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## **EVALUATION OF THE FUNDING AREA HUMAN RIGHTS OF BREAD FOR THE WORLD SYNTHESIS REPORT**

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**CAMINO**

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This version of the synthesis report was anonymised and shortened by Bread for the World.



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## ABBREVIATIONS

BAZ	Temporary consultants ( <i>Berater/innen auf Zeit</i> )
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development ( <i>Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung</i> )
BUS	Local structure of advice and support ( <i>Lokale Beratungs- und Unterstützungsstruktur</i> )
CRS	Creditor Reporting System
EU	European Union
DC	Development Cooperation
FA	Funding area
FAE	Funding area evaluation
FGD	Focus group discussion
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
LGBTI	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersexual
ME	Meta evaluation
HR	Human rights
HRV	Human rights violations
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NOKAP	Middle East, Caucasus, Asia and Pacific ( <i>Naher Osten, Kaukasus, Asien und Pazifik</i> )
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Development and Cooperation
PME	Planning, monitoring and evaluation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
ESC rights	Economic, social and cultural rights

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This synthesis report presents the results of the fourth funding area evaluation which was conducted by Bread for the World within the framework of the guidelines for target and impact-orientated success monitoring as defined by and between the Catholic and the Protestant Central Agencies and the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Evaluations of funding areas are a component of the agreed system approach which differentiates between elements like project levels or funding area levels. While objectives achievement control is a priority for evaluations of individual projects, the **gaining of developmental insights, institutional learning**, strengthening of capacities and improving the dialogue at the level of funding areas and annual planning play an important role for the funding area evaluation. Reporting refers to a level **above individual projects** (BMZ 2009).

Besides the present report, the evaluation team elaborated a comprehensive **desk study, three case study reports** from three countries, and detailed **inception reports** about the entire funding area evaluation and the field study phase.

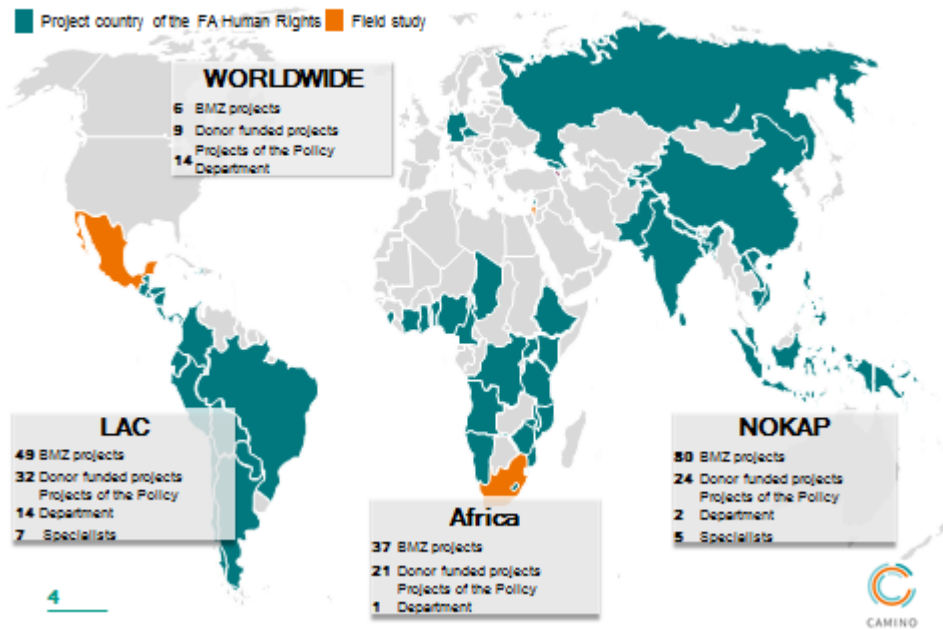
The statistical population analysed by us includes 289 financial support projects and twelve specialists. Between 2013 and 2015, seven specialists were deployed in Latin America, two in Southeast Asia, and three in the Middle East. Most of them were assigned to human rights organisations. Their work focused predominantly on the documentation of human rights violations and on impact orientation (strengthening of planning and monitoring, strategy development).

About 59 percent of the projects of the statistical population are funded by the BMZ and 30 percent by donations; 11 percent are supported by the Policy Department. As a rule, the projects funded by the BMZ or donations run for a period of three years; the projects supported by the Policy Department are usually one-year measures. While the statistical population does not include any projects funded by BMZ or donations with a budget of less than 100,000 EUR, the project budget of the Policy Department ranges between 20,000 and 62,000 EUR.

Generally, most of the projects of the statistical population are implemented in the region of the Middle East, Caucasus, Asia and Pacific (NOKAP, 111 projects) followed by Latin America (102) and Africa (59). In addition, there are 29 worldwide projects. The countries with the most numerous projects are India (22), followed by Brazil (19), Mexico (14), South Africa (14), Indonesia (13), Columbia (13), and Palestine (10). Nearly half of the projects of the statistical population which are supported by the Policy Department (14 of 31) are in Latin America; 14 projects have a worldwide or supraregional orientation. About 57 per cent of the projects intervene in rural areas, 17 percent in cities, and 26 percent operate in rural as well as urban areas.

By their own account, most of the partners work for the protection of civil and political rights (73 percent) and also economic, social and cultural (ESC) rights (85 percent). In Africa, all the partners state that they work on ESC rights, but only 59 percent on civil and political rights. About 29 percent of the partner organisations are small organisations (less than 10 staff); 12 percent are large organisations with over 50 staff. The latter are more frequently found in NOKAP but less often in Latin America.

Figure 1: Distribution of the projects of the statistical population



## 2 CHARACTERISTICS OF PROJECT ENVIRONMENTS

As illustrated by the world map above, the partner organisations work in the most diverse environments. The following sections will elaborate on two context characteristics which influence the majority of the partners in their work: shrinking spaces and armed conflicts. The strategies they use to encounter these contexts will be analysed in the chapter on relevance.

### Restricted freedom to act for civil society

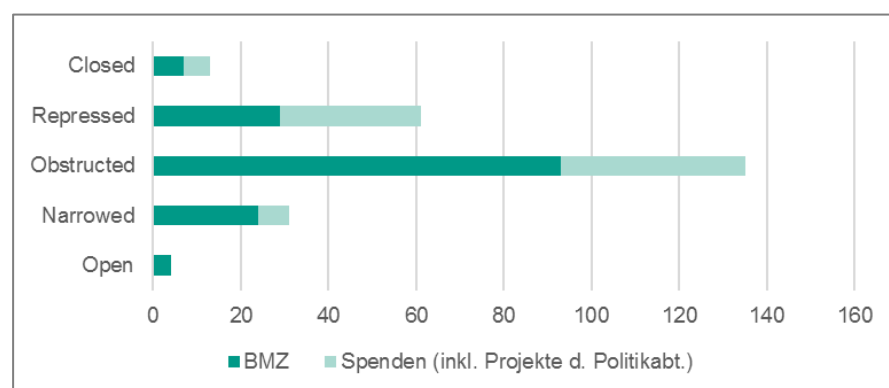
According to Amnesty International (2017), human rights defenders<sup>1</sup> experienced threats or attacks in 2016 in at least 94 countries; 281 activists were killed in 22 countries (largely in Latin America). The CIVICUS Monitor (2017) shows that less than three percent of the world population (23 mostly European countries) can enjoy open space in civil society while governmental and non-governmental actors in 172 countries restrict or impede the freedom of expression, assembly or association. In 21 countries it is almost impossible for civil society actors to defend any rights: the space is closed. Three of these countries are represented in the statistical population of this evaluation with projects: Ethiopia, China, and Vietnam. In 34 countries civil society is repressed through threats and violence and “merely” obstructed in 53 countries. In 64 countries, liberty rights are formally respected but often ignored in a narrowed space like, for example, in South Africa.

Figure 2: Ratings of shrinking spaces according to CIVICUS



Most of the projects supported by Bread for the World included in the statistical population (135 projects) are located in countries where civil space is rated as obstructed. About 60 percent and even 71 percent in Latin America, of the partners interviewed by us confirmed a deterioration in the situation of civil society actors. Only rarely did they observe advantageous political changes which opened new windows of opportunity. This happened for example in 2016 in Chile when partners cooperated constructively with the new Sub-Secretariat for Human Rights in the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights.

Figure 3: Survey of funding measures according to CIVICUS rating of the respective countries



### Violent conflicts and fragility

In addition, violent conflicts and fragile governmental institutions restrict the freedom to act in civil society – directly and also indirectly if, for example, crimes against human rights defenders go unpunished because of a lack of effective prosecution. By their own account, more than half of the interviewed partners work in areas which are affected by conflict; in two of three cases, this interfered with the implementation of their projects.

<sup>1</sup> According to Amnesty’s usage, human rights defenders are all persons who, individually or jointly with others, promote or defend human rights without resorting to hatred, violence or discrimination. Such people may be, for example, journalists, lawyers, trade unionists, teachers or persons concerned, no matter whether they are paid or work as volunteers. We use “activists” as a synonym.



The project documentation and evaluation reports analysed within the framework of the desk study rarely provide information whether projects in conflict contexts implement specific measures for conflict or post-conflict contexts or work conflict-sensitively. In the case of Palestine, we were able to convince ourselves on site that the history of origin and the activities of Palestinian organisations are closely interrelated with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which rules everyday life of the population in the West Bank and East Jerusalem. Systematic work on connected human rights violations accounts for a major part of the activities of Palestinian human rights partners.

## 2.1. CLASSIFICATION OF PROJECT TYPES

### Definitions of human rights terms

We understand **human rights** as enshrined in the multilateral agreements based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) – legal rights of persons towards the state or state-like structures which are guaranteed by international law and serve the protection of fundamental aspects of the human person and his or her dignity (Kälin 2004,17). Human rights have implications for virtually all fields of politics and society; they include rights of defence against arbitrariness on the part of the state (for example, protection from torture), participatory rights (for example, freedom of assembly) and economic, social and cultural rights (for example, the right to education).

**Human rights instruments** are multilateral agreements serving to give human rights a fixed and binding place in international law. They define what these rights apply to, what legal claims may be derived from these rights, and how states meet the obligations arising for them. The terms of these agreements are further specified and adapted to concrete conditions by panels of experts who regularly make recommendations to the member states. The experts do not only rely on reports issued by the states on the implementation of the agreements, but also on information provided by local or international non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Besides the HR agreements, there are regional human rights treaties existing in Europe, Africa, America, and the Arab states.

**Duty bearers** are the numerous states which ratify or accede to a human rights instrument and, thus, voluntarily oblige themselves to implement it at national through to local level. The obligations on the respective national territory include: (i) obligations to respect (states must not themselves violate human rights), (ii) obligations to protect (they have to prevent that human rights are adversely affected by third parties like, for example, companies) and (iii) obligations to guarantee human rights (they have to work towards the full realisation of human rights, for example, by means of legislation and implementation of this legislation). Even outside their national territory, state actors are bound to human rights to a degree increasing with the influence they exert (extraterritorial state obligations). Some actors are not considered to be duty bearers in terms of international law even though they can impact on human rights; such actors may be companies, non-governmental, armed groups, or private individuals. For some economic actors, human rights standards are developed (for example, UN guiding principles for the economy and human rights), others commit themselves voluntarily to initiatives like the Global Compact of the United Nations for commercial enterprises.

Because of their unalienable dignity, all people are **rights holders**, without discrimination on the basis of gender, ethnic origin or other characteristics. Rights holders may appeal to international instruments to actively claim their rights.

The **human rights approach** (or rights-based approach) harmonises projects of international cooperation with human rights. Rights-based approaches of various organisations may differ; what they have in common, however, is (i) their orientation towards a human rights-related framework, (ii) their application of recognised human rights principles (participation, non-discrimination, and accountability) and (iii) they address rights holders and also duty bearers (OHCHR 2006). A rights-based project need not explicitly pursue human rights objectives; decisive is here the orientation towards human rights values and instruments for implementation.

### Human rights projects and human rights-related projects

The projects selected for the statistical population for the funding area evaluation are allocated to the main funding area State and Civil Society (CRS Code 151). About one half of the investigated projects are classified by us as **human rights projects**: they are orientated closely towards human rights in-

struments and give priority to respecting, protecting and guaranteeing internationally recognised human rights. The other half are projects with a more or less pronounced **human rights relation**: they can create conditions for the implementation of human rights but, generally, they do not relate to human rights instruments.

Our analyses of the documentation and the systematisation of the statistical population prepared by Bread for the World show that about one third of the projects monitor human rights. However, nearly all participants in the partner interview stated that they document human rights violations in reports. Apparently, partners work with broader definitions of human rights work which result in a certain lack of contentual clarity.

Human rights projects and also human rights-related projects may work in a **rights-based way**; yet, rights-based approaches do not constitute a mandatory precondition for the work on human rights (see also section 4.2.1).

### 2.1.1. Human rights projects

The majority of the examined human rights projects aim at the implementation of human rights obligations by the state and the empowerment and support of rights holders.

Most of the reviewed human rights projects are cooperations with partners who consider themselves to be human rights organisations and human rights defenders. To a lesser extent, there are also projects which systematically use a human rights approach and are oriented towards human rights in their objectives and working methods but, yet, do not see themselves as human rights organisations. About one third of the human rights projects of our sample cooperates with national human rights institutions; one half make use of international mechanisms. In Latin America, partner organisations often collaborate with the Inter-American Commission and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. All in all, partners in Latin America make use of legal means more often than those in Africa or NOKAP.

**Typical human rights activities** are public relations work on human rights violations, advocacy on legal, policy and process development, and the mentoring and training of state actors on human rights. Moreover, promoters of HR projects observe court proceedings, legislative procedures and other processes and encourage dialogues between duty bearers and rights holders to improve the implementation of human rights. In addition, they bring actions before and file reports with UN bodies and regional human rights mechanisms and organise briefings for bilateral and multilateral actors.

### 2.1.2. Human rights-related projects

For most of the examined human rights-related projects it seems to be plausible that they make a contribution to implementing human rights, but the explicit relation to human rights instruments is lacking.

Primarily, the projects aim at impacts on rights holders, especially vulnerable persons or groups: people who live in poverty, marginalised women, children, slum dwellers, subsistence farmers, indigenous people and population groups affected by systematic discrimination (for example, the Dalit in South Asia). The projects are expected to contribute to solving problems like, mostly, a lack of access to resources, governmental services, and political participation. Typical activities here are the establishment and strengthening of grassroots organisations and interest groups, networking for joint advocacy and providing information about rights (not necessarily with reference to human rights instruments). A noticeably smaller proportion of these projects address duty bearers, particularly with advocacy for good governance and distributive justice.

Table 1: Classification of project types

	HR projects	HR-related projects	Weaker relation to HR
<b>Objective</b>	Ensuring respect for one or several clearly identified human rights	Empowerment of rights holders for access to rights, participation, resources, services, etc.	No relation to specific human rights

<b>Used human rights-related framework</b>	Noticeable use of a human rights-related framework, for example in HR analyses, formulation of objectives, indicators	No explicit relation to international HR instruments Plausible, but not verifiable contribution to HR	No relation to HR instruments No plausible connection with human rights
<b>Intended impacts on ...</b>	Duty bearers (also through regional or international HR mechanisms) Rights holders	Predominantly rights holders, particularly marginalised and disadvantaged people	Predominantly marginalised and disadvantaged people
<b>Typical activities</b>	Documentation, advocacy, lobbying on human rights Support of people affected by human rights violations Legal approach International networking	Establishment/strengthening of grassroots and interest groups, networking of civil society Support of people affected by violence without orientation towards HR Advocacy for good governance, justice ...	Improvement of living conditions, income-generating measures, healthcare services, and much more. No advocacy with duty bearers
<b>Number of projects in sample</b>	41	32	6

#### PROJECTS FOCUSING ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

Projects dealing with discrimination of and violence against women and girls use empowerment strategies more often than the average of the statistical population (86 percent vs. 66 percent). In the analysis of the sample, we classified them primarily as human rights-related projects. The partner organisations are most diverse, among them, for example, church-based agencies, umbrella organisations for grassroots structures, and women's groups doing feminist work. However, Bread for the World supports also typical human rights projects with primarily female target groups. These partners use HR analyses and instruments to make human rights violations against women and girls visible and enforce their rights. Accordingly, we did not consider it useful to classify "women's rights projects" under a category of their own.

#### 2.1.3. Projects with a weaker relation to human rights

For some of the analysed projects of the statistical population, we did not find any, or only a very weak, relation to human rights. Though the documentation mentions the term "human rights", the activities cannot be connected with improving the implementation of human rights. What they offer is, for example, income-generating or health-promoting activities for marginalised groups or training measures about the issue of gender equality, but they do not aim at improving the access to human rights through, for instance, advocacy.

## 2.2. IMPACT MAP

The funding area Human Rights is a structure which serves the accountability with reference to the application of funds. The examined projects are not part of a superordinate programme of Bread for the World for the promotion of human rights provided with its own planning structure. Rather, the work on human rights issues has developed over decades from the development practice of the sister organisations which merged in 2012.<sup>2</sup> Bread for the World's employees describe the transitions between the funding area Human Rights and rights-based work generally as fluid.

### 2.2.1. Definitions to impacts

An **impact map** is what we call the simplified, graphical or verbal representation of logical correlations among the impacts to which a project should contribute. Simpler impact maps may be represented as impact chains.

<sup>2</sup> An overarching strategy plan for Bread for the World (2016–2020) was adopted in 2016, that is to say, after the approval of the projects examined in our evaluation.

A **theory of change** explains how - possibly external - conditions which can be influenced by a project should interact to achieve intended objectives, frequently on a superordinate level, or make a contribution to achieving these objectives; thus, it explicates conditions, impact hypotheses, and other influences and is concrete enough to be verifiable within the scope of project steering.

**Logframes** are extended impact chains. Generally, they summarise in tabular form how the achievement of the objectives envisaged at different levels should be reviewed. Ideally, they do not only specify these objectives, but also the assumptions for the achievement of the objectives which may be influenced by external factors so that they can also be used for a simplified representation of a theory of change.

In accordance with Hummelbrunner et al. (2013), we define impact correlations as **complex** in situations which are marked by uncertainties and contradictions. Whether expected impacts will materialise depends strongly on the context, which may be highly difficult to predict and is often unique; only in retrospection will it be possible to gain clarity on the causal relationships among impacts. Frequently, complex impact maps may be broken down into smaller parts whose causal relationships are less complex, but **simple** (that is to say, clear, predictable and controllable) or **complicated** (or, in other words, they are context-dependent, but may be planned and predicted on the basis of relevant expertise).

### 2.2.2. Visualisation of the impact map

As the funding area Human Rights does not exist as a programme with its own strategy, our impact map represents correlations among the activities, strategies and possible impacts of the entirety of the 301 examined projects in a simplifying manner. It is not an individual impact chain, but a nexus of often complementing interventions which are able to interact. There are major overlaps between intended impacts and impact factors. Usually, individual projects of the funding area intervene in partial areas of the impact map; the partner survey showed that the different strategies are often combined in use (see also the following section). If the relationships among the individual elements were to be illustrated and relevant indicators were to be developed to track the successes achieved, project-specific representations would be needed.

The projects of the statistical population pursue objectives which are mutually dependent to a high degree. The achievement of an interim goal does not necessarily lead on to the next objectives, which often require additional factors increasingly beyond project control (see also the chapter on overarching and developmental impacts).

On top of our impact map, the overarching developmental impacts on **rights holders** and **duty bearers** are shown; in the long run, the projects should contribute to achieving these impacts. The impacts on duty bearers intended by the projects should have a positive influence on the enjoyment of the rights by rights holders; this is why the latter are shown at the top. Besides the governmental institutions in the project country, the other conflict party may be addressed as duty bearer in international conflicts. Also third countries may be admonished to fulfil their extraterritorial state obligations. These correlations were visualised separately in our Palestinian case study.

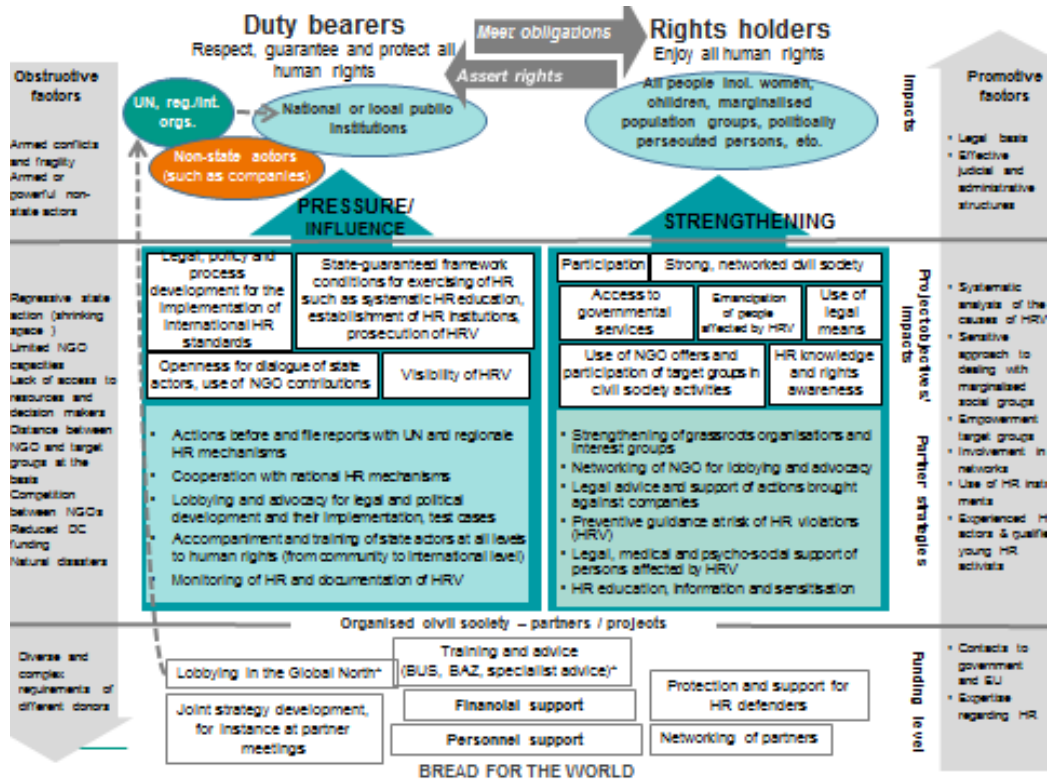
On the basis of the results of our case studies we have complemented the traditional model of human rights work, which exclusively classifies state actors as duty bearers: especially projects with a relevance to HR mobilise civil society and partially use innovative approaches to call **companies** to account.

The middle section of the map shows the primary intervention and impact levels of the **partner organisations** and civil society in the partner countries. Here, “pressure” and “influence” are often at the centre of activities: thus, partners can exert an influence on legal and policy developments by documenting human rights violations and advocate for changes or strengthen civil society at various levels. An active civil society may exert pressure to act on duty bearers, for example through public protests.

The lower section of the map summarises the **activities of Bread for the World** in connection with the funding area. For the most part, civil society partners are addressed, but partly also governments, multilateral organisations, or internationally active companies. Activities marked in bold were at the focus of the funding area evaluation; activities marked with an asterisk, however, were not considered.

Furthermore, the activities and impacts of human rights projects depend on various factors, which can be influenced by the project partners only to a limited degree. The key factors are represented at the right and left margins of the map. Also **armed groups** like security companies, militias, and organised crime are named as influencing factors. They do not appear as duty bearers on our map because they (i) are subordinated to state or private decision makers or (ii) are beyond the influence of the human rights system because of their criminal character, which is a symptom of fragile statehood. Nevertheless, the individual members of such groups are indeed rights holders who are entitled to protection from torture, for instance in police custody.

Figure 4: Impact map of the funding area Human Rights

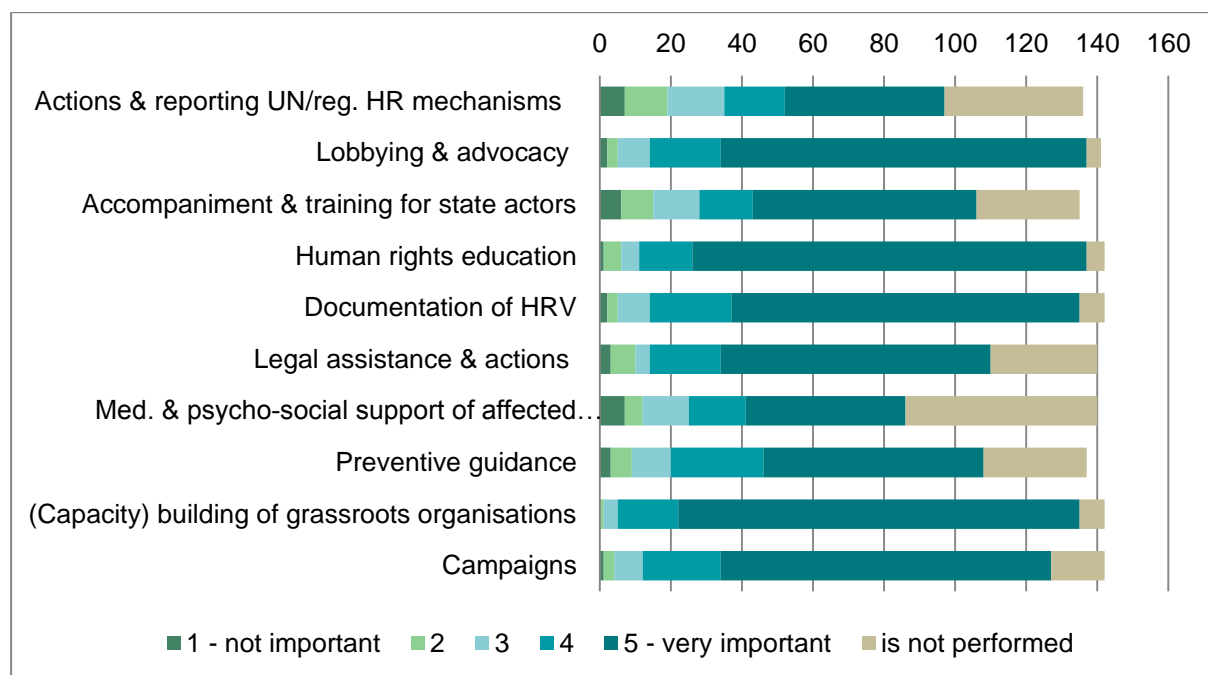


COMPLEMENTARITY OF APPROACHES

Human rights work in the stricter sense of the term and empowerment approaches have the potential of supporting each other, both within one project (as is the case for the larger part of the analysed human rights projects) and among projects of different partner organisations. Several of the reviewed project evaluations emphasise that a close connection of (i) research, lobbying, advocacy and campaigns on one hand and (ii) concrete work with local communities (for example, providing legal assistance) on the other hand is a distinguishing feature or also an important success factor of the respective partner. For that matter, the case studies from Mexico and South Africa show clearly that the concrete work with communities and lobbying and advocacy work interact in a mutually supportive way. The combination of approaches at different levels enables partner organisations to represent their target groups towards the state in a credible fashion and provides them with an information lead over governmental agencies, which is an incentive for the government to consult the partner organisation in coordination processes.

Also in the partner survey, the majority of partners graded the **use of different strategies as important for the achievement of objectives**.

Figure 5: Grading of the importance of different strategies for the project objectives



### 3 RELEVANCE

The majority of the reviewed projects combat human rights violations and their causes. The partner organisations develop their projects themselves and appreciate the partnership with Bread for the World for its mutual respect. Generally, the projects are suitable to solve the targeted problems. Thanks to their strategic adaptation to environments which are often characterised by shrinking spaces, their work is context-relevant. Rights-based approaches ensure the mainstreaming of human rights also in projects which do not use any human rights analyses. Despite some good examples, gender-sensitive work and the consideration of intersectionality are not yet sufficiently established in all of the funding area's projects.

#### 3.1. COMBATING OF HR VIOLATIONS AND THEIR CAUSES

For 52 percent of the evaluated projects, our meta-analysis of project evaluations ascertained that the partner organisations analyse and combat structural causes of human rights violations; this applies throughout to all projects of our case studies. Such causes may be, for instance, a lack of visibility, and the discrimination of particular population groups, cultural aspects, and a lack of capacities in authorities. Generally, these projects work at the level of individuals as well as institutions; for the most part, their objectives and activities appear to be well suited to contribute to solving the targeted problems.

In most cases, the reviewed human rights-related projects focus on overcoming the marginalisation of the target groups, which could be a cause as well as a symptom of human rights violations. Here also, the larger proportion (82 percent) of the qualitative sample designed objectives and activities in such a way that they make contributions to overcoming the targeted problems, particularly through enhanced participation and civil society development. Frequently, they use the well-proven set of instruments of strengthening grassroots organisations and interest groups and the formation of federations for advocacy at micro, meso, and macro-level.

#### 3.2. INCORPORATION IN HUMAN RIGHTS ANALYSES AND DEBATES

Bread for the World advocates for overcoming poverty and for justice; in this context, the subject of human rights has high priority. This reflects a global consensus: since the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (1993), it is generally agreed in the development policy discourse that development and peace cannot be considered as severable from human rights.<sup>3</sup> Also the Agenda 2030 with its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlights human rights as a central issue, particularly for the Agenda principles of peace (especially through HR, good governance and gender equality) and people (human dignity). Furthermore, the principle of prosperity includes decent work, that is to say, work where workers' rights are respected, as a precondition for sustainable economic activity (BMZ, 2016).

#### **Rights-based approaches: mainstreaming of human rights**

Actors in development cooperation often have strategies and methods which define the role of human rights for their work – so-called human rights approaches, or rights-based approaches. In practice, the transitions between the promotion of human rights projects and rights-based work are often fluid, as is also the case with the statistical population of this evaluation.<sup>4</sup> Rights-based approaches may enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of projects by strengthening their legitimacy and promote the accountability to the target groups (BMZ, 2011; Crawford, 2011). In addition, they provide an established reference framework for advocacy to development goals.

Even though, in contrast to the government institutions of German development cooperation, Bread for the World does not have a binding human rights approach, the organisation uses important **elements of rights-based approaches**, especially the focus on particularly marginalised groups and the orientation towards the empowerment of target groups. For the larger part of the examined projects we discovered elements of rights-based approaches. About one fourth of the projects examined in the docu-

<sup>3</sup> In contrast to earlier development policy models where economic development was considered to be a prerequisite for an improved implementation of human rights and, accordingly, a priority (see UN, 1993).

<sup>4</sup> See above, our classification of project types.



ments analysis even fulfilled five of the six evaluation criteria as listed below (see boxed text). Less than three of the criteria applied to almost one third of the projects, which means that apparently they do not, or only to a lesser extent, use rights-based approaches for their work. The majority of these projects (22/ 24) are human rights-related projects.

#### CRITERIA OF RIGHTS-BASED APPROACHES

Our analysis of the project documentation used the following criteria to ascertain to what extent rights-based approaches are used by the partner organisations:

- Explicit relation to human rights agreements and institutions;
- Use of human rights analyses for the development of the project;
- Orientation towards overcoming the causes of human rights problems;
- Orientation towards the empowerment of rights holders and consideration of their strategic interests;
- Participation of the target groups (rights holders) in the project;
- Involvement of state duty-bearers within the framework of the project.

Among the analysed projects, human rights projects<sup>5</sup> which fulfil five or six of these criteria are represented with a larger proportion (37 percent vs. 13 percent), but they do not always work with a rights-based approach (for example, the empowerment and/or participation of the target groups are not a matter of course).

In contrast to human rights projects, rights-based projects do not necessarily pursue objectives at the level of respect, guarantee and protection of human rights; also projects for the strengthening of agriculture appropriate for the location or educational projects may have a rights-based design.

### 3.3. STRATEGIES IN THE CONTEXT OF SHRINKING SPACES

Another central issue of more recent human rights debates is the restriction of the freedom to act in civil society as mentioned above, which makes itself felt in nearly all of the partner countries.

#### Cooperation and confrontation with duty bearers and decision makers

State duty bearers and also powerful companies determine with their actions to what extent human rights can be realised. The partners in our case studies in Mexico, Palestine and South Africa use context relevant strategies to influence these decision makers.

#### STATE DUTY BEARERS: PARTNERS AND OPPONENTS

The governments of the countries visited for the case studies, which included the Palestinian Authority since this was facilitated through the recognition as an observing non-member state of the United Nations (2012), have ratified the international human rights treaties. In South Africa and Mexico, the state obligations under the human rights treaties are already reflected in the constitution and legislation; accordingly the examined organisations, for example in South Africa, may resort to national laws when they defend human rights. Particularly in Palestine and South Africa, the partners use **cooperative strategies** like the provision of documents and expertise, the referral of individual cases to authorities, making submissions to laws and procedures, and even regular collaboration in interministerial committees (in Palestine, for example, the committee for the adaptation of legislation to the ratified treaties under international law). More **confrontational strategies** include, among others, the public documentation of abuses, public criticism of governmental action, the mobilisation of demonstrations, or the filing of legal actions before national, regional, or international courts.

#### INFLUENCING DUTY BEARERS IN CONTEXTS OF CONFLICTS

In international conflicts, the parties involved in a conflict are bound to obligations from international human rights treaties and **international humanitarian law** like the Geneva Convention (IV) Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons. In addition, **third states and other external actors** (like, for example, international organisations and companies) can be held accountable if their conduct counteracts their obligations under international law.

<sup>5</sup> The criteria which define HR projects were mentioned in sections 3.3.2 and 3.3.3.  
CAMINO

#### “NEW” DECISION MAKERS: COMPANIES

Besides the actions of state duty bearers, current debates about human rights in development cooperation also deal with companies, especially enterprises operating transnationally. Formally, these actors are no duty bearers in terms of human rights treaties under international law, but they can jeopardise human rights, for example, with inhumane working conditions, violent security personnel, illegal land seizure, or the destruction of natural resources like water sources and arable land (BMZ, 2012). Just like local warlords in fragile states or armed groups of organised crime (with whom they sometimes collaborate), they are occasionally more powerful than states. Moreover, they may contribute to the exacerbation of shrinking spaces to suppress protests etc.

For instance, partner organisations in the countries investigated within the framework of the field studies appeal to the **responsibility of companies** – a strategy which is part of Bread for the World’s human rights approach (Bread for the World, 2015). In South Africa, one of the organisations focuses on exerting influence on companies, especially in mining, through documentation, advocacy and strategic legal actions, but also constructive dialogue to find pragmatic solutions. Also in Mexico, conflicts over land in connection with major projects, for example in raw materials mining or wind energy, play a growing role in the partners’ work. However, initially it is often difficult to identify responsible parties: often the communities do not even know by which companies the projects are carried out.

#### Strategies for the strengthening of rights holders

As represented in our impact map, rights holders are both the target group on the highest impact level and addressees and participants of the partners’ strategies.

The projects of the statistical population address a wide spectrum of persons as, frequently, marginalised target groups like ethnic or indigenous populations (38 percent of the sample<sup>6</sup>) or people living in poverty (35 percent). Some projects work with persons whose occupational situations involve risks such as domestic or migrant workers or workers without union representation. Others address people who are particularly vulnerable because of their identity like children, people with disabilities, members of the lower castes in South Asia, LGBTI, or religious minorities. In addition, there are projects for refugees and asylum seekers, imprisoned persons and their families, and surviving dependants of disappeared persons and other victims of state violence

Nearly all projects examined in the meta-evaluation (91 percent) and 75 percent of the projects of the sample aim at the **empowerment** of these target groups for the enforcement of their strategic interests. For 41 percent of the projects of the sample, the documentation showed that the target groups were able to participate in the project activities and, thus, had the chance to integrate their needs and interests.

#### EMPOWERMENT: A KEY STRATEGY WITH RIGHTS HOLDERS

As represented in the classification scheme above, both human rights-related projects and HR projects aim at the empowerment of rights holders. Thus, in South Africa two of the examined partner organisations support community based monitoring: rights holders document the conduct of authorities and enterprises and use the collected data in the dialogue with decision makers.

In Mexico, the work with rights holders has strongly come to the fore in view of the increasing fragility of the state. All the approaches shown in the impact map are applied; emphasis areas differ according to whether the projects work with groups (for example, the strengthening of interest groups) or with individuals (for example, legal advice).

### 3.4. GENDER AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Discrimination against women and girls or against lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgenders, or intersexuals (LGBTI) is based on unequal power relations and social norms which often go unnoticed or are accepted as natural. **Gender-sensitive work** reveals these relations and takes the practical needs and strategic interests of women, girls and LGBTI into consideration to overcome discrimination.

<sup>6</sup> All information provided in this section refer to the sample of the qualitative documents analysis.

### Gender-sensitive work – not yet a matter of course

The documentation<sup>7</sup> indicates that about two thirds of the examined projects work in a gender-sensitive way (in the sense of considering unequal power relations between men and women). Gender sensitivity occurs more often with human rights-related projects (75 percent) than with human rights projects (59 percent); a possible explanation may be that women are more often the primary target group of the analysed human rights-related projects.

#### QUESTIONS TO VERIFY GENDER SENSITIVITY

In our documents analysis, we assessed gender sensitivity on the basis of the following questions:

- Are women explicitly named as a target group?
- Are women/girls identified outside the standard questions in the project proposal, project application or progress report / final report?
- Is reference explicitly made to gender analyses?
- Do the objectives address the practical needs and strategic interests of women?
- Are quantitative data listed separately according to gender?

If at least three questions are answered positively, we rated the project as principally gender-sensitive.<sup>8</sup>

The Yogyakarta principles, which were developed by human rights experts from 25 countries to apply human rights in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity (2007), clarify how sexual orientation and gender identity can be taken into consideration in the HR system. None of the partner organisations examined in the desk and case studies refers to this instrument in its documentation, but one of them is specifically committed to the rights of lesbians.

### Intersectionality

Multidimensional discriminations and intersectionality (that is, multiple forms of discrimination on the grounds of personality traits like ethnicity, gender, and other physical characteristics) were not discussed in any of the analysed project evaluations. Frequently a differentiated discussion of the heterogeneity of the target groups, their needs and interests was lacking. Yet, partners do work with women and girls who experience discrimination because of multiple aspects of their identities, for example, representatives of indigenous groups. The analysis of the statistical population revealed that projects working on the subjects of gender-based discrimination and violence deal with the rights of indigenous people more often than the other projects (29 percent to 22 percent). In comparison, there are surprisingly few projects which are concerned with natural resources as well as with women's rights. This may indicate possible deficiencies in gender mainstreaming of projects of the funding area in the field of natural resources.

### Potential conflicts of value for church-based partner organisations

As the analysis of the project documents of individual church-based partner organisations indicated, conflicts of value may arise between human rights principles and the ideologies conveyed through the project activities, particularly concerning the rights of women and children or of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transsexuals, or intersexuals (LGBTI). Strictly speaking, we would not refer to such projects as HR projects or projects with a strong human rights relation because *per definitionem* human rights are universal and indivisible; accordingly, all humans, and also girls, women, LGBTI and other groups, are fully entitled to enjoy these rights. However, for counselling offers for persons affected by domestic violence there is a risk that an approach which regards the preservation of marriage superior to the right of women and children to physical integrity may have serious, or even fatal, consequences for the users of these counselling offers. We could not verify whether it was possible to reduce these risks by raising such issues in the partner dialogue. For that matter, the church-related partner organisation examined within the framework of the South Africa case study does not convey any religious contents,

<sup>7</sup> On the basis of the available information, our documentation focused on gender as social expectations of individuals on grounds of their biological sex (in the binary sense of male/female).

<sup>8</sup> This relatively generous assessment is based on the fact that criteria like the proportion of women in the provider organisations and their management bodies could not be identified from the project documentation. A review of the 80 provider files included in the sample, which are available as magazine files, was not possible within the time frame of this evaluation.

nor did we find any indications that human rights were given a lower priority than ecclesiastical norms within the scope of this partner organisation's focus of activities (corporate responsibility).

### 3.5. OWNERSHIP OF THE PROJECTS BY THE PARTNERS

The funding by Bread for the World is an important factor for the implementation of the projects even if it is hardly discussed in the project evaluations. Our online survey of the partner organisations focused on the process of project development and implementation and particularly on the relationships of the partner organisations with Bread for the World. We understand the latter to be an important link between the partners' project work and the impact map of the funding area.

#### Respectful partnership

Bread for the World's partnership approach enables the partner organisations to develop projects independently. 84 percent of the interviewed partners did not feel under pressure from Bread for the World during the project development phase to change their priorities. 93 percent of the partners agreed to the statement that it was useful to discuss the project strategy and objectives with Bread for the World. Within the scope of the case studies, the visited partners confirmed that for the development of new projects the partners' priority setting was generally respected in the dialogue between Bread for the World and the partner organisations. **In the partner survey, the relationship to the employees of Bread for the World was appreciated to be trusting.** 94 percent of the partners agreed to the statement that the employees of Bread for the World are respectful, helpful and competent. Even so, 85 percent of the partners did not have a problem with questioning Bread for the World's positions if they do not agree with them. Yet, only 52 percent reported that Bread for the World asked them for their opinion and their advice.

Generally, very often discussions among the partner organisations and Bread for the World deal with project management but also with the partner's strategy in the global South which, for most, is an essential component of the relationship. Networking or common strategies are discussed less frequently.

In contrast to partners who have already gone through two or more funding phases, partners who receive initial funding often expect contacts to be more frequent than they actually are. Apparently, relationships work more smoothly over time. All in all, however, **for the future many partners wish for more time for personal conversations with the project staff of Bread for the World and with other partners of Bread for the World.** The most frequent suggestions to strengthen relationships and communication are: (i) regular regional or international meetings with different partners to exchange experiences and develop common strategies, (ii) regular project visits by Bread for the World, and (iii) common lobbying and advocacy with Bread for the World. The desire for more intensive networking among projects was also mentioned several times in discussions with specialists (see also the chapter "Efficiency") and by the partners visited in Palestine.

A relatively small proportion of the interviewed partners uses services offered by Bread for the World in addition to project funding for support (for example, protective measures, support for lobbying tours, scholarships). The only exception are PME trainings which were attended by representatives of about half of the partners.

## 4 EFFECTIVITY

Most of the examined projects set their objectives realistically and achieve them. Major impact factors are state action and access to politics, the use of networks, and effect-oriented work. We found examples of the effective interaction of different funding instruments but no documented funding area strategy or policy which could systematically utilise the potential for synergies. Undesirable effects may occur if certain rights holders are excluded from projects because a differentiated examination of the diversity of the target groups is lacking or if state duty bearers or other powerful actors feel threatened by the work of the partner organisations and their target groups.

### 4.1. ACHIEVEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

It is the primary objective of human rights initiatives that duty bearers and powerful decision makers respect, guarantee and protect all human rights so that all rights holders can enjoy their rights. This means that the **realisation of the primary objectives is in the hands of actors who, at best, can exert an influence on civil society organisations but cannot control them**. For this reason, the examined partner organisations usually formulate their project objectives in a process-oriented manner or organise them at **realistic and achievable impact levels**. As the agreed project objectives and indicators are used for reporting, this method appears to be sensible. In the majority of the examined cases, the projects achieved the objectives thus defined. Only in very few cases, about 13 percent of our sample, projects envisage objectives which can hardly be fulfilled within the planned time frame or influenced by the project activities.

Within the typical project period of three years, for instance, grassroots groups can be organised or a greater awareness for human rights violations can be raised in public. We categorise these results as outcomes, which is clearly above outputs as they cannot be directly produced by the partner organisation but are also dependent on the activities of others (for example, duty bearers, members of grassroots groups, or media reporting about human rights). Most of the projects examined in our meta-evaluation (34/38, which is 89 per cent) are rated as successful, which does not always mean that success is consistently related to the project objectives.

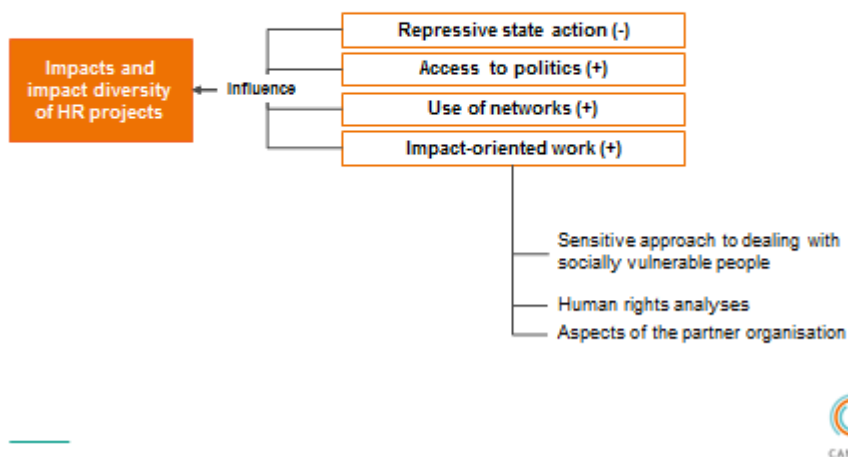
#### 4.1.1. Impacts on rights holders and duty bearers

For more than half of the projects (58 percent), the evaluations report several of the impacts shown in our impact map. This is to be assessed as positive in so far as in complex change processes often impacts on various actors need to be achieved so that changes can be brought about. What was most frequently observed by the project evaluations was that **the target groups can effectively defend their rights** (50 percent), closely followed by the successful **formation of grassroots groups** (47 percent); often both these impacts occur together. As expected, the strengthening of target groups and the formation of grassroots groups often go hand in hand with an **improvement of political participation** (42 percent, or 39 percent of the projects which produce one of the impacts first mentioned). Improved political participation – an impact achieved by 33 percent of the analysed projects –, takes place prevalently with human rights-related projects. For human rights projects, **impacts on government action** like the implementation of laws (27 percent of the analysed HR projects) or legal development (18 percent) are more often ascertained.

### 4.2. IMPACT FACTORS

By conducting a meta-analysis of 38 project evaluations we examined which factors were supportive or obstructive of the achievement of objectives. Here, we identified four key factors, or clusters of factors, which can enhance or obstruct impacts. Access to politics and the use of networks are among the factors internal to partner organisations or projects. In addition, impact-oriented work is a central impact factor; this is understood to be the sensitive approach in dealing with vulnerable groups, human rights analyses, and aspects of the partner organisation (like, for example, their personnel capacities). An external key factor which influences the effectiveness of human rights projects significantly is state action.

Figure 6: Factors influencing impacts and the diversity of impacts negatively (-) or positively (+)



### State action

The issue of shrinking spaces for civil society activities has already been mentioned. **Repressive state action inclusive of restrictive legal framework conditions and a lack of responsivity of political institutions are identified as obstructive factors for more than a third of the project evaluations.** The evaluations show that in contexts which are characterised by state repression the impacts achieved by the projects are less noticeable. By way of contrast, the average number of the impacts observed doubles where state repression has no relevance for a project. The meta-evaluation has proven that repressive state action is the impact factor with the strongest influence on the observed diversity of impacts.

### Access to politics

In addition and closely linked to actual state action, also **the access of NGOs to political actors** influences the achieved diversity of impacts. The project evaluations confirm good access to politics for 44 percent of the projects, which is rated significantly better for human rights projects (50 percent) than for human rights-related projects (36 percent). At meso and macro level, partner organisations and associations of grassroots groups maintain formal and informal contacts with state duty bearers as, for example, law courts, parliaments, or ministries. Moreover, they cultivate contacts with national human rights commissions, foreign governments, and multilateral organisations, for instance through representations in the country (embassies, UN offices) and lobbying tours which can be supported by Bread for the World. Several of the examined partner organisations have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the UN (ECOSOC) or observer status with the African Commission on Human and People's Rights. Also network partners may benefit from this kind of access, for example within the scope of joint lobbying trips. At community level, grassroots groups are often in contact with local or traditional leaders.

#### 4.2.1. Use of networks

The meta-analysis of the evaluations and also the field studies prove the value of networks for the achievement of impacts. 67 percent of the projects examined in the meta-evaluation, or even 90 percent of the human rights projects, are involved in networks. **Networks with regard to the implementation of laws promotive of human rights and the exertion of influence on duty bearers** in general proved to be particularly relevant in this context. Beyond the direct impact relevance, networks can

**reduce negative effects of repressive state action** through joint actions or interventions at national, regional or international level. Apart from that, the meta-evaluation indicates only a weak correlation between networks and the access to politics: the project evaluations state that projects with access to politics need not necessarily be involved in networks to achieve impacts, and vice versa.

Partly it is the partner organisations themselves who initiate, operate or coordinate networks. Especially for lobbying and advocacy networks can be useful, for instance, if the network is better known than its members, whose political activities are consequently backed up by the network. It is pointed out that the cooperation in networks promotes lobbying, particularly if NGOs with different competence profiles get together in strategic networks like, for example, NGOs conducting research and lobbying and NGOs offering services for rights holders. By way of networks, smaller NGOs may open up access to national and international actors and, thus, make their positions more visible.

Networks may have a positive effect on legal development.

### Impact-oriented work

The meta-analysis of the evaluations has ascertained a direct connection between impact orientation and effectiveness. We consider impact-oriented work to be a sensitive approach when dealing with socially vulnerable groups and partner organisation' aspects like their stability and capacities.

#### IMPACT ORIENTATION

**All evaluated projects which are clearly based on a theory of change and pursue realistically formulated objectives have achieved observable impacts.** Yet, the meta-evaluation has found

indications of an - often very scant - theory of change and of realistically formulated objectives only with seven (18 percent) of the examined projects. With about one third of the progress reports of our sample, it was not possible to establish a clear correlation between project activities and reported impacts.<sup>9</sup> All in all, the statements on impacts often remain generic or agreed indicators are hardly mentioned. **Without explicit impact hypotheses**, it appears to be difficult to plan human rights projects and, for instance, to observe in which ways a project contributes to influencing duty bearers so that laws will be implemented. Our case studies revealed that partner organisations in Mexico, Palestine and South Africa, which are countries with long-standing traditions of high-quality human rights work, indeed orientate their work **towards the long-term combating of causes of human rights violations and think in an impact-orientated manner**. However, most of them document their impact hypotheses only rarely or incompletely.

#### EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH HUMAN RIGHTS ANALYSES

Our case studies confirm the result of the meta-evaluation: reflecting on the causes of human rights violations and the correlations between project activities and desired impacts may have a positive effect on the diversity of impacts. Projects where evaluations observed a high diversity of impacts (more than four reported impacts) often also combat **structural causes of human rights problems**. Where an explicit focus on the combating of structural causes of human rights violations in the form of human rights analyses and the orientation towards international agreements and recommendations is lacking, chances might be missed to use international obligations as a leverage factor for advocacy work or to inform target groups about their rights without giving rise to unrealistic expectations.

Since the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (2005) and the *Accra Agenda of Action* (2008), impact orientation has generally been assessed as an important **factor for the effectiveness** of projects – also by Bread for the World as is shown by the evaluation questions. These questions refer to the project providers' efforts to ensure impact monitoring with meaningful indicators, regular data collections and analyses, and the return flow to project steering. Furthermore, statements on impacts and sustainability made in project reports should be underpinned by gender-specific data.

<sup>9</sup> Our documents analysis evaluated impact orientation by means of the following four criteria: 1) statements on impacts and sustainability are underpinned with credible data; 2) impact hypotheses are formulated explicitly (which means that they describe how the planned activities should contribute to achieving the project objectives); 3) more than one half of the indicators in the progress report can be effectively used to measure the achievement of project objectives; 4) regular data collections for measuring impact take place.

#### SENSITIVE APPROACH TO DEALING WITH SOCIALLY VULNERABLE GROUPS

The analysis of the project evaluations confirms the hypothesis included in the interactive impact structure: **projects which deal with socially vulnerable groups in a sensitive manner are more effective in establishing grassroots groups and improving the political participation** of rights holders. In addition, as is apparent from the field studies the work with rights holders can strengthen the legitimacy and credibility of HR organisations when dealing with decision makers. Furthermore, the meta-evaluation confirms the findings of gender research, namely, **that a project can only achieve impacts on the equal treatment of women if it empowers the target groups to defend their rights** or if it combats structural causes of human rights violations.

As described under “Relevance” (cf. chapter 4.3.2), **a large majority of the examined projects seek to empower the target groups to assert their strategic interests**. According to the partner survey, in most projects the target groups are actively involved in planning and implementation of the projects; yet, only in rare cases is this reflected in the project documentations. **Some of the evaluations analysed by us do not provide any proof that the project approach how to deal with vulnerable social groups may be assessed as sensitive**. They do not contain any information on the needs and interests of women and marginalised groups (for example, people with disabilities, indigenous people, or LGBTI) in the target group. A lack of consideration of these aspects may have a negative effect on the participation and empowerment of target groups. Accordingly, it is scarcely surprising that these projects do not have any documentation of having made an impact at political level and on the establishment of grassroots groups..

#### ASPECTS OF THE PARTNER ORGANISATION

Also the **stability and resources of the partner organisation** have an influence on the number of impacts a project can achieve. Evaluations which confirm fewer impacts for the projects identify influencing factors such as insufficient human resources and communication problems as well as conflicts within the organisation (for example, between the board and the management). Other influencing factors are professionalism and expertise of the project staff.

### 4.3. NON-INTENDED AND UNDESIRABLE IMPACTS

Information on non-intended impacts can hardly be found in the factual reports and evaluation reports even though the factual reports include a relevant question. As relevant target group and risk analyses are lacking, the examined documentation hardly provides any insights whether **rights holders were disadvantaged or excluded by the projects**. Within the framework of the case studies we could convince ourselves that, as a rule, the partners are familiar with the **do-no-harm principle**. However, many of them make contact with especially hard-to-reach groups only sporadically, often because of a lack of resources; implicitly, this may aggravate the disadvantages of marginalised groups.

**Encouraging unexpected impacts** reported by the partners often relate to the enhanced visibility of the partner organisation due to public activities and the resulting improvement of access to media and international funds. The rise of project beneficiaries and staff members into political offices is assessed as negative by some of the partners, but mostly as encouraging. For example in Bangladesh, India, Peru and Chad, representatives of Bread for the World’s partners were included in state commissions for human rights.



## 5 EFFICIENCY

Efficiency refers to the relation between the deployed resources and their utilisation or, in the present context, to the results which can be assigned to the respective project. As explained below, in the work on human rights both sides of this equation are difficult to quantify. The use of resources, however, is a priority for the project partners: less than one half of the interviewed partner organisations assessed their resources as sufficient for the achievement of their objectives; this means that clear priorities must be set and resources must be handled economically – sometimes too economically to ensure sustainable work. Bread for the World supports the strengthening of financial systems and, thus, not only supports careful economic management but also the protection from risks through over-regulation of NGOs by the state. Further efficiency potentials could be used in the fields of risk and knowledge management (especially in reporting).

### 5.1. WHAT DOES EFFICIENCY MEAN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS WORK?

We evaluate a human rights project to be efficient if the available resources are not only used economically but also in such a manner that, according to the context, they can contribute in the best possible way to human rights goals. For this reason, strategies and the quality of implementation play a key role here. In connection with resources which are limited and partly difficult to quantify, it is necessary to set priorities and to observe the quality and results of the work within the scope of a changeable context.

#### Which costs, what benefits?

Work in the field of human rights gives rise to **costs which can hardly be translated into monetary values**: (i) the knowledge, experiences and connections of paid or unpaid activists, and (ii) risks for the organisation, the reputation and health of their staff and participants. In addition, there should be room for (iii) expenses for unforeseen activities, for instance, to make use of unexpected new opportunities to influence duty bearers. On the other side of the equation there are the impacts of human rights work – often they are the result of complex processes of change stretching over many years. As already elaborated, generally changes of the human rights situation cannot be attributed to specific projects or partner organisations but call for the **interplay of various aspects for which, possibly, there is no demonstrable connection with the activities** of a specific organisation.

Consequently, the two sides of a hypothetical cost-benefit-calculation of the projects of the funding area are **complex and can be controlled only to some degree**. Then there are also context factors: the more difficult the project environment is, the more tedious, prolonged and “more expensive” will the achievement of sustainable impacts be. For this reason, a **traditional cost-benefit-calculation would be misleading**. Still it is possible to review, for example when evaluating individual projects, whether the available resources are adequate in relation to the project objectives and activities and are deployed in an economical and transparent manner.

More than two thirds of the partners estimate **the funding by Bread for the World to be sufficient to implement their projects**. What is more, the analysis of the project documentation showed that, as a rule, the project period is sufficient to implement the planned activities and to achieve the (cautiously formulated) project objectives. The meta-analysis of 38 evaluation reports has confirmed these results from the perspective of external experts.

Yet, all in all **only 49 percent of the partners assessed their financial, technical and human resources as sufficient in their entirety to achieve their strategic goals**. The main obstacles mentioned were internal problems (such as a lack of personnel, changes in the staff, lacking expertise, and internal conflicts) and the consequences of shrinking spaces.

Saving costs at the expense of quality?

In the field studies we could convince ourselves that the partner organisations generally deploy their resources economically for the implementation of their projects. Occasionally, however, austerity

measures may endanger economic viability in the sense of a profitable relation of activities and available resources.

**There is not much scope for austerity measures as**, because of the nature of their work, **salaries** usually account for the major proportion of the costs of human rights organisations. Human rights work requires profound legal knowledge which is generously paid for in the business sector. Yet, at all examined partner organisations the personnel costs are **at the customary level of local NGOs** and, thus, are significantly lower than the usual salaries and fees, for example for lawyers.

The examined partners also keep other **current expenses**, for example for security measures and transportation, as low as possible. This means that private vehicles or working equipment like computers are often used for work-related purposes. Austerity measures where **a part of costs and risks is transferred to employees or staff members like freelancers or volunteers** in this way may be a hindrance to working effectively. In spite of conditions like these, in the field studies we observed relatively high outputs, whose sustainability may nevertheless be at risk because of the savings measures.

### **Efficient use of resources with clear priorities**

Our field studies have shown that the partner organisations **set their priorities on the basis of considerations of efficiency and effectiveness**. As a result, some of the examined partners in the three countries have stopped their individual case work (like providing legal assistance to persons affected by human rights violations) or reduced it to a small number of strategically important law suits; instead, they are focusing on advocacy. An organisation in Palestine has a strong human rights focus on the rights of Palestinian children in Israeli military custody and, thus, can use its limited resources in a targeted manner.

In the context of shrinking spaces, partners may also decide on considerations of efficiency and sustainability **to take fewer risks in their work and protect important core activities**; this may result in lower effectiveness, for example, if the number of public events is reduced or specific target groups are no longer reached.

### **Strong financing systems and pooling of resources**

Bread for the World supports its partners in countries like Mexico, Palestine, or South Africa through local consultancy companies with the continuous development of their financing and administrative systems, which comply with high standards and comprise regulations like efficient procurement rules. Not only does this promote careful economic management but, due to greater transparency, it also contributes to the partner organisation's protection in case of a defamatory campaign (see also below, "Risks and risk management").

In these three countries, the partner organisations coordinate their work within associations of NGOs and mutually exchange their resources as far as possible, for instance for joint investigations or national or international advocacy work.

## **5.2. RISKS AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

Risk management is closely linked to efficiency: state or non-state interventions into NGO activities, which may range from additional audits, searches, or the confiscation of data carriers through to defamation campaigns, arbitrary arrests, or deliberate killings (for example in DR Congo, Ecuador, Columbia, Mexico, Nicaragua, or Cambodia), may seriously affect the work of the organisations concerned or bring activities to a standstill.

### **External and internal risks**

Legal and legitimate human rights work is often criminalised to suppress criticism of state action. Especially in **shrinking spaces**, there is a lot of risk in human rights work. Issues which cause concern among the organisations participating in the partner survey are in particular (i) the reduced access to funds (see the chapter on sustainability), (ii) the low level of citizen participation in political processes, (iii) the disproportionate use of force by security forces, and (iv) national legislation which restricts civil

society activities. This includes also the growing number of administrative regulations which increase administrative burdens on the organisation so that smaller initiatives may well be unable to cope.

More than half of the interviewed partners regard **persecution and intimidation** by state and non-state actors to be alarming. Some have experienced attacks on their offices and the private households of their members, others have been spared concrete security incidents. Even though all the organisations are aware of the risks inherent in their work, the degree of awareness is lower if there have not yet been any incidents.

In addition to context-related external risks there are also internal **risks arising from the organisations' work**. For example, the clientele or witnesses may suffer harm if personal data fall into the wrong hands. Risks do not only emanate from repressive duty bearers but also from non-state actors such as members of extreme political currents who take violent action against initiatives for the freedom of religion or the equality of women. Also the communication with donors bears risks, for instance if sensitive information is transmitted in unencrypted form.

### **Risk management of the partner organisations**

**Risks for their organisations** are countered by the partners through the integration of their activities in civil society initiatives which are more broadly based and through the utilisation of personal contacts and informal channels to influence relevant actors. Also making reference explicitly to national law and state politics may be useful to overcome reluctance at local authorities.

Our desk and case studies have shown that risks for organisations and project implementation are addressed but **risks to humans** such as staff members, clients, or participants in project activities, **are often underestimated** or ignored. Only a small proportion of the analysed project documentation contains information on this problem or investigates the question how the danger to staff members, volunteers, participants and outside parties could be minimised. In some of the projects, especially in Africa and NOKAP, the partners seem to underestimate these risks. Furthermore, information is often missing on how it is ensured that project activities are welcomed by the persons concerned and respect their human rights. In the same way, a consideration of the risks involved with interventions into gender relations seems to be mostly lacking in projects for the promotion of the equality of women.

All the same, risks for rights holders are taken into consideration and reduced as far as possible: informal networks, which also include contacts with high-ranking government representatives, can be mobilised in the event of risks such as harassment or arrests. This presupposes, however, that staff members or activists are any time available and ready for action and that they are able to secure the release of activists or bring harassment to a stop by telephone or media campaigns.

### **Good practice in the handling of risks to humans**

In the project documentation, project activities like **human rights information, increased media activities, or networking are frequently mentioned as prevention strategies** with the intention that the awareness of rights and joint appearance will ensure more security. Also the **maintenance of contacts** of the partner organisations with governments and multilateral organisations through delegation visits, for example, may give some protection. Besides, some partners offer security training for NGO staff and activists. In this way, between 2014 and 2016 a project prepared activists in Mexico how to handle the increasing threats: with altogether ten human rights organisations it provided psychosocial strategies and security measures through the exchange of experiences and training courses and supported the establishment of solidary networks for mutual protection.

Bread for the World is aware of the risks to HR defenders and has developed a set of measures to respond. Its **support for the development and implementation of security strategies** was evaluated differently by the members of the organisations participating in the case studies; in the partner survey and our discussions with partner organisations in Mexico it was rated as very useful.

If human rights defenders are acutely threatened, Bread for the World can take **measures for their protection** or back up such measures, for instance through short-term financial support from an emergency fund or from funds for small projects. The projects supported by Bread for the World for the pro-

tection of HR defenders are found more often in Latin America (22 percent) or worldwide (27 percent) than in Africa (8 percent) or NOKAP (4 percent). In addition, human rights defenders may use **scholarships** in foreign countries as a refuge to avoid acute threats. This instrument was used by threatened representatives of civil society organisations in Azerbaijan and Cambodia.

Moreover, in the event of changing circumstances Bread for the World facilitates the **adaptation of implementation plans**: activities may be moved in space and time. In line with this, 25 percent of the interviewed partners stated that since the beginning of the current funding period the implementation of their projects had to be significantly adapted because of political changes. This is why in the three field studies flexibility in the allocation of financial resources was rated to be essential for the targeted use of funds and the effective continuation of the projects.

### 5.3. EFFICIENCY POTENTIALS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

#### Deficiencies in impact-oriented monitoring

The forms of project proposals, project applications or factual reports definitely encourage structured reflection of causes and effects – a chance which is rarely used. The interviewed partners stated that, on one hand, they use 9 percent of their budgets on an average for planning, monitoring and evaluation; on the other hand, most of them admit that **their decisions hardly ever reflect monitoring data**. For only 40 percent of the sample, the documentation indicates that the partner organisations regularly collect data for impact measurement. Even though almost 90 percent of the participants of our survey stated that they had collected baseline data for their projects, 70 percent declared that their decisions were rarely or never influenced by monitoring data. In the same way, baseline information or monitoring data are hardly ever used in the examined evaluations.

In the partner survey, the reporting forms of Bread for the World were rated as easy to understand by the majority of partners (67 percent); 82 percent of the partners were of the opinion that the reporting formats concentrate on what is essential. Still, the narrative questions are often neglected in favour of the summary table as mentioned above.

As our field studies have revealed, the partner organisations perceive particularly **the semi-annual factual reports as unnecessary, burdensome and time-consuming**: during the long change processes in the field of human rights, there is hardly anything substantial to be reported about impacts within a period of six months. What is more, feedback from Bread for the World is often not required or focuses on procedural questions. This might give the impression that Bread for the World is not much interested in the contents of the report which, accordingly, should only be treated as a mere formality.

#### Potentials of improvement of project evaluations

Widespread **deficiencies in the quality of the project evaluations examined by us** result in inefficiencies because frequently they do not provide any new or robust results which might contribute to project steering. Evaluations of individual projects are a component of the reporting of church-based partner organisations to the BMZ and an important instrument for cross-project learning (for example, through meta-analyses); their quality determines the degree to which they can be used effectively and whether they are “value for money“.

The project evaluations analysed within the framework of the funding area evaluation rarely report about methodological difficulties or limitations; none of the examined project evaluations provides any good practice examples for the review of impacts in human rights work which are difficult to measure.

#### GENDER IN MONITORING

In the partner survey, 90 percent of the partners state that they collect gender-specific data. However, a much less gender-sensitive impression is gained from the project documentation of the sample: here, we found indications of the collection of gender-specific data for less than half of the examined projects (37 of 79) - see also above under “Relevance“. In the field studies it became obvious that providers who use data bases for the documentation of HR violations do also record the gender of the persons concerned (male/female) but, generally, **do not use this data for gender analyses** because such analyses are perceived as irrelevant.

In many cases, largely information from the partners on project activities and their results is reproduced. Seemingly, interviews with external actors and representatives of target groups only take place sporadically, which further reduces the gaining of insights for the contracting entities. In the same way, considerations of research ethics, which are particularly important in the field of human rights, are hardly discussed. In one project evaluation we detected serious violations of data protection.

Many of the **evaluators did not have sufficient time and funds available** to answer the posed questions; sometimes, for instance in the context of the identification of impact at target group level, this would require laborious procedures.

## 6 DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACTS

In the field of human rights, the achievement of long-term developmental impacts depends only partially on factors which are influenced by NGO projects. Civil society work alone cannot enforce any rights, but make a contribution that people claim their rights and that duty bearers and decision makers are called to account. The long-term, flexible funding ensured by Bread for the World and an – unfortunately decreasing - number of other donors is often an important prerequisite for achieving impact at higher levels.

### 6.1. PROJECTS: PIECES OF A COMPLEX IMPACT PUZZLE

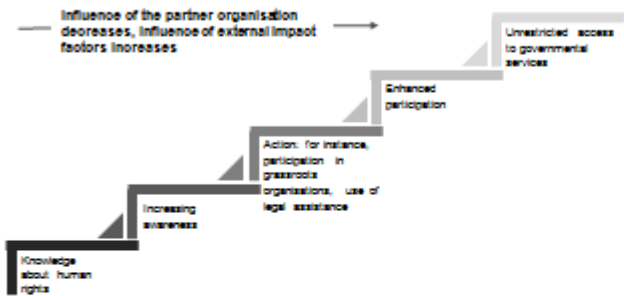
As already explained in the chapter on efficiency, the elements listed as impacts in project evaluations are often process-like **partial victories in the course of complex change processes of many years**. Projects in advanced funding phases can build on achievements of the previous phases to continue to make progress. However, obtaining an interim result does not automatically lead to further progress; often it is considered to be a success, and rightly so, if a project “merely” contributes to stabilising a situation and avoiding regress.

#### Impact connections for changes with rights holders

As a first step, the majority of the projects seek to extend the knowledge of their target groups. In the impact logic of human rights-related projects, the next step is increasing awareness, which is often an essential precondition for changes in the behaviour of the target population. The fourth step is about enhanced participation both in civil society and political decision-making structures and processes. At this impact level of human rights projects, the increased ability of rights-holders can be found to claim their rights with (test) cases. Ideally, participation and legal means lead to improved access to governmental services (such as health and education) and, as the case may be, to the rehabilitation and reintegration of persons affected by violence and human rights violations.

In the following diagram, the progressively fading colours indicate how the influence of the project activities decreases step by step in proportion to other impact factors like, for example, state measures to ensure, or restrict, the freedom of association and assembly.

Figure 7: Exemplary flight of steps for impacts of HR-related projects

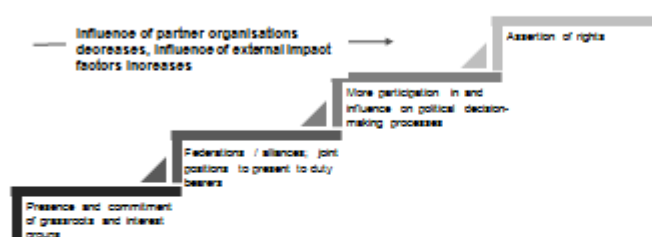


Human rights projects achieve impacts also on individuals. Wherever precedents are set or new approaches are implemented successfully through test cases, further-reaching impacts may be generated like, for instance, with participative approaches for the legal representation of indigenous groups to protect their constitutional rights in connection with raw materials mining and palm-oil plantations.

### Impacts at civil society level

The target groups of most human rights-related projects are civil society organisations from grassroots level to international associations of non-governmental organisations. On the first step, we find the presence and commitment of grassroots and interest groups, which advocate for the rights of their members even independently of the partner organisation. A second, possible step will be reached if these organisations form federations or alliances and jointly formulate positions to present to duty bearers, in some cases with the support of international law and standards. The third impact step here is about codetermination in the form of enhanced participation of these organisations in political decision-making processes and the exertion of influence on state and powerful non-state actors. Here also, the reaching of the top step of the flight of impact steps – the assertion of rights to, for instance, an appropriate standard of living – depends essentially on changes in the behaviour of duty bearers.

Figure 8: Exemplary flight of steps for impacts at civil society level



In the long run, projects for the promotion of the equality of women often aim at making impacts at the level of individual attitudes and social norms. Here also, activities often begin with knowledge transfer, awareness-raising and working with communities to initiate change processes which, at social level, will extend over generations.

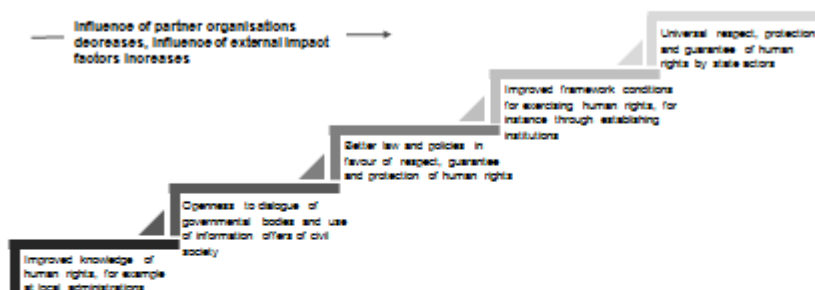
### Impacts on duty bearers

Developmentally relevant changes in the conduct of state duty bearers are only rarely mentioned as project objectives. It would be frivolous to make a commitment to the achievement of objectives which can only be influenced very limitedly. Even so, the examined evaluations indicate as an impact for 11 percent of the projects that states meet their legal obligations; for 5 percent they report that the projects contribute to laws or legislative changes. Generally, impacts on state action occur more frequently in connection with human rights projects than with other projects of the funding area. Our case studies confirm these findings and establish that, indeed, the partners work towards more ambitious objectives at duty bearer level in their missions and long-term strategies; however, it will only be possible to

achieve such objectives in the long run and in the context of complex impact correlations (see also section 8.2.1 below).

Here also, the first step involves extending the knowledge about human rights, for instance of projects with local administrations and information deficits. At national level, the openness to dialogue of governmental bodies and the use of information offers and research results of civil society for legal and policy development are often claimed to be partial victories. A possible third step implies better laws and policies in favour of human rights with a special focus on the rights of socially marginalised groups. On the fourth impact step, state actors improve the framework conditions for exercising human rights through, for example, government-supported human rights education and training, the systematic prosecution of crimes, making amends for human rights violations, and the establishment of institutions. At the top of the flight of steps there are the universal respect, protection and guarantee of human rights by state actors.

Figure 9: Exemplary flight of steps for impacts on duty bearers



## 6.2. IMPACT THROUGH LONGER PROJECT PERIODS

Because of changeable political environments and also because of the continuous enrichment of human rights instruments and other means of international law, **there is nothing like a “final state”** of work in human rights. Success may evaporate or turn into defeat, for instance if a change in policy at state level endangers human rights. Then again, new types of international agreements like corporate responsibility agreements open up new opportunities. For this reason, the work on human rights, civil society development and gender equality calls for continued commitment over long periods of time.

**Only in rare cases will it be possible that an individual project brings about impacts at the highest target level within the typical period of three years.** However, the partner survey indicates that there are indeed partial victories as attitudes begin to change or structures start to emerge. On an average, it took the partner organisations interviewed in the partner survey one whole funding period (that is, three years) until they could observe their first significant project successes; in many cases initial successes will be noticed only after two funding phases (six or more years). Above all, the partners reported partial victories like changes in awareness and attitudes, successful legal actions, and the development of structures (networking of organisations, or citizen participation at community level). Further successes are generated by placing human rights issues on the agendas of national or international decision makers. These **successes are often based on long-term experiences**; without this knowledge capital it would be difficult to achieve even smaller partial victories within one project period



in the field of human rights. Certain lawsuits such as actions before regional or international law courts may last over more than a decade until judgment is pronounced and, thus, an impact will be achieved beyond the scope of an individual project.

## 7 SUSTAINABILITY

The criterion “sustainability” refers to the permanence of the impacts of projects beyond the project period. As the projects of the statistical population were approved between 2013 and 2015, we cannot make any conclusive statements about their sustainability. A large part of the examined projects, however, contributes to frameworks for sustainable impacts, particularly to (i) the empowerment of individuals or (grassroots) organisations to defend their rights and (ii) the involvement of decision makers who might play a role for the maintenance of impacts.

### 7.1. LONG-TERM COMMITMENT FOR PERMANENT IMPACTS

As already explained in the previous chapters, **setbacks belong to the work in the field** of human rights. Partial victories achieved may evaporate, especially if an initiative ends prematurely, if after the end of a project there is no financing available or if in the context of shrinking spaces a continuation of activities is no longer possible. Here also, long-term accompaniment and funding by Bread for the World provides essential support, particularly in shrinking donor landscapes such as in emerging countries.

### 7.2. SUSTAINABLE IMPACTS

Impacts on knowledge and capacities at target group level are hard to reverse. An increased **awareness of rights and organisational capacity** persist also in difficult environments. Federated grassroots organisations can continue to exist, even if the freedom of assembly and the freedom of expression are restricted and activities particularly visible in public like larger demonstrations are no longer possible.

In circumstances like these, it is often a challenge to maintain member loyalty and create spheres of action where acquired knowledge and capacities may be put into practice. Moreover, mobilisation often takes place on occasion of specific events; for example, communities in Mexico successfully prevented the execution of large-scale raw materials mining projects in their communities. However, if the immediate danger is overcome, many people lose interest in further activism. Especially if the fighting against human rights violations extends over a longer period of time there is a risk that fellow combatants lose their energy and motivation.

Also **laws and newly established state structures** at different levels create a framework which could only be dismantled with a certain effort (such as legislative changes) and could hardly be hidden from the public gaze, all the more because people’s awareness has previously been raised by projects. Nevertheless, the Mexican case study shows that the adoption of legislation promotive to human rights will not necessarily lead to a genuine improvement in the human rights situation. Even though the legal framework is regarded to be almost exemplary, also by international observers, it is hardly ever applied in practice. The causes named are, in particular, a lack of political will and limited capacities of executive bodies.

#### **Cooperation with duty bearers – a guarantor of sustainability?**

About one half of the examined human rights projects include the accompaniment and training of duty bearers. HR-related projects use such alliances to a much lower degree (about 20 percent of the examined projects). Yet, some examples should be mentioned how conditions for sustainability can be created here; one project contributed to the establishment of centres for the treatment of cervical cancer in the project region so that the state fulfilled its obligation to provide adequate healthcare services. At community level, the examined project evaluations confirmed that particularly human rights-related projects create or strengthen relationships between grassroots groups and local leaders, for example through the establishment of dialogue and mediation structures.

Even so, state structures can only contribute to the perpetuation of impacts if institutions are consolidated. In fragile contexts or in armed conflicts, however, state structures are often weakened and only functional to a limited degree. Often this is not so much a matter of achieving positive impacts in the

proper sense, but of limiting the extent of negative impacts on the human rights situation by fragile statehood.

### **Strong grassroots organisations for constant change processes**

People who are aware of their rights and are organised will also be able to defend their rights in the face of adverse political trends and put up resistance at different levels against restrictions of their rights. Especially projects with strong empowerment components can make an important contribution to the **empowerment of persons affected by human rights violations**. The Mexico study provides many examples of individual empowerment processes of people who, in the course of suffering from HR violations, got to know their rights and defended these rights with the support of Bread for the World's partner organisations. Such processes often extend over several years, and persons like these often turn into human rights defenders themselves.

Particularly human rights-related projects often establish **grassroots groups** or strengthen such groups, whose successes are measured on the basis of the number of new groups as well as the increase or stability of existing groups and their activities. For instance, an Indonesian organisation reported that it contributed to the formation of 40 networked operations groups which influence national enterprise policies. In South Asia, organisations often describe the establishment or strengthening of extensive formations of grassroots groups. Some partners in Latin America commit themselves to structured citizens participation in urban neighbourhood associations.

### **7.3. ECONOMY – SUSTAINABILITY: CONFLICTING PRIORITIES**

As elaborated in the chapter on efficiency, austerity measures may endanger the implementation quality and the durability of projects and their providers. In South Africa, for example, some partners decided – under consideration of their long-term strategies – to hand over the individual case work to structures with limited resources like smaller women's groups and other grassroots groups. Some of the work of these groups is carried out on a voluntary basis and without any funding so that occasionally these groups are privately cross-subsidised by members and their relatives. Also in the Mexican context it became apparent that **limited funds have potentially negative effects on the sustainability** of the organisations' work, which are aggravated by repressive state action. Consequently, expenses for additional benefits for the personnel (for stress management, team building, supervision etc.) are among the first positions to be saved. By way of contrast, a women's organisation in Mexico has developed various approaches to support human rights defenders in **protecting themselves from burn-out**.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 8.1. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE FUNDING AREA HUMAN RIGHTS

The term “**human rights**” should be more clearly defined so that HR projects and projects with a strong relation to HR can be identified and adequately examined and supported. We recommend Bread for the World to gain an overall picture of its work in the funding area Human Rights and define it by means of an organisation-wide policy or another reference document or, in other words, determine which overarching objectives should be pursued and which means are required. A policy would facilitate high quality of implementation and long-term impacts through:

- Selection and supervision of projects under consideration of the specificity of the funding area;
- More systematic use of the human rights reference system and other instruments of international law (such as humanitarian law, or corporate responsibility agreements) wherever this may strengthen effectiveness in the respective context and under consideration of the risks involved;
- Improved access to suitable offers for partners (such as the protection of human rights defenders in emergencies) and project team members (such as making use of the expertise of the Policy Department).

Existing or potential **interconnections of the work in the partner countries with the activities of Bread for the World in the “Global North”** (for instance, its advocacy work in Europe and at the UN as well as its public relations work) should be made visible and incorporated in strategies. Already now, partners in the “Global South” are informed by project team members and partially through other channels (for example, in direct cooperation with the advocacy network ACT Alliance) about the international advocacy of Bread for the World. By **intensified communication, information and, if possible, harmonisation** in this field, powerful international advocacy could be supported. Furthermore, particularly in conflict contexts and in shrinking spaces the work in the “Global North” is a means of protection for partners and their projects by, for example, providing information about the necessity and legality of human rights work to decision makers and the wider public.

### 8.2. PARTNERSHIPS FOR LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

Human rights projects and projects with a clear relation to human rights require more than one funding phase to unfold impacts; frequently this happens only indirectly, via detours and after overcoming many setbacks. This is why they should be **supported flexibly and throughout several funding phases on the basis of a common understanding of their change theories and appropriate reporting**. The number of phases depends on the respective strategic goals and context factors which should be identified as relevant for the impacts when the funding starts and regularly monitored.

#### Reflection of change theories

The **open, constructive and critical dialogue** with Bread for the World is a valuable component of collaboration for the partners and a precondition for reasonable, long-term cooperation. It ought to be enhanced to encourage **more systematic, joint reflection** on how the projects contribute to changes in their complex impact correlations and contexts.

It is not a matter of introducing completely new instruments but of engaging in dialogue to reflect about correlations between project activities and desirable long-term impacts and document them in a manner which is useful for the project and the partner. In particular, overarching impacts and strategies should be reviewed here. For this, elements of the impact map as presented above as well as a broad spectrum of visualisations might be used; but also narrative representations documented in writing may provide clarity. Thus, joint considerations can take place which points of a project-specific change theory should be regularly monitored to review long-term strategies.

#### Long-term funding and flexible financing

On the basis of a common understanding of the changes a partner is striving for in the long run and the way how parallel measures should gradually support the change process, a **commitment over sever-**

**al funding phases** may be agreed. By a memorandum of understanding (MoU) or a mutual declaration of intent, such arrangements could be formalised. If possible, a MoU should also outline a long-term theory of change and state clearly the prerequisites for achieving objectives.

**Hidden costs** of work in the context of shrinking spaces like, for example, costs of risk management, risk premia, informal and systematic supervision/intervision, and self care should be made visible and budgeted.

### **Sustainable partnerships**

Long-term, flexible funding is not a “blank cheque”: if reliable reporting is to be ensured and the partner organisations are to be protected from (often unjustified) suspicions, strong internal systems are required. Furthermore, also in the context of long-term partnerships it is necessary to support sustainable management and to develop context-sensitive exit strategies.

#### STRENGTHENING OF FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

Particularly in the context of shrinking spaces, **supporting the partner organisations in the strengthening of financial and administrative systems** through local or regional advisory structures has proven successful. This should be maintained so that providers can continue to meet increasing regulatory requirements and, thus, be protected to a certain degree from government abuses.

#### SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

The partners’ most important resource in the funding area Human Rights is their staff who, through their knowledge, skills, and experience and the establishment of long-term relationships with decision makers and rights holders make it possible to work successfully. Especially in the context of shrinking spaces it is no longer sufficient to count exclusively on the staff members’ personal commitment and their readiness to take risks. **Adequate salaries, acceptable working conditions** and benefits proportionate to the risks such as social security and offers of self care, should be encouraged and facilitated.

## **8.3. APPROPRIATE MONITORING OF PROJECTS OF THE FUNDING AREA**

### **Adequate impact monitoring**

Objectives and indicators which are used for reporting should continue to be formulated in such a way that their achievement within one project period is realistic. However, they can be structured in a more productive manner so that data collections and reporting will support the partner organisations more effectively in project planning and management and facilitate more relevant reports.

#### USEFUL OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS

Within the framework of reporting on **individual projects, it remains reasonable to use process-related or openly formulated objectives and indicators**. As explained above (cf. chapter 7), changes at outcome or impact level are results of complex impact correlations and the conduct of numerous actors which may be influenced by a project only partially and indirectly.

Care should be taken that even indicators at process level and lower impact levels can be used appropriately also within the scope of monitoring the intended complex and long-term change processes (for instance, by means of an interactive impact structure). In the field of human rights, this is not so much a question of numerical targets (such as “200 lawsuits processed”, “20 percent increase in the membership of grassroots groups”) but of **qualitative fields of observation** (such as the reactions of relevant decision makers to partner organisations’ activities, the viability of the supported grassroots groups) which provide information whether the project is on the right track.

As shown by our field studies, partners do monitor aspects which are important for the achievement of objectives to review adequacy and effectiveness of their activities in changeable contexts. **This impact and context monitoring, which is often intuitive and implicit, should be made more explicit and continuously visible in the partner dialogue.**

#### ADEQUATE DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

As mentioned above, the collection and analysis of data within the framework of project monitoring should particularly focus on those aspects which are of importance **for project steering** in view of the long-term objectives in the respective context.

In certain situations, quantitative data may be useful, but their analysis should be systematically combined with **qualitative information**. A drop in the number of reported cases of torture in police custody, for example, may be a positive sign (decrease in human rights violations), or on the contrary it may mean that increasing repression has reduced affected persons to silence. Numbers alone will not provide any relevant information here.

It is recommended to **proceed realistically** with the (further) development of monitoring systems: the observation radius and methods should be adapted to the partner organisation's capabilities. For instance, for the examination of impacts at target group level it may be more useful to support the target populations directly by way of participative approaches in the monitoring and documentation of change processes instead of conducting methodologically difficult surveys (which, in case of incorrect sampling or other technical mistakes, would render misleading results).

#### SUPPORTIVE REPORTING

Ideally, project applications and project reports should support organisations in committing the larger part of their time and resources to the high-quality implementation of their projects. Distracting requirements ought to be minimised. Ideally, documents like **factual reports should be requested only so often as Bread for the World can read them and give feedback to the partners as to content**. In the funding area Human Rights with its long-drawn-out impact correlations, elaborate semi-annual factual reports seem to be dispensable. If the funding guideline does not permit any exceptions, semi-annual reports might be replaced by a summary of project activities.

#### Strengthening of evaluation quality

The quality of project evaluations should be strengthened for systematic reporting and learning, both at project level and the whole funding area. Evaluations will cost time and money so that they should be optimally utilized instead of being regarded merely as a matter of duty. Evaluations without any insights gained may block learning processes.

Care should be taken that the proposed types of evaluation questions and approaches meet the specific needs of human rights projects and are appropriate to the available resources. Project team members, partner organisations and evaluators must be reminded that individual evaluations of human rights work are only snapshots within the context of comprehensive, long-term impact correlations. For this reason, the **criteria "impact" and "sustainability" at project level may, in general, be examined only to a very limited extent**, for example with questions about the conditions a project has created to achieve long-term and sustainable impacts.

Moreover, it should be pointed out that reliable answers to far-reaching questions, particularly about social and developmental impacts, require relatively sophisticated methods. Therefore, if the achieved long-term developmental impacts and sustainability are to be reviewed, we recommend to replace project evaluations by more wide-ranging processes which, for example, examine a thematic country programme as a whole and, if possible, involve flanking measures (like relevant Bread for the World advocacy in the "Global North") or **combine several evaluations of individual projects**. In this way, resources can be fully committed to a longer evaluation process of high quality.

Economy should definitely be a subject of individual evaluations but it should be especially examined **at the partner organisation's level** instead of the level of an isolated project. For the rare projects in the funding area Human Rights which invest the largest share of their financial means for the production of tangible outputs clearly assignable to the project, a cost-benefit analysis may be also applied. However, as a rule it is salaries which account for the largest part of expenses of the projects in the funding area. Here, an efficiency review should focus on examining the **adequacy of resources and the quality of their use**. Excessive austerity measures like, for instance, salaries below average and

the systematic deployment of volunteers for core activities of the organisation should not be assessed as efficient but as **risks to sustainability**.

It is recommended that, especially in the context of shrinking spaces, **hidden costs** of the human rights work are made visible so that they can be appropriately budgeted in future project phases. This includes costs for positions like

- Long-term strategic planning for clear but adaptive prioritisation and monitoring at strategic level;
- Joint processes of reflection and planning together with other NGO actors of the funding area;
- Risk management inclusive of risk premia for employees such as life insurances;
- Supervision, intervision, retreats, instructions on self care for employees and volunteers;
- Reserves for emergencies and new windows of opportunity.

Apart from that, projects should be evaluated as not very efficient if they have deficiencies in strategic planning and prioritisation or in risk management and, thus, jeopardise the optimum use of funds.

#### **8.4. MAINSTREAMING OF RIGHTS-BASED APPROACHES**

Since 2011, German government development cooperation comprises a binding human rights approach. By the systematic application of rights-based approaches the effectiveness and legitimacy of Bread for the World's funding measures in the funding area and far beyond can be enhanced. For this reason, we recommend that the Work **positions itself in a more binding way** with reference to the human rights approach.

Rights-based work does not imply that partners have to expose themselves to more risks in shrinking spaces. Already the systematic involvement of all employees and the target group in project planning and monitoring is an important element of rights-based work which, especially in difficult times, may improve the cohesion in the organisation and in their work and enhance risk management. This should be promoted in the partner dialogue in such a way that project staff members of Bread for the World communicate not only with the leadership and the donor relations officers of the partner organisations but also have discussions with individual employees or groups of employees from different areas and possibly also with target group representatives. Enough time should be allowed for such processes.

#### **Gender, intersectionality, and child protection**

An important element of rights-based approaches is the perception of all members of the target groups as rights holders who are entitled to acceptance and participation in the project. Especially if the complex and multilayered power structures and inequalities among social groups are taken into account, it is important to **adopt a gender perspective and apply it consequently to project implementation**. This includes also strategies how to deal with multidimensional discrimination (intersectionality). Bread for the World can further support its partners in this matter by reflecting critically in the partner dialogue how the partner organisations concern themselves with the **diversity** of their target groups. This involves questions such as the following:

- How do the partner organisations implement gender policies in their work with clients, activists and other target groups?
- How do they ascertain whether they reach particularly marginalised groups with their activities? How can they as a more traditional human rights organisation contribute to participation, empowerment and the strengthening of the resilience of particularly marginalised people?

An exchange of experiences with feminist or other organisations in the field of human rights, which strive for the strengthening of rights holders more systematically within the country or at an international level, may be supportive here.

Wherever there are concerns with regard to a partner organisation's sensitivity for issues of gender or intersectionality the organisation should, for the time being, not yet receive any funding. Also for the recruitment of consultants and evaluation experts, gender sensitivity must be a selection criterion. This may prevent that the project will knowingly or unknowingly cause harm to persons such as women or LSBTI (**do-no-harm** principle).

## 8.5. STRENGTHENING OF RISK MANAGEMENT

In view of the increased tendency of restricting civil society activities, risk management is not only a topic for partner organisations in the funding area Human Rights. However, because of their mission to remind duty bearers of their responsibilities, partner organisations are often perceived as hostile from the side of the state and often experience oppression. For this reason, it is necessary to consciously deal with risks.

### Dealing with risks more consciously

In the partner dialogue, especially during the application process and in monitoring, **risks ought to be thematised more systematically**. In particular, **risks to rights holders** (inside and outside the partner organisations) must be named explicitly in the relevant forms and in discussions and strategies must be developed to minimise such risks.

If it is to be ensured that rules for the dealing with risks are effectively communicated and taken into account, risk analyses should be regularly conducted at partner organisations and also for the work in the “Global North”; moreover, appropriate rules of conduct should be developed, documented, communicated and reviewed.

### Taking risks into account for budget planning

As already mentioned above (sections 9.2.3 and 9.3.2), risk management should be considered for project planning and included in project budgets as a cost factor in order to

- take costs of the preparation of risk management plans, security trainings and regular security measures into account, and
- build reserves for emergencies.

Furthermore, all the partners in the funding area should be informed systematically about the support offered by Bread for the World in the event of a crisis and how this support can be mobilised.

### Reviewing and reinforcing instruments

Both at Bread for the World and at the partners in the funding area, existing instruments for risk management ranging from early prevention through to prompt action in case of emergency should be reviewed.

#### COMMUNICATION AT THE OCCURENCE OF RISKS

In the relationship between Bread for the World and the partners, a **prompt and open exchange** of information on attacks against specific organisations or persons is a precondition for joint risk management. Communication must take place in **both directions**, not only from threatened partners to Bread for the World but also vice versa. If, for example, unknown persons contact employees of the Work with accusations against partner organisations, the partners concerned should be informed immediately to clarify the facts and consider countermeasures.

#### DIGITAL SECURITY

**Secure communication** and data security (for instance, of data bases on human rights violations or data bases of trade unions on their members) plays an increasingly important role particularly in repressive environments. Bread for the World is able to support organisations in the field in the exchange of experiences about this issue and, thus, learn from each other. In addition, we recommend that Bread for the World should inspect its own communication (especially in respect of the electronic transmission of sensitive information) and improve it if required, in particular if risks arise for the partners from the current practice.







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