cambodia. With the exception of Cambodia interviewees predominantly viewed this trend negatively: they stated that it turned local NGOs into “subcontractors” and led to divisions within civil society and a decreasing acceptance of NGOs at the grassroots level.

Furthermore, the presence of northern aid agencies frequently creates competition with local NGOs, new demands for professionalisation and greater imbalance within civil society. A partner from Nepal, a country with over 80 international NGOs and 30 bilateral and multilateral organisations, criticised this as leading to high transaction costs and an agenda dominated by foreign staff.

The government in Nepal is seen as too weak to regulate this situation, which leads to a lack of cooperation and coordination. From the viewpoint of the Nepalese partners better coordination between partners from the north is urgently required. In contrast, the partner from Cambodia welcomed

the presence of northern aid agencies and argued it represented a chance to improve partnerships.

5 The role of churches, Christian and secular organisations

It is important to remember that from a global perspective the number of Christians in Asia is extremely small. Whereas in Latin America over 90% and in sub-Saharan Africa 30-70% (in some countries even 70-89%) of all people are Christians, not even 5% of the Asian population are Christians (Ortag 2008). Christian churches, therefore, have a minority status nearly everywhere in the region. However, the proportion of church and Christian organisations, and organisations with Christian values, and organisations that are members of networks with Christian and secular membership make up a remarkable 48% of the organisations involved in the funding priority under study.

Other important factors determining the developmental and societal role of church and Christian organisations and organisations of other faiths include: the political climate in general, the degree of religious freedom, the conflict potential related to religious issues, and the missionary background and theological orientation of the respective church. Frequently it is a combination of different factors. The differences are great from one country to the next, which makes it difficult to come to general conclusions.

In places where Christian churches have made important contributions to civil society and to development, these churches were viewed positively by the interviewees, particularly in the areas of ethical and moral guidance, interreligious and intercultural dialogue, human rights and peace work, food security, natural resource management, capacity building and networking as well as humanitarian aid. More conservative churches were criticised mainly because they oppose gender justice and focus on charity and more technical approaches to development.

6 The role played by civil society umbrella organisations

The role played by civil society umbrella organisations varies from country to country. There are strong, representative national NGO umbrella organisations in India, Nepal and Cambodia. In contrast, in China and Indonesia either no such platforms exist or where they do, they exist in very weak forms. The national umbrella organisation in Bangladesh has been weakened by division. In most countries issue-related and sector-related networks are more. These networks not only represent issue- or sector-related positions but also engage in more general development policy concerns, frequently together with other actors.

The degree of cohesion, legitimacy and strength of civil society at the national level of a country probably determine to a large extent the role, relevance and impact of its work. Whether a national umbrella organisation cross-cutting issues is required, depends on the respective national context and the structure and configuration of its civil society. In India, for example, over the last few years the national NGO umbrella organisation VANI has regained importance as an overarching representative of civil society interests and as a strong lobbying organisation. On the one hand, it plays an important role regarding the reform of laws affecting NGOs, accountability requirements, tax regulations and other administrative conditions. On the other hand, it engages in issues related to India's important political role at the international level, for example as a member of the G20-group. VANI sees this as opening up new opportunities for its members to participate in international political processes.

7 The role of the women's movement

Nearly all interviewees asserted that women's organisations largely contribute to greater gender justice in society: they have successfully influenced the general public, legislation, national and

international politics, the media and not least civil society itself through awareness building, lobbying and advocacy. Furthermore, women's specific leadership qualities, for example linked to conflict resolution, were mentioned. At the same time, interviewees pointed to gender policy deficits continuing to exist within civil society. According to them, there was a general lack of gender sensitivity (China), women were still underrepresented at the top level and still had too little access to resources (India). During the two partner workshops in India it was emphasised that women's organisations, in particular from the feminist movement, have a great potential to contribute to the development of civil society as a whole. Their contribution was viewed as very important because of their experience with multiple discrimination, with processes of self-reflection, liberation and empowerment and its valuable knowledge gained from feminist research and discourses. Partners from Indonesia and Cambodia (where women's organisations are still less visible) expressed the need to train female leaders, to strengthen the political role of women and to organise empowerment programmes for women's organisations. In Myanmar the women's movement and other initiatives to increase gender awareness in civil society and society at large are just beginning to emerge.

8 The relationship between NGOs, community based organisations and social movements

Most interviewees admitted that cooperation between these different civil society actors is sometimes difficult. The reasons stated included: increasing differentiation, different approaches, competition, divisions and a loss of trust within civil society. Alliances and cooperative relations seem to work best where strong, self-confident social movements exist who are obviously capable of building bridges between NGOs and community based organisations. This is particularly true for women's, environmental and indigenous movements, or more general human rights movements.

Many of the partner organisations emphasised the need for better linkages between these different levels.

9 Collaboration with other civil society actors

Over the last few years, the increasing professionalisation of civil society has also led to intensified collaboration with professionals in different areas; this is seen as an important means of enhancing qualifications and networking in society. This is especially true in education, health, the judiciary, the media and the environment. Collaboration with universities and research institutes and in part with unions, farmer's associations and student organisations is growing. A more systematic approach to using the strategic possibilities provided by the Internet ("digital democracy") is still to be developed.

10 Expectations towards EED and ACT Alliance

Partnership and collaboration with EED is highly valued by all partners, especially when taking into account the fundamental changes in donor policies during the last few years. At the same time, the partners urgently appealed to EED's successor organisation to continue working in its established manner. Expectations included an increase of funds and providing space for building competence and organisational structures in civil society. Further competence building should happen in the following areas: international issues and issues concerning more than one country, lobbying and monitoring government (such as in the areas of governance and budget analysis), fundraising, exchange programmes, and regional and/or international meetings. Priorities for funding included: human rights, rights-based approaches, programmes for women and indigenous peoples, strengthening national umbrella organisations, networking, lobbying and advocacy, endowment

funds for local community-based organisations, work with young people, and humanitarian aid during crises. Partners also clearly argued that integrated programme approaches should be maintained and not be replaced by issue-related conditionality of funding. Furthermore, the interviewees placed high priority on strengthening institutional sustainability through co-funding of the central costs of coordination and administration, that is, institutional support that goes beyond mere project-based funding. It was hoped EED would - in the context of APRODEV and ACT - use its influence to work towards harmonisation of the requirements on partners to create synergies. They expect from EED to intensify its lobbying and advocacy work with the German government and the EU, as well as at the international level. In their view, EED should strengthen its engagement as a strategic political ally of its partners in the global south.

ACT Alliance is only represented in some of the countries in the region, and only a few EED partners are members of national ACT forums. Accordingly the alliance is seen to have no or very little significance in most of these countries. However, more differentiated answers came from India and Indonesia. Particularly in India the potential importance of ACT for political work on the international level (UN, EU) was highlighted, for example, regarding compliance to human rights standards and the prosecution of human rights violations as well as the debate on development effectiveness. In Indonesia hopes for improvement in several areas were expressed, including national and international lobbying and advocacy, strengthening international collaboration between civil societies on specific issues (for example on the MDGs and tax justice), and the advancement of institutional learning through exchange and knowledge management. In Cambodia ACT Alliance is involved in emergency aid. According to interviewees ACT Alliance does not play an outstanding role in the Asia-Pacific region.

Annex III

Southeast Europe/The Caucasus

1 Context

After the dissolution of the Eastern Bloc poverty and a lack of perspectives became widespread in many countries in southeast Europe and the Caucasus. At the same time, in some parts of the region the EU's 2004 and 2007 eastern enlargement created hopes for improvements in the economic, social and political conditions. Macedonia is already a member of the EU and Albania is a candidate country. Still, poverty, unemployment, corruption, deficits in the educational and health systems, a high potential for conflict and violence, environmental degradation and gender-related discrimination are characteristic of the region's development. Overall, the situation in most of the countries is characterised by social and economic instability. A central challenge remains the historically grounded weaknesses in both civil society and structures for political participation. Strengthening these therefore belongs to EED's most important focuses in southeast Europe and the Caucasus. The work of EED in the region concentrates on countries classified as developing countries according to the DAC criteria. Four of the seven countries in the region are listed by the World Bank as UMIC (Azerbaijan, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia) and three as LMIC (Armenia, Georgia, Kosovo). According to the UN's HDI index all of these countries belong to the HHD group. Appendix G provides an overview of the classification of these countries according to the World Bank and UNDP indices (HDI and GII).

2 The development of civil society

What are the overall trends?

The efforts to join the EU have positively affected regional processes of democratisation. In many countries governments are opening up to civil society political participation and are prepared to establish the respective structures and procedures. To effectively use these new opportunities, civil society needs to build and strengthen

participatory approaches, viable and functional organisational structures, staff capacities and professional competence.

How has civil society adapted its goals, priorities and strategies to the current context?

Since the beginning of the 1990s civil society has grown in importance. However, active citizenship has not yet fully developed. In southeast European countries civil society organisations are usually small. However, in Georgia they are already larger and have relatively good organisational structures. At the same time, they complain about their strong dependence on foreign funds, and see the need to both continue strengthening their ties to the grassroots level and to increase their political influence.

How has civil society's influence on government policies, national legislation and international agreements evolved?

The efforts to adapt to EU standards are leading to new possibilities for the participation of civil society organisations. In Macedonia, for example, civil society has taken part in the creation of a new NGO law, antidiscrimination legislation and regulations on the work of volunteers. In Albania civil society has participated in constitutional reform, in new laws for political decentralisation and in a new national development strategy. In Georgia it helped develop laws against discrimination and for gender equality as well as laws to introduce the principle of subsidiarity to the social welfare sector. Overall the interviewees said the high complexity of EU standards also presented great challenges for civil society.

Can civil society influence private sector?

Generally interviewees stated that civil society had only limited possibilities to directly influence company policies and ensure they take the interests of marginalised social groups into account. The only exception was Macedonia, where civil society organisations together with the government and private sector companies worked out a CSR law and developed a joint project related to this. Although Georgia has consumer protection legislation and there are government tax incentives for

companies with social commitment, civil society still has no access for direct participation.

Has civil society become stronger or weaker?

The influence of the EU has led civil society to work towards further developing its expertise and professionalism. In Macedonia the results of this are visible which again contributes to strengthen civil society in general. In Georgia and Albania, on the contrary, interviewees described problems linked to the cuts in funding and a strong dependency on donors, as well as a diminishing number of members and volunteers direly needed for keeping their work going.

3 The development of democratic space

Have laws and administrative requirements changed affecting the work of civil society?

No new laws or administrative procedures limiting democratic freedom for civil society were reported in the region. An exception is Azerbaijan, where there are still clear restrictions on the freedom of assembly and freedom of the press. In Albania laws promoting democracy are only being slowly implemented. At the same time, the work of civil society organisations and unions is not properly regulated nor is it sufficiently secured by law (for example, regarding tax exemption and non-profit-status). Furthermore, civil servants still frequently lack the necessary knowledge and skills to interact with civil society, so there is certainly need for training here. The conditions for civil society organisations have worsened in Georgia recently as NGOs are now required to pay 20% income tax and have no possibility to apply for exemption or compensation. This places a noticeable burden on civil society.

Are civil society organisations currently obstructed, persecuted, criminalised or subject to paramilitary violence?

Whereas many civil society organisations (mainly human rights organisations) in countries

in the southern Caucasus (especially in Armenia and Azerbaijan) are subject to repression and interference, according to the interviewees this hardly happens in the southeast European countries. Here too proximity to the EU probably has a positive effect. Where civil society organisations do face repression they frequently look for dialogue with important political actors and the police or take legal action.

Have new structures and processes been introduced that broaden the political participation of civil society?

Interviewees stated this was again the case for the southeast European region, while it was not so applicable to the Caucasus. In the southeast European countries governments have developed strategies and institutions to cooperate with civil society, mainly in the framework of Europe's eastern partnership (NGO participation through national platforms and civil society fora in Brussels). Participation in government policy works best at the local level. Macedonia, for example, passed a law for this in 2011. A further example is the participation of civil society organisations in Development Effectiveness Country Groups, e.g. in Georgia.

How does civil society use the existing scope for action??

Wherever possible civil society uses its available options to build diverse cooperative relations especially within the EU and the Caucasus.

4 Internal challenges, strengths and weaknesses of civil society

Alternative models for development: Is civil society still visionary?

There were no explicit answers from interviewees to this question. Due to the historic context the great challenge at this point of time lies in creating

a civil society as part of the construction of post-socialist societies. From the survey it is clear that civil societies, much like governments, mainly focus on market economy concepts with a strong focus on self-help and individual entrepreneurship.

Coherence: How well does cooperation work within civil society?

Overall there is a great need to promote active citizenship and collaboration within civil society. Currently, cooperation between NGOs and community based organisations works best in the area of community development, where it is directed towards the practical needs of local people. Collaboration is more difficult in the fields of human rights, monitoring government activities, and in research and conceptual development. As in other parts of the world, in southeast Europe and the Caucasus increased professionalisation is also leading to a differentiation in civil society between NGOs and grassroots organisations.

Competence: Is civil society sufficiently qualified?

All interviewees said there was a large need to build professional capabilities – technically, methodically and conceptually – throughout the region. This also included methods and instruments for lobbying and advocacy.

Impact: Have the efforts towards strengthening of civil society borne fruit?

The interviewees provided no information concerning this question.

Governance: What about participation, transparency and accountability in civil society?

There were hardly any answers to this question either. In this context the partner in Georgia emphasised the importance of the Development Effectiveness Group at the country level and argued that coordination between NGOs must be improved.

Institutional sustainability: is the work of civil society secured in the long-term?

All of those interviewed stated that neither their institutional independence nor the sustainability of their work was sufficiently secure. A general cutback in funding, increasing needs due to the growth of organisations, a strong dependence on foreign donors, few alternative sources of funding (government, private sector companies) and insufficient finance management and administrative capacities are described as the main factors challenging institutional sustainability.

Changes in the composition of civil society environment: What role do new actors play?

The situation varies strongly from one country to the next. In Georgia and Albania the interviewees pointed to the increasing role of new actors (among them the National Platforms in the framework of the EU's eastern partnership) working at the fringes of civil society, government and the private sector. Their actions are rarely transparent and hardly ever documented. This does not seem to be the case in Macedonia.

5 The role of churches, Christian and secular organisations

The churches traditionally play an important role in humanitarian work and welfare programmes. An exception is the Armenian Apostolic Church which has founded its own development organisations.

6 The role played by civil society umbrella organisations

There is a strong national umbrella organisation in Macedonia as well as several issue-based networks. In Albania and Georgia there are apparently no cross-cutting national umbrella organisations; however, the existing issue-based networks in Georgia are stronger than in Albania.

7 The role of the women's movement

All interviewees said women's organisations played an important role in civil society, especially in legislation and policy development. As examples they mentioned their key contributions to push through a 30% quota for women in the Macedonian parliament, and in Albania to bring about an antidiscrimination law as well as government policies for gender equality, against domestic violence and human trafficking, on the rights of people living with disabilities and on children's rights. In Georgia women are seen as "a driving force" within NGOs; for example, they strongly promoted the influence of civil society on gender legislation and on the implementation of UN resolution 1325 (especially regarding a strategy for the integration of female internally displaced persons).

8 The relationship between NGOs, community based organisations and social movements

Once again the southeast European countries differ from those in the Caucasus: whereas in the first group the relationship was described as good, with civil society initiatives often beginning at the grassroots, interviewees in Georgia, in contrast, argued that such cohesion was weak.

9 Collaboration with other civil society actors

The survey suggests that in southeast Europe and the Caucasus region there is only limited cooperation between civil society, and universities or research centres. Building and expanding such relations for the professional qualification of civil society and to promote networking with key players would be important.

10 Expectations towards EED and ACT Alliance

Interviewees expect EED to continue supporting them in their efforts to strengthen active citizenship, to improve governance within civil society, to influence legislation affecting NGOs (particularly with regard to taxes and financial aspects), to implement integrated programmes in rural areas, to intensify collaboration with European civil society and to strengthen lobbying, advocacy and their presence and competence at the EU level. With the exception of Macedonia, ACT Alliance appears to play no role in the region

Annex IV

Middle East

1 Context

For many years the region has been characterised by conflict and political stagnation. In the beginning of 2011 the Arab Spring set the first signals of far reaching change. In most of the region civil and political human rights are not fully implemented and discrimination against women regarding their political, social and economic situation is common. Overall the situation in the countries EED collaborates with continues to be marked by a high potential for conflict and violence, in the Israel/Palestine context as well as in relation to the processes of democratisation in Egypt.

2 The development of civil society

What are the overall trends?

In this context of tension, it is of key importance to build a pluralistic civil society advocating justice, the peaceful coexistence of different religious and interest groups, and a model of sustainable development which aims at overcoming internal disparities. EED's partners in the region are committed to contribute to this.

How has civil society adapted its goals, priorities and strategies to the current context?

Civil society organisations in the region focus mainly on the issues of democracy, human rights, peaceful conflict resolution, gender justice and improving the perspectives of young people. Most recently a special focus has been placed on stronger participation in democratisation processes and a reorientation away from broad public relations work towards lobbying key actors.

How has civil society's influence on government policies, national legislation and international agreements evolved?

Interviewees positively recognised that civil society organisations in the Middle East had con-

tributed to the alignment of national laws to international human rights standards, especially laws concerning the rights of women, children and people living with disabilities.

Can civil society influence private sector?

According to the interviewees, civil society does not have any significant influence on the private sector. Where such influence does exist, it is limited to individual cases.

Has civil society become stronger or weaker?

Overall interviewees said that civil society's strength in the region is growing. According to them, for Israel this is only partially true because although there are civil society organisations that are critical of the government, a large number of civil society organisations strongly identify with government and government policies.

3 The development of democratic space

Have laws and administrative requirements changed affecting the work of civil society?

In Israel and Egypt the legal and administrative framework is relatively restrictive. This allows the government to more strongly control foreign funding and confiscate the funds of organisations that close down. Other characteristic elements are complex reporting requirements, financial and security controls and restrictions for registration. Such measures are apparently not applied by the Palestinian National Authority in the autonomous Palestinian territories (the Gaza strip and parts of the West Bank).

Are civil society organisations currently obstructed, persecuted, criminalised or subject to paramilitary violence?

In Israel/Palestine the Israeli government and its authorities and the Israeli occupation forces are the source of most repressions affecting Israeli and

Palestinian human rights organisations. It ranges from travel restrictions to criminalisation (for example claims for compensation after calls for boycotts), to the instalment of parliamentary enquiry commissions, to house searches, arrests and acts of violence (for example by the Israeli settlers' movement). It remains to be seen how this trend towards criminalising and persecuting civil society organisations will develop or change due to the democratic changes in Egypt.

Have new structures and processes been introduced that broaden the political participation of civil society?

The interviewees also see tendencies towards an expansion of political space for civil society, as a counter trend to these restrictions. Civil society organisations make use of these openings to the best of their abilities. Networking for example, has increased. The invitation of civil society organisations in Israel to parliamentary and ministerial commission hearings was also viewed positively.

On the other hand the interviewees criticised the fact that the Israeli government has basically delegated to civil society the responsibility for providing basic social services to the Arab minority. In the autonomous Palestinian territories civil society organisations are invited to participate in ministerial working groups.

How does civil society use the existing scope for action?

Civil society frequently reacts to restrictions and repression with public relations work, collaboration with other civil society organisations, dialogue with the government and - where appropriate - legal action. New possibilities - such as those mentioned above - are used actively. Everywhere civil society organisations are trying to enhance their influence on legislation, for example by lobbying members of parliament and commenting on draft laws (sometimes even on request).

Israeli and Palestinian civil society organisations increasingly operate at the international level. Since the beginning of the Arab Spring,

Egyptian civil society organisations have also received more international invitations.

4 Internal challenges, strengths and weaknesses of civil society

Alternative models for development: Is civil society still visionary?

Due to the conflict-ridden context, civil society organisations concentrate primarily on alternative approaches to conflict resolution.

Coherence: How well does cooperation work within civil society?

Collaboration and coordination within civil society is generally described as good.

Competence: Is civil society sufficiently qualified?

Whereas conceptual competence is described as good, civil society organisations do see a need for qualification in methods and instruments of lobbying and advocacy as well as fundraising. Institutional learning and exchange within civil society seems to take place.

Impact: Have the efforts towards strengthening of civil society borne fruit?

Impact is mainly registered in human rights and peace work. However, according to the partners' own assessment, adequate methods and instruments of impact monitoring are lacking.

Governance: What about participation, transparency and accountability in civil society?

Interviewees hardly provided any comments on this question. The tenor was that civil society has generally good management and control systems in place, simply because the authorities make them comply to strict regulations.

Institutional sustainability: is the work of civil society secured in the long-term?

Interviewees mentioned the negative impacts of the financial crisis and complained about the general cuts in funding, donors' reduced willingness to cover institutional costs and the trend towards issue-related conditionality of funding.

Changes in the composition of civil society: What role do new actors play?

No important changes were reported.

5 The role of churches, Christian and secular organisations

Overall churches, the church, church-related and/or Christian organisations play an important role in the Middle East; albeit with strong variation between individual countries. In Israel only the European church-related development organisations are mentioned in this respect.

In the Palestinian territories Christians, churches and Christian organisations apparently play a more important role than would be expected from their proportion of population (about 2 to 5%). They are responsible for several large programmes in the fields of health and education and are founding members of secular human rights organisations. They are represented in parliament through quotas and well integrated into international networks. In Egypt too the churches are seen as playing an important part in civil society.

6 The role played by civil society umbrella organisations

National umbrella organisations exist in Egypt and the Palestinian territories but not in Israel. Their role was not described in greater detail.

7 The role of the women's movement

Overall the interviewees view the women's movement as important, but they only provided a few concrete examples. Usually these concerned gender justice and children's rights. In the Palestinian territories the focus of women's organisations on domestic violence, traditional gender roles and the economic contribution of women was reported positively. Egyptian women's organisations, together with other civil society organisations, have brought up the issues of violence/female circumcision, women's self-determination and women's human rights.

8 The relationship between NGOs, community based organisations and social movements

Interviewees stated that the relationship was good or even very good.

9 Collaboration with other civil society actors

Cooperative relations exist mainly with universities and research institutes; in Palestine there are also links to lawyers.

10 Expectations towards EED and ACT Alliance

There were few concrete answers to this question. The Egyptian partners hoped for further financial support from EED and possibilities for exchange. Apart from this, from the Palestinian side there was a wish to build further awareness

in Germany. The interviewees stated that ACT Alliance only has a role as an emergency aid organisation.

Annex V

Civil society at global level

1 Context

Since the beginning of the 1990s the international importance of civil society has grown continually. Over the past few decades, UN conferences (on human rights, women's rights, development, food security, climate and others) have always been accompanied by parallel events organised by civil society.

Yet today civil society organisations are not only represented in parallel meetings but also in the main conferences and take part in the discussions themselves. Progress in human rights and development policies at the UN level does not automatically lead to changes at the country level (which is partly due to the weakening position of the UN during the last few years).

However, UN level agreements usually imply obligations for the signatory countries that call for an implementation of UN resolutions in national legislation. The implementation of such resolutions can be claimed and critically accompanied by civil society. The World Social Forum is another important platform for civil society at the global level.

2 The development of civil society

Over the last few years it has mainly been the global federations or alliances of especially marginalised groups, of human rights associations and of lobby organisations that have made themselves heard and presented their demands. Most prominent among them are the global networks of indigenous peoples, women's and human rights organisations, as well as issue-based international groupings dealing with food security, water, climate and the environment.

The passing of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in 2007 is largely due to years of lobbying and advocacy by international indigenous networks such as

Tebtebba. It established the autonomy of indigenous peoples with regard to their culture, identity, language, health and education; their right to their own concepts of social and economic development, to political participation in all processes affecting them and to protection against all forms of discrimination.

On this basis various UN organisations have included the rights and concerns of indigenous peoples in their documents and policies, and are, thus, able to work more effectively towards ensuring these standards are also upheld at the national level. World YWCA, an organisation also interviewed for the project, has focussed its work over the last few years on a human rights-based approach.

3 The development of democratic space

Options and structures available for the political participation of civil society organisations operating at global level have clearly increased over the last few years. The limitations, restrictions and repression that frequently occurs at the national level, does not exist at the international level.

The indigenous peoples network Tebtebba now has such a high reputation that its director was named the official representative of the Philippine government during the climate and deforestation negotiations (UNFCCC/REDD+) at the Cancun conference in 2010. The World YWCA, whose member organisations are active at the national levels, reported greater political freedom (for example in Tunisia and Egypt in the course of the Arab Spring) as well as shrinking democratic spaces (e.g. in Syria, Zimbabwe and the Ukraine). The strategy of World YWCA in dealing with restrictions includes bringing civil society organisations and government representatives together informally during meetings of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. This creates an independent space for talks and negotiations outside of national contexts allowing for non-violent, democratic communication and the resolution of conflicts.

4 Internal challenges, strengths and weaknesses of civil society

Alternative models for development: Is civil society still visionary?

At the international level in particular civil society organisations have and use the opportunity to articulate alternative development concepts and to ensure they form part of resolutions and agreements between states and other multilateral actors. In some cases, this is eventually reflected only in a few paragraphs as for example in climate agreements or in the development effectiveness process. In other cases, especially where determined pressure groups such as those of indigenous people, women, children, or people living with disabilities are involved, much broader concerns and perspectives can be pushed through.

Over the last few years, indigenous peoples networks such as Tebtebba, for example, have widened their focus from merely demanding special rights for indigenous peoples to approaches concerning development in general. These are based on the value systems of indigenous cultures and include environmental, economic, cultural, gender-related and social dimensions. Comprehensive as they are, they present alternative perspectives to the growth-oriented model of development. Tebtebba introduces these perspectives into international debates, for example, in the recent Rio+20 process with its controversy on concepts of sustainable development. The UN Conference on Sustainable Development/Rio+20 in June 2012 was seen as an important milestone in the international debate on sustainable development. The international lobbying organisation Third World Network (TWN), a long-standing EED partner, argued that the controversial concept of a “green economy” that was at the centre of the Rio+20 conference would also divide civil society. Whilst environmental organisations mostly view this concept positively, many human rights and development organisations argue that it excludes questions of justice and poverty eradication. They argue that the idea of a “green economy” is limited to green-

ing the dominant growth model of development without bringing about fundamental change.

Coherence: How well does cooperation work within civil society?

The interviewees stated that cooperation and networking between global civil society organisations on specific issues has continued to intensify over the last few years. This is especially true in relation to international events and the corresponding - preparatory and follow-up - negotiation processes. In part this has resulted in lasting cooperative relations.

Over the last two years Tebtebba, for example, has founded a global network to evolve joint indigenous positions on climate and development - the Indigenous Peoples’ Partnership of Forests and Climate Change - with member organisations from 10 countries (Bangladesh, Nepal, Vietnam, Indonesia, Kenya, Cameroun, Nicaragua, Peru, Brazil and Mexico). Tebtebba also led the initiative to found the pan-Asian alliances called Asia Indigenous Peoples’ Climate Change Network, Asian Indigenous Women’s Network, and Asian Indigenous and Tribal Peoples’ Network for Rio Plus 20. At the global level Tebtebba manages the secretariat of the Indigenous Peoples’ Global Network on Sustainable Self-determined Development and that of the Global Network of Indigenous Peoples and Extractive Industries. Furthermore, Tebtebba is a member of various other international networks such as the Third World Network and the Asia Pacific Network on Rio Plus 20. Complementary to these global activities Tebtebba ensures it remains in close contact and collaborates with community-based organisations in various countries, learning from their perspectives and concerns and in turn ensuring it communicates and implements the results gained from the international level in national contexts.

The key importance placed on relations with the grassroots is shared by World YWCA: It maintains sound relations to its national associations and their members. The organisation also is an excellent networker at the global level. It is active in the international civil society platform CIVICUS, the Alliance of Youth CEOs and the global fo-

rum of AWID (Association for Women's Rights in Development). Furthermore, World YWCA regularly organises the World YWCA International Women's Summit.

Competence: Is civil society sufficiently qualified?

Over the past many years, internationally operating civil society organisations have benefitted greatly from their sophisticated and complex cooperation with multilateral institutions. They have developed an enormous body of expertise on specific issues, legal knowledge, strategic methodical skills in lobbying and advocacy and a net of manifold contacts to key actors in the field of development, environment, and women's and human rights. Organisations such as Tebtebba and the World YWCA, which also consciously maintain the linkage to local community based organisations and social movements, also transmit their knowledge to this level. They strive to build the necessary competence also at the grassroots to enable local people themselves to represent their concerns at the national or - if necessary - at the international level. But also international professional and lobby organisations such as TWN, that do not have national member organisations, share their knowledge with partner organisations in different countries, and in turn incorporate these partners contributions in TWN's international lobbying.

Impact: Have the efforts towards strengthening civil society borne fruit?

Over the last few years, global civil society organisations have successfully participated in international and national policy-making and in some cases have even influenced private sector corporations.

The indigenous peoples network Tebtebba, for example, in collaboration with other civil society organisations, has provided important inputs to the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (established in 2000), the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP, passed in 2007), the incorporation of indigenous peoples' rights and perspectives in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and

the Convention on Biological Diversity (UN-CBD). Furthermore, Tebtebba has contributed to shadow reports for the UN Committee for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and for UN Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and influenced decisions that have led to commitments by member states.

For many years, World YWCA has actively taken part in the international debates on security issues and the special situation of women during conflict. It sees resolution 1325 and 1820, passed by the UN Security Council in 2000 and 2008, on women, peace and security as important milestones. Furthermore, World YWCA has contributed to shadow reports for UN CEDAW, the UN Human Rights Council and the UN human rights monitoring mechanism Universal Periodic Review (UPR). World YWCA also took part in a civil society campaign against the company Unilever. Due to intensive lobbying and campaigning (the "boycott, divest and sanction" campaign) the company finally committed itself to reducing the environmental impact of its activities substantially. Another consequence of the campaign was the company's decision to close its branch in the Israeli settlements located in the West Bank.

Governance: What about participation, transparency and accountability in civil society?

The governance of international civil society organisations without a direct connection to the grassroots level is rarely questioned because these organisations are less involved in day-to-day cooperation with national civil societies. Still, for reasons of democratic legitimacy most EED partners, even those at the international level, such as Tebtebba or World YWCA, strive for strong linkages with the grassroots level. World YWCA, for example, asks for regular qualified feedback from its national member organisations.

Institutional sustainability: is the work of civil society secured in the long-term?

Essentially the international partners are also affected by the general decrease in funds and the changing donor policies. However, due to their

large number of diverse contacts they usually have access to a broader spectrum of funding sources and are therefore comparatively better placed than many smaller local civil society organisations.

**Changes in the composition of civil society:
What role do new actors play?**

The international EED partners were also critical about the role of new actors emerging in civil society who are by nature and constituency more closely linked to government or private sector.

5 Expectations towards EED and ACT Alliance

Also among its global partners EED is highly valued for its understanding of partnership and a funding policy that is seen as relevant to development, based upon a long-term perspective, supportive of institutional sustainability, and orientated towards partners' needs and perspectives. Their concern is that EED and its successor organisation should continue to enable and support platforms and scope for action, exchange programmes on examples of best practice, as well as building professional and conceptual expertise. International partners would also be happy to see EED go even more beyond its funding role and establish itself as a strategic political partner in development cooperation. Interviewees at the international level also viewed ACT Alliance mainly as a humanitarian aid organisation.

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