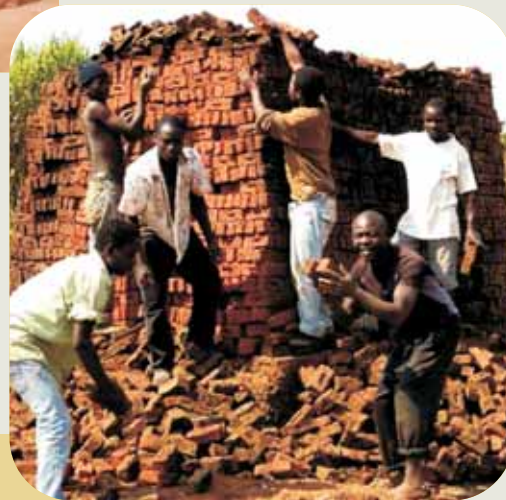


ENGAGEMENT OF INDIAN CSOs IN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

A Compilation of Case Studies



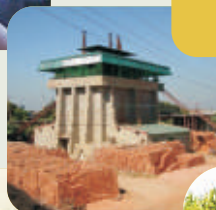


Knowledge. Voice. Democracy.

PRIA

ENGAGEMENT OF INDIAN CSOs IN SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION

A Compilation of Case Studies



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Society for **Participatory Research in Asia**

42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area

New Delhi – 110062 India

Tel: +91-11-2996 0931/32/33

Fax: +91-11-2995 5183

Email: info@pria.org

Website: www.pria.org

Content

Acknowledgement	i
Preface	ii
Acronyms.....	iii
Engagement of Indian Civil Society in South-South Cooperation	1
Transfer of Technologies for Sustainable Development: The Experience of Development Alternatives Group.....	14
African Livelihoods Partnerships (ALPs): A Case Study of Basix.....	24
Reforming Competition Regimes in Developing Countries: The Experience of CUTS International.....	35
Making Municipalities Participatory and Accountable in India, Bangladesh and Cambodia: The Experience of Participatory Research in Asia	46
Strengthening People’s Organisations and NGOs in Africa: SETU Africa Programme of VimoSEWA	56
On-Farm Productive Water Development and Management - Greening the Central RiftValleyofEthiopia: The Experience of KABIL.....	65
Addressing Challenges of Inclusion for the Urban Poor: The Experience of Shack/Slum Dwellers International.....	72
Catalysing Sustainable Environmental Practices in South Asia by Centre for Science and Environment.....	85
Curtailing Illicit Financial Flows in Asia: The Experience of Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability	92

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Dr Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay
Director, PRIA

Preface

The first public articulation of south-south cooperation (SSC) began after the Second World War, when the first prime minister of independent India Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru mobilised his fellow leaders in Asia and Africa to begin the journey of development together. Over the past seven decades, SSC as a fulcrum of development thinking was largely overshadowed by OECD principles and practices of development cooperation. It is only in the past decade that renewed discourse in SSC has begun as many erstwhile developing countries have emerged as donors in development cooperation.

Even today, much of the discourse on SSC is posited as 'G2G' (Government to Government) cooperation. Little attention has been paid to the long and significant history of 'C2C' or 'P2P' (civil society and people-led efforts) approaches to development cooperation. Indian civil society has been an active promoter of people-to-people development cooperation for many decades. One of the early examples of such SSC is the promotion of India Mark 2 handpump which was invented and implemented on Indian soil by voluntary organisations in the 1960s and then spread in Africa. Many other examples of such practices can be quoted – from cooperatives to women's literacy to water harvesting, solar energy, participatory methodologies, organic agriculture, sericulture, etc.

As the global tapestry of development cooperation has begun to shift significantly in this decade, it is important to capture contemporary urges in civil society-led SSC efforts in India. This document is presenting a number of recent examples to illustrate the dynamic nature of such cooperation in contemporary India.

However, the pattern of such SSC efforts has started including multiple stakeholders. Many efforts involve governments and academia; involvement of 'northern' actors (both government and non-government) has become quite explicit. Next generation SSC programmes of Indian civil society may more explicitly include private business. The potential for all-round benefits from such programmes is immense. But, future effectiveness of such SSC programmes of Indian civil society will depend on support from Indian policy-makers, government leaders and civil society itself.

We hope that this document helps to contribute towards better appreciation of value-addition of Indian civil society-led SSC programmes.

Dr Rajesh Tandon
Founder-President, PRIA

Acronyms

ALIF	African Livelihood Investment Fund
ACHR	Asian Coalition for Housing Rights
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AirMAC	Air Resource Management Centre
ALPs	African Livelihoods Partnerships
BEPS	Base Erosion and Profit Shifting
CBGA	Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability
CBOs	Community Based Organisation
CCI	Competition Commission of India
CCODE	Centre for Community Organisation and Development
CHODAWU	Conservation, Hotel, Domestic and Allied Workers Union
CIDR	Centre International de Developpment et de Recherche
CIRC	CUTS Institute for Regulation and Competition
CKDUe	Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Etiology
CLIFF	Community Led Infrastructure Financing Facility
CPD	Centre for Policy Dialogue
CRDB	Cooperative Rural Development Bank Plc
CRV	Central Rift Valley
CSE	Centre for Science and Environment
CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
CUTS	Consumer Unity and Trust Society
DA	Development Alternatives
DAC	Development Assistant Committee
DID	Department for International Development
DLDG-SAA	Deepening Local Democratic Governance through Social Accountability in Asia
DPA	Development Partnership Administration
DTA	Double Tax Agreements
EBP	Entrepreneurial Business Planning
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
EURODAD	European Network on Debt and Development
FIAC	Facility for Investment Climate Advisory Services
FIDC	Forum for Indian Development Cooperation
FIT	Field Innovation Testing
FTC	Financial Transparency Coalition
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Green House Gas
GIZ	Gesellschaft fur Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GoI	Government of India
GTZ	German Technical Cooperation
HI	Homeless International
HNSA	HomeNet South Asia
IB	Intelligence Bureau
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IFFs	Illicit Financial Flows
ILRT	Livelihoods Research and Training
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INCSOC	The International Network of Civil Society Organisations on Competition
INRM	Integrated Natural Resource Management
IOCU	International Organisation of Consumer Unions
IT	Information Technology
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme
JSAPMDD	Jubilee South – Asia Pacific Movement on Debt and Development
KBC	Kadam Badhate Chalo

LATINDADD	Latin American Network on Debt, Development, and Rights
LBCs	Livelihood Business Centres
LHL	Litenga Holdings Ltd
LSC	Land Services and Citizenship Programme
MCR	Micro Concrete Roofing
MEA	Ministry of External Affairs
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MFIs	Microfinance Institutions
MIFED	Microfinance et Development
MIS	Management Information System
MM	Mahila Milan
MoCA	Ministry of Corporate Affairs
MRTPA	Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act
MRTPC	Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NRG	National Reference Group
NSDF	National Slum Dwellers Federation
NSPs	National Strategic Partners
NYPBC	Nyassa Youth Producer Business Centre
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OPWDM	On-Farm Productive Water Development and Management
PAMIGA	Participatory Microfinance Group for Africa
PRIA	Society for Participatory Research in Asia
PSPD	People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy
SABAH	SAARC Business Association of Home-based Workers
SAFC	Social Accountability Facilitation Committee
SAWTEE	South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment
SCO	Shanghai Cooperation Organisation
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SDI	Shack/Slum Dwellers International
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Cooperation
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association
SEWU	Self-Employed Women's Union
SFSA	Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture
SLAs	Savings and Loans Associations
SPARC	Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centre
SSC	South-South Cooperation
TARA	Technology and Action for Rural Advancement
TI	Transparency International
TIEA	Tax Information Exchange Agreements
ToR	Terms of Reference
TOT	Training of Trainers
TRIMs	Trade Related Investment Measures
UCLG	United Cities and Local Government
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDEF	UN Democracy Fund
UPFI	Urban Poor Fund International
USBK	Vertical Shaft Brick Kiln
WEG	Women Economic Groups
WIEGO	Women in Informal Economy: Globalising and Organising
WISE	Women in Self-Employment

Engagement of Indian Civil Society Organisations in South-South Cooperation

- *Kaustuv Kanti Bandyopadhyay and Rajesh Tandon*

India in the world

Till a decade ago, India was viewed predominantly as a poor developing country with low visibility on the global polity and economy. Since the last decade, India appears to be writing a dynamic new future not only as an acknowledged leader of the South but transcending to play a larger global role. India is in the process of redefining its role and position both at the regional and global level.

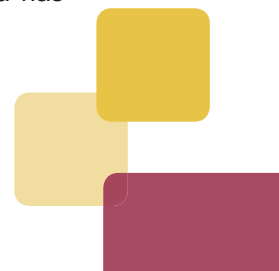
The economic liberalisation following the 1990s fuelled the annual GDP growth rate of India to 6-7 percent. The economic growth following liberalisation continued and picked up pace; and from 1994 the GDP growth rate has surpassed the 7 percent mark for three consecutive years and over the last decade has averaged over 6 percent per annum. Consequently, India's global presence has steadily become more visible. Two issues are shaping India's rise in the political dividend it has garnered as the world's largest democracy and its growing economic status.

After receiving international development assistance for nearly five decades, in 2003, India announced that only five countries and the European Union were to be allowed to continue providing development assistance. During his budget speech of February 2003, the Union Finance Minister announced that the Government would be discontinuing its government-to-government development cooperation with all but six bilateral donors (Department for International Development, UK; Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH or GIZ, Germany; Japan International Cooperation Agency, Japan; United States Agency for International Development, USA; the Russian Federation; and the European Commission). Formal guidelines to this effect were subsequently issued in September 2003, which specified that government-to-government cooperation with these donors would not be renewed after on-going programmes were completed. These donors were also told that they could continue their cooperation by channelling their funding/assistance through NGOs and multilateral agencies.

These new Official Development Assistance (ODA) guidelines took many donors by surprise, leading to mixed reactions. On the one hand, some bilateral agencies were keen to continue and be involved in India's development process while others decided to cut back and phase out ODA in India and channel it to other countries in Asia and Africa.

This policy was overturned by the subsequent Congress-led government, which allowed donors providing more than US\$25 million per year to continue to provide assistance. However, given the uncertainty in policy, many of the previously rejected donors began reconsidering their assistance to India when on-going packages were completed.

India's emergence as a possible super power and its expanding domestic market along with its rising stature in international forums has set a very optimistic future. In 2010 alone, as many as twenty-four heads of state/government had visited India including the top leaders of the world's five most powerful countries (most notably known as the P-5) and signed deals worth billions of dollars with India. In fact, it was business which took centre stage in bilateral talks. With the exception of China, all other leaders supported India's candidature for a permanent UN Security Council seat. Nuclear-armed India has



emerged as the world's largest democracy. In May 2011, Manmohan Singh, the former Prime Minister of India, visited Africa to attend the second 'India-Africa Summit' in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and pledged a US\$5 billion aid package for Africa. At the conclusion of the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in October 2015, the Indian Prime Minister doubled its pledge and offered US\$10 billion in concessional credits to Africa over the next five years. The new loan offer would be in addition to the US\$7.4 billion in soft loans and US\$1.2 billion in aid provided since the first India-Africa Summit in 2008. India's new offer includes a grant assistance of US\$600 million; an India-Africa Development Fund of US\$100 million; an India-Africa Health Fund of US\$10 million; 50,000 scholarships in India over five years; and expansion of the Pan Africa E-Network to institutions of skills, training and learning across Africa. The Indian presence will not only enhance commerce and infrastructure but also include other key development areas, such as education and training. Besides Africa, India is also trying to expand its relations with other regions in the seemingly multi-polar world and not confine itself with traditional ally Russia or the new friend, USA. In June 2011, in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan, India also expressed its interest to become the full member showing its desire for a bigger stake in the Eurasian region. Thus, the near 9 per cent economic growth and a huge market are the reasons which are prompting India to be an influential world leader gaining substantial attention (Pomeroy, et. al, forthcoming).

India is seen as a rapidly rising global power by virtue of being the largest democracy and having younger demographics, and is one of the top five economies of the world today. As a member of the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and Asian Development Bank (ADB), India has increased its stakes and influence following the global financial crisis of 2008. In new multilateral mechanisms like G20, IBSA and BRICS, India's influence is increasingly being felt. Indian business enterprises (both public and private) have been making their presence felt around the world. Indian investment abroad in 2012 was higher than foreign investment in India.

In recent years the volume and diversity of Indian development cooperation, under the broad rubric of South-South Cooperation (SSC), has grown dramatically. SSC is a general term used to characterise the development cooperation between developing countries. It makes a distinction from the development cooperation led by OECD/DAC member countries where the northern countries provide aid and development assistance to southern developing countries. The new government which came in power in May 2014 at the centre has indicated that this cooperation, through a variety of instruments like, Technical Assistance, Training and Capacity Building, Trade and Investment, Concessional Line of Credit and Financial Assistance will continue to expand. India, so far, has largely relied and engaged government and business institutions to implement its development cooperation with other developing countries.

In this context, the Ministry of External Affairs has set up Development Partnership Administration (DPA) under its aegis. DPA is expected to support in the consolidation of outgoing aid and streamline all administrative matters related to this process. The stated mission of DPA is ensuring efficient execution of India's, development projects through the stages of concept, launch, implementation and commissioning.

Indian CSOs in the current context

In the last three decades, Indian CSOs are experiencing certain major changes. First, being categorised as a 'lower middle income country' by the World Bank and OECD/DAC a large number of official donors and their recipient International NGOs have either withdrawn or declined aid resources in India. Indian CSOs who have traditionally been receiving developmental resources from such sources are now faced with a declining resource scenario. Second, the funding sources for CSOs from the central and state governments are now primarily geared towards service provision and administered through 'tender' based approaches. In addition, as many accountant and managerial consultancy firms have entered the social development and service provision arena, competition has increased between the former and the latter. It has also resulted in declining resources to support actions for such issues as social mobilisation, capacity building, empowerment, etc. Advocacy organisations, specifically, that are engaged in policy advocacy, also fall in this line. Third, over the years micro finance has become the 'business model' for many CSOs to pursue financial sustainability for the organisations, which has undermined the social and political empowerment of the marginalised. Finally, with proliferation of the private sector and accumulation of enormous fortunes amassed by taking advantage of governmental deregulation, economic liberalisation and globalisation, many such private companies have started promoting corporate social responsibility (CSR) and private philanthropic activities. However, it is not obvious that CSOs are the primary vehicles of promoting CSR (ibid).

The voluntary sector in India is not untouched from global linkages spanning countries and economies and the consequent repercussions. The global recession of 2008-09 has affected the voluntary sector in many developing countries, including India, as the crisis has manifested itself in the form of dried up funds for development. The slowdown in the US economy and the debt crisis in Europe have stirred things up in the remotest of Indian towns and villages, with NGOs feeling the pinch due to cutbacks of 20-40 percent by Western donors. Many small NGOs are facing a viability problem with their coffers drying up. Some have had to shut down their projects.

The Indian government has tightened the rules on NGOs over the past few years, following protests that delayed several important industrial projects. Essentially, trouble for many activist groups in India began when the former Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh blamed groups from the US for provoking anti-nuclear protests against a Russian-backed project in Koodankulam (Tamil Nadu). The government sealed the accounts of many NGOs involved in these protests. About a dozen NGOs have got their permission to receive foreign donations revoked. As per the government these organisations were allegedly engaged in activities that harm the public interest. Also, the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) permits of several thousands of small NGOs were cancelled for what officials said was inadequate compliance with reporting requirements.

Within the first few months of the National Democratic Alliance led government which came in power in May 2014, the Intelligence Bureau (IB) of India had submitted a classified document to the Prime Ministers' Office identifying several foreign-funded NGOs that are allegedly negatively impacting economic development. The negative impact on GDP growth was assessed to be 2-3 percent per annum, identifying several projects that were stalled because of NGO-assisted agitations against nuclear power plants, uranium mines, coal-fired power plants, farm biotechnology, mega industrial projects, hydroelectric plants and extractive industries. The report suggested that while caste discrimination, human rights and big dams were earlier chosen by international organisations to discredit India at global forums, the recent shift in the choice of issues was to encourage "growth-retarding campaigns"

focussed on extractive industries, genetically-modified organisms and foods, climate change and anti-nuclear issues. According to the report, the funding for such campaigns came from foreign donors under charitable garb for issues ranging from protection of human rights, violence against women, caste discrimination, religious freedom, etc., or to enable justice to project-affected displaced persons or for protection of livelihood of indigenous people.

Unlike in many smaller developing countries, the quantum of resources invested through NGOs for development work in India is negligible. In the current Indian economic scenario, the share of ODA is minuscule. However, many of these NGOs are engaged in activities that are essential for the vibrancy of Indian democracy such as holding governments and institutions accountable and standing up for the rights of people, particularly the marginalised and the voiceless. Moreover, they also experiment with innovative ideas that strengthen sustainable development and democratic governance. In the overall anti-NGO rhetoric, therefore, what gets muted is the precious voice of civil society, which a democracy like India cannot live without.

While Indian government and business establishments are going global, most Indian CSOs have largely remained domestically focused in their development efforts. Although Indian CSOs collectively are concerned about declining international support for development activities, they are not collectively focussed on the "impact of India outside India". Over the last few year's a group of Indian CSOs have been focussing on India's positioning in the global context as well as the role of India's policy, investments and international activities which have dramatically changed.

One of the significant developments in facilitating civil society engagement in official SSC in India was the creation of the Forum for Indian Development Cooperation (FIDC). It was launched in January 2013 with an idea of exploring various facets of development cooperation, which would also seek to draw upon India's own experience. The steering mechanism includes a number of Indian CSOs and academic institutions as well as representation from the DPA. Over the last two years, FIDC has been playing a critical role not only in bringing out information related to India's development cooperation in a systematic manner but also creating appropriate platforms for dialogues between Indian CSOs by organising several conferences, workshops and seminars across the country. Such events have been attended by a large number of CSOs. On the occasion of the Third India Africa Summit Forum in New Delhi, FIDC with support from the MEA published "India Africa Partnership: Towards Sustainable Development" – a compilation of case studies on India's development cooperation in Africa. It also included several case studies on the work of Indian CSOs work in Africa.

The present study

The roles and contributions of indigenous Indian CSOs in national and sub-national development have been well recognised and analysed by a number of practitioners, scholars and academicians. A plethora of documentation and research studies have been undertaken in the past to analyse the variety of interventions and contributions towards social change, many of which are available in the public domain. In the past decades, many Indian CSOs have also extended their contributions to transnational activities and international discourses on development in myriad forms. However, a systematic analysis of these experiences is meagre. In recent years, with the growing presence of Indian government and business sector in global development, the documentation, analysis and dissemination of such CSO experiences has become undeniably critical.

With this backdrop, PRIA with support from the Heinrich Boell Foundation, India undertook the documentation of Indian CSOs development cooperation initiatives in other developing countries. The present study tried to bridge this knowledge gap through addressing the following research objectives.

- ▶ To document the projects and programmes undertaken by Indian CSOs in other developing countries and analyse their contributions towards sustainable development.
- ▶ To document and analyse the role and contribution by Indian CSOs in the global development discourse including global campaigns and advocacy.
- ▶ To identify challenges faced by Indian CSOs in undertaking transnational and global activities with special emphasis on challenges related to capacities, resources and legal environment.
- ▶ To identify opportunities for Indian CSOs to strengthen their role and to enhance effectiveness in undertaking transnational and global development activities.

Before we proceed to describe the present study a few comments on the forms, functions and roles of Indian CSOs might be pertinent. Civil society in India covers both informal individual initiatives as well as those of more formally structured organisations (Tandon 2002a).

▶ Forms of civil society

Tandon (2002b) opined that civil society as an operational construct could be viewed as public space, a social movement or an organisation. Thus, he classified civil society into three main forms.

- Civil society can be seen as a movement for advancing various causes. These can be movements for rights to entitlement or protest movements against policies and actions. Civil society as a movement enables organised efforts at raising the voice of those who are typically not heard.
- Civil society is also a set of organisations. These are primarily self-help, mutual help and mutual support groups. Through them, families and citizens get together and look after their common public good, e.g., neighbourhood associations, village councils, local sports and culture groups, trade unions, cooperatives and social clubs.
- Civil society as intermediary organisations that enhance the capacities, voices and articulations of other citizens. Advocacy, campaigning, information dissemination, research and development also serve as arenas for action by them.

▶ Roles of civil society

Bandyopadhyay (2013) studied intermediary CSOs and summarised the roles and contributions of intermediary CSOs as follows:

- Provisioning of services to excluded and unreachable.
- Promoting and scaling-up innovations in participatory development practices.
- Promoting economic and political empowerment of marginalised through mobilisation and awareness building.
- Promoting active citizenship and access to rights and entitlements.
- Supporting governance reforms and democracy building with a bottom-up approach.
- Promoting policy discourses on public good.

The roles played by CSOs in India can be classified into two time periods, i.e., before and after economic liberalisation. The CSOs in India played three major roles before the 1990s these are as follows (Goswami and Tandon 2013):

- CSOs brought certain critical developmental issues and concerns to the attention of policy makers and made them open for wider public debate.
- CSOs experimented with various developmental models and solutions to address the socio-economic problems of the society.
- CSOs played a major role in highlighting the plight of the most deprived sections of society.

In the wake of liberalisation during the 1990s, the state started withdrawing from many of its welfare responsibilities. Consequently, civil society is encouraged now to take up this new space and responsibilities. There are three new roles performed by CSOs in this scenario.

- *Innovation:* CSOs have experimented and come up with new models and methods such as sustainable and people-centred development.
- *Empowerment:* CSOs are involved in empowering socio-economically marginalised and exploited sections of society.
- *Research and advocacy:* CSOs undertake public education and policy advocacy through their research on the issues of women, dalits, tribes, environment, and so on.
- *Deepening democracy:* the role of CSOs in making Indian democracy alive and inclusive is commendable. CSOs are engaged in a wide spectrum of activities which encompass issues of governance, advocacy, policy making and facilitating people's participation through awareness generation.
- *Inclusion:* Integrating the excluded sections of society within the global economic chain by developing their income-generating skills and capacities and providing them with required financial services and market linkages.
- *Holding the government and its institutions accountable:* Civil society in the form of non-formal and sporadic protest movements has made the government take notice of people's concerns and issues. Furthermore, civil society in the form of non-formal and unregistered coalitions/platform, voluntary in nature, perform the role of monitoring government functions and highlights any explored lacuna through their network of CSOs.
- *Asserting political identity:* Issues of civil liberty and political assertion of minority communities including women, scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and others have captured a lot of civil society space and in the process are creating pressure on the state in an unprecedented way.

Summarising the above discussion on the forms, functions and roles of civil society, it can be argued that civil society is in continuous process of attuning to the ever changing socio-economic-political milieu. CSOs are continuously tweaking strategies in order to be relevant and indispensable in changing times.

While service delivery and community building still remain the main pillars of CSOs, it is the role of CSOs as advocating for rights that have gained much currency and prominence in the last two decade. The changing political milieu in India has brought forth issues and demands for transparency and accountability by people from the government and its institutions. CSOs, among others, have played a prominent role in bringing forth these demands through various campaigns and movements. By virtue of entering this contested arena, there is an apparent strain in relations between the state and CSOs.

The present study sought to document case studies of nine credible Indian CSOs which extended development cooperation in Asian and African countries. A brief description of the nature of development cooperation for each case study is presented below.

Development Alternatives: *The case study demonstrates an effective model of technology transfer to other developing countries like Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Malawi in the areas of resource efficient building material technologies and production systems that contribute to sustainable infrastructure development and job creation.*

Basix: *Low agricultural productivity, little or no vocational skills, and massive financial exclusion are some of the causes for entrenched poverty in many developing countries. The case study illustrates how Basix, based on decades of experience in India, made efforts to enhance livelihoods of the poor in select African countries in a sustainable, scalable and innovative manner.*

CUTS International: *Fair competition among enterprises is critical to a country's economic growth. However, many developing countries lack appreciation and capacity to institutionalise a competition regime with supportive policies and institutions. The case study analyses the capacity building, technical assistance and advocacy efforts provided by CUTS International to many Asian and African countries.*

PRIA: *Despite growing urbanisation, there is colossal gap in quality of public services provided by the municipalities and local bodies in many Asian countries. Lack of citizen engagement, transparency and accountability in decision making and lack of planning capacities are critical factors which affect public service delivery. The case study illustrates an initiative of PRIA, implemented in India, Bangladesh and Cambodia, to improve citizen engagement, transparency and accountability of municipalities involving CSOs, municipalities and other stakeholders as partners.*

VimoSEWA: *Social and economic protection of women engaged in the informal sector is an issue in almost all developing countries. Despite many progressive policies, access to financial and insurance institutions for these women workers remains an area of concern. The case study analyses the SETU Africa Programme implemented by VimoSEWA to provide support to women workers in a number of African countries to form their own organisations and an insurance programme in which they themselves are users, owners and managers of all services.*

KABIL: *The situation of endemic poverty regions in many parts around the world is characterised by low skills, lack of farm production knowledge, non-existing or distant markets, lack of capital, little access to water for irrigation (and drinking), community involvement, and gender inequities. The case study looks at an example of technology transfer by KABIL to address some of these challenges faced by some rural communities living in Central Rift Valley of Ethiopia.*

Shack/Slum Dwellers International: *Lack of access to basic services including affordable housing to the urban poor is an issue ubiquitous to most developing countries. The case study focuses on how Shack/Slum Dwellers International emerged as a transnational network of the urban poor with support from SPARC, National Slum Dwellers Federation and Mahila Milan. Shack/Slum Dwellers International creates knowledge and strategies to help urban poor communities to transform themselves from beneficiaries and consumers of aid and assistance into actors who demonstrate possible ways for governments and international agencies committed to exploring development solutions.*

Centre for Science and Environment: *South Asia presents a rich environmental diversity; however, it is also exposed to massive degradation. The case study illustrates the efforts of Centre for Science and Environment to support a variety of institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, in some South Asian countries to address a range of issues related to environmental degradation.*

Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability: *Illicit financial flows (IFF) are illegal movements of money or capital from one country to another that are illegally earned, transferred, and utilised. Over the past half century, IFFs have proliferated in the global financial system. The problem of IFFs cannot be tackled by an individual country as illicit capital leaves one country to land in another. The case study illustrates the formation, functioning and impact of Asia Network of Financial Transparency Coalition (FTC), led by Centre for Budget and Governance Analysis. FTC is a global network of civil societies, governments, and experts working towards curtailing IFF through the promotion of a transparent, accountable, and sustainable financial system that works for everyone.*

The value addition of Indian CSO-led SSC

The analysis of nine case studies offers important lessons in terms of added value of Indian CSOs led SSC. Such value addition has a greater potential to complement the conceptualisation and implementation of government to government and business to business development cooperation.

Addressing the needs of the most marginalised: A number of project initiatives documented here directly addressed the needs of the most marginalised and vulnerable people. The African Livelihood Partnerships (ALPs) initiative by Basix enhanced livelihood options for the poor in select African countries in a sustainable, scalable and innovative manner. The ALPs worked with vulnerable populations like smallholder farmers, including pastoralists and fishermen, women as micro-entrepreneurs and homemakers, and the youth, who are aspiring and jobless. The low cost and environment friendly technology innovated and promoted by Development Alternatives helped in making building materials accessible to the poor and provided them employment opportunity in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. It also helped in post-Tsunami reconstruction work in Indonesia. The SETU Africa Programme of VimoSEWA promoted an integrated approach to poverty reduction and self-reliance for women and families in five African countries, through microfinance, microenterprise and livelihoods promotion, micro-insurance, health and child care and capacity-building for leadership and management by local people, especially women. The pressing needs of the urban poor to access basic services including water, sanitation and housing were addressed by Shack/Slum Dwellers International.

Transfer of Indian innovations and knowledge: Almost all the project initiatives were first piloted, tested and implemented successfully in India to address some development challenge. The innovations have been refined and knowledge has been harvested, before such initiatives were tried in other developing countries. This approach has enhanced the likelihood of success in transferring Indian knowledge and experience to be adapted and implemented in other contexts. The social accountability approach of PRIA to make local governance institutions more participatory, accountable, transparent and responsive to the needs of citizens have been experimented in several Indian cities before those were tried in Bangladesh and Cambodia. SEWA's decades of experience in mobilising and organisation building of women in India was successfully tried in African countries. Enormous experience of CUTS International and Centre for Science and Environment to work respectively with competition authorities

and environment regulatory authorities in India created demands from other South Asian and African countries for transfer of knowledge and intervention approaches.

Multi-stakeholder learning and capacity building: Successful development interventions always require learning new knowledge as well as adopting new practices by all stakeholders. Change in one stakeholder may not result in sustainable development. Most project initiatives have tried to create a favourable ecosystem in which multiple stakeholders developed new knowledge, capacities and practice to effect positive change. For example, Development Alternatives has worked with local communities, local NGOs, local private entrepreneurs, government authorities and international donors in promoting Vertical Shaft Brick Kiln (VSBK) as an energy efficient technology for greening the brick industry in Bangladesh and Malawi. PRIA worked with local communities, local municipalities, local CSOs, media, utility companies and national ministries in improving public service delivery by promoting participatory governance at the local level. The actors in Shack/Slum Dwellers International through experience have perfected a methodology what they called 'horizontal exchange ritual' involving the communities of urban poor, local government officials, ministers and other stakeholders where a multi-stakeholder team learns a new practice together led by the community.

Deepening ownership, mutual trust and accountability: Drawing from the approach to learning together with multiple stakeholders, most project interventions right from the conceptualisation stage took steps for deepening local ownership and responsibility as well as enhancing mutual trust while holding each other accountable for project results. While for most projects the starting point was innovating development solutions in the Indian context, none of the projects tried a blue/print approach. Before implementing a project intervention, most projects undertook analysis of the context and designed the interventions accordingly with active involvement of local actors. For example, Centre for Science and Environment, during the inception period of its project, set a key goal to develop specific work plans for each South Asian country. The scoping phase identified potential partners and stakeholders in various countries in the region. This involved exploration to understand and document leading environmental issues, explore institutional frameworks and government and community initiatives. This approach in turn helped the environment authorities in Bhutan and Sri Lanka to adopt relevant laws and practises. SETU Africa Programme of VimoSEWA catalysed local trade unions and cooperatives of women in many African countries which not only emulated certain interventions promoted by VimoSEWA but also adapted many approaches in their own context. For example, after visiting SEWA Bank's pension programme, the Organisation for Women in Self-Employment (WISE) in Ethiopia designed a micro-pension scheme called "Saving Today for Tomorrow" for their co-operative members. The rituals promoted by the community members of Shack/Slum Dwellers International are now owned and practiced by the communities of the urban poor in 33 countries. In most cases, relationship and mutual trust preceded the conceptualisation and implementation of the joint project. Mutual learning, sharing of resources and horizontality have been the hallmarks of such development cooperation.

Local action with global coalition building: One of the significant characteristics of Indian CSOs is their historical connection with the global development community. Many CSOs have led, catalysed and participated in numerous global and regional networks and platforms in addressing a variety of issues related to development, democracy and governance. For example, CUTS International became a member of the International Organisation of Consumer Unions (IOCU – now known as Consumer International) as early as 1991. It also catalysed South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), a network of CSOs in South Asia, in 1994 to build capacity to understand the effects of globalisation and to engage with the WTO. In addition, CUTS also developed the International

Network of Civil Society Organisations on Competition (INCSOC) to raise global awareness on the issues related to competition regimes. PRIA catalysed the formation of LogoLink – a global network on citizen participation and local governance, to facilitate learning across multiple actors. SEWA is member of a global network of informal workers called Women in Informal Economy: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) focused on securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. It has also catalysed the formation of StreetNet International, a global organisation of street-vendors which represents their issues and struggles for their rights. SEWA also facilitated the formation of HomeNet South Asia (HNSA) which is a network of home-based workers' organisations representing over 290,000 home-based workers from five countries in South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). Shack/Slum Dwellers International itself was catalysed by Indian counterpart NSDF, SPARC and Mahila Milan, which is now active in 33 countries. Development Alternatives and Centre for Science and Environment have made significant global footprints on issues related to environmental degradation and climate change. Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability has similarly catalysed the formation of Asia Network of Financial Transparency Coalition (FTC) which is a global network of civil society organisations, governments and experts working towards curtailing illicit financial flows through the promotion of a transparent, accountable and sustainable financial system that works for everyone.

This connectedness helped Indian CSOs draw on international experiences as well as sharing Indian experiences in global and regional platforms. A number of such global and regional initiatives have contributed to exchanges of knowledge and capacity in many developing countries not only within the civil society sector but also among other stakeholders.

Challenges faced by Indian CSOs

These fascinating set of development interventions facilitated by Indian CSOs in Asian and African countries are not without their share of challenges. One of the greatest challenges that Indian CSOs face in transnational work is the legal environment both in India and in partner countries. Most Indian laws relevant to the voluntary sector are meant to regulate inflow of resources to CSOs, particularly from foreign donors. The current set of laws like the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, the Income Tax Act, the Societies Registration Act, and other acts pose significant legal obstructions for Indian CSOs to work in other developing countries.

Many CSO interventions required organising training, workshops, educational events, exposure visits and other capacity building events for community members, CSOs, and officials from countries to India. Most CSOs, with only a few exceptions, found it most difficult to arrange visas for such groups. As exposure to Indian experience was critical to the success of many such interventions, this difficulty added to the anxiety of many CSOs. The problem of arranging visas for delegates from other South Asian countries was ironically found to be more difficult, given the inconsistent diplomatic relationships between India and other South Asian countries. Most Indian CSOs also faced challenges for arranging short term visa for their staff when visiting other countries. The navigation of this challenge entirely depended on the relationship between the local CSO partner and the government in partner countries.

The anti-NGO rhetoric in India in the last couple of years has become a formidable challenge to promote and foster SCC by Indian CSOs. Many successful innovative solutions to sustainable development and just governance pioneered by Indian CSOs in India involved a range of stakeholders, particularly champions from within the government sector. Many such state actors who otherwise were supportive

to Indian CSOs led innovations and experimentations are now apprehensive in extending their support and cooperation. This could be a potential bottleneck in future.

Possible modalities for partnerships between DPA and Indian civil society

In the last two years, some leading Indian CSOs have made modest endeavours to initiate meaningful policy dialogue and engagement with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, through DPA. These initial engagements have been encouraging but they need to become more robust and meaningful. Evidence and lessons from Indian CSO-led development cooperation practices need to be generated and communicated to support policy advocacy for institutionalising CSO engagement in India's development cooperation.

1. Several principles need to be explicitly adopted to guide the partnership between DPA and CSOs:

- CSOs in India today are diverse, pluralistic and multi-faceted; in these partnerships, focus should be on those non-profit entities who have been undertaking development programmes in India.
- These CSOs should have at least a decade-long experience with certain areas of specialisation in community development.
- Past exposure to the context of those societies where the Indian government is undertaking projects will be helpful.
- The non-profits must have transparent and accountable governance systems with professional leadership and staffing.
- These CSOs should have an appreciation of India's global strategic position and DPA's mission and policies.
- An acknowledgement that software capacities are the main value-addition of civil society.
- An understanding within DPA that civil society actors, in partnership, are independent actors and will bring different perspectives, values and capacities than the government.

2. Several different modalities in building such partnerships can be explored:

- a) Contract for project support
 - Based on a transparent system, a number of non-profits with varying domain expertise can be short-listed, vetted and put on a sort-of rate contract mechanism so that open bidding can be reduced.
 - When DPA decides to launch a project in a certain country, it can invite some of these short-listed non-profits to support designing, planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects. Another area of comparative advantage of NGOs is facilitation of community participation and local ownership.
- b) Grants for invited thrust areas
 - DPA may identify certain thrust areas based on local demand and assessment (for example, women's livelihood, urban poor sanitation, rural drinking water, etc.). It can call for proposals (in a flexible format) from these CSOs to undertake projects which address the requirements of the identified thrust areas.

- c) Recommendation for training, education and capacity-building
 - When DPA proposes training and capacity building support to other countries, it can include:
 - Online and face-to-face educational programmes being conducted by CSOs (as many CSOs have good facilities and libraries)
 - CSOs can design and conduct the training and capacity building programmes in-situ
 - Use resource persons and expertise (including training manuals and audio-visuals) from CSOs

- d) NGO initiated projects in priority countries/themes
 - DPA may establish certain priority countries (like Myanmar, Tanzania, Cambodia, Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, etc.); it may also choose certain priority themes (like livelihood, local governance, urban poverty, women's empowerment). It can, from time to time, invite proposals from CSOs for projects in these countries and on these themes.

- e) Strategic partnerships
 - The Ministry of External Affairs can enter into strategic partnerships with certain CSOs which have a global reputation and connectivity of relationships in other Southern countries. Such partnerships could focus on south-south alliance building around certain issues (like climate change or inclusive development); they can also act as catalysts for policy advocacy in trans-national settings (such as UN agencies, BRICS, IBSA, World Bank/Asian Development Bank, European Union, etc.).

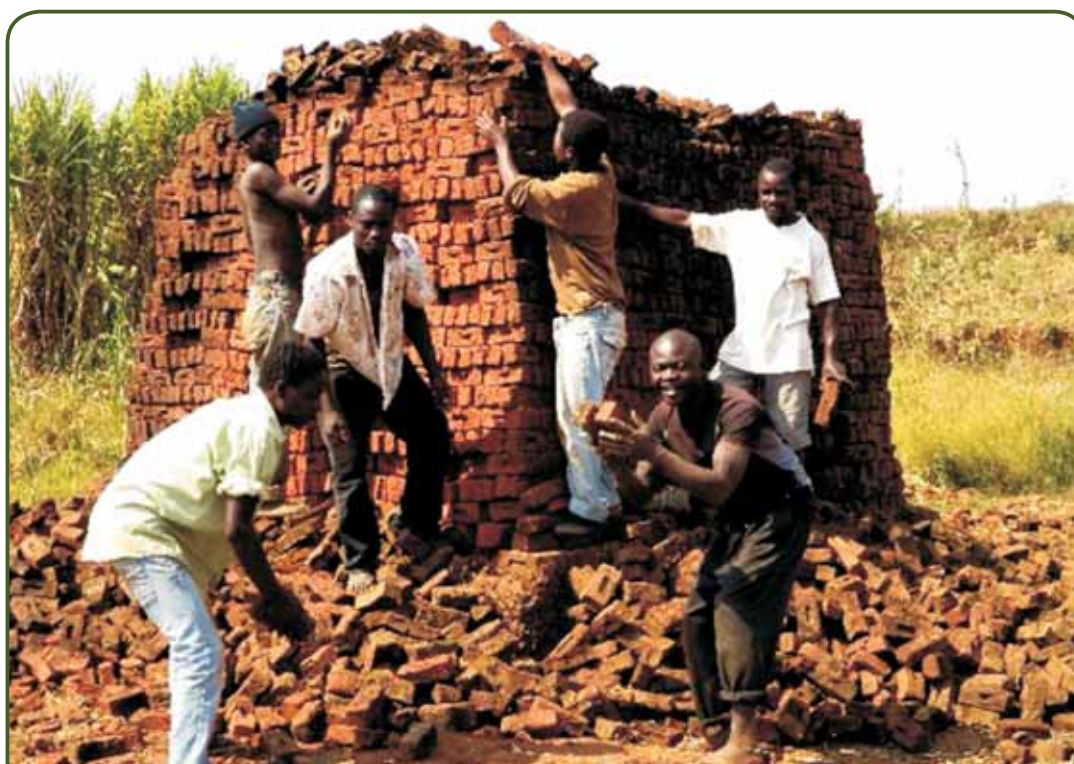
- f) Channels of ongoing communications
 - As many civil society practitioners travel to other countries, they can be enabled to connect with Indian embassy/high commission staff. These civil society practitioners can also become channels for information or the ideas they have learnt about the country they are interacting with.

Epilogue

Many Indian CSOs for decades have been implementing a wide range of projects and programmes in other developing countries, with resources from international NGOs, foundations, bilateral, multilateral agencies and occasionally with assistance from the Government of India. The practical knowledge and skills gained through implementing projects and programmes nationally and sub-nationally have been utilised by these CSOs in other developing countries with similar development contexts. However, the current official policy and practice do not adequately and explicitly recognise the existing and potential contributions of Indian CSOs in development cooperation. There is a need to carry on informed and constructive policy dialogue between government, CSOs and other actors for institutionalising CSO engagement in India's development cooperation.

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Transfer of Technologies for Sustainable Development: The Experience of Development Alternatives Group

Introduction

Development Alternatives (DA), a premier social enterprise dedicated to sustainable development, focuses on practice-to-policy perspective for delivering socially equitable, environmentally sound and economically scalable development outcomes. The DA Group has innovated eco-solutions to help meet the basic needs of all and works with partners, including micro, small, medium and large scale enterprises, government bodies, private entrepreneurs and civil society to market these in a commercially viable manner to an ever-growing body of consumers.

Construction and buildings represent an indicator of growth and development in the emerging economies. In construction; building materials account for 50-60 percent of the costs. These also account for the majority (up to 80 percent in the Indian scenario) of the Green House Gas (GHG) emissions attributed to the sector. India has had success in the last 30 years to combat climate change imperatives and integrate resource efficiency priorities.

Experience of DA Group in Technology Transfer

Over the years, the DA Group has pioneered eco-friendly, resource efficient building material technologies and production systems that contribute to sustainable infrastructure development and job creation. A large menu of eco-building products and technologies innovated by the group has resulted in the creation of a new generation of micro, small scale (MSE) building enterprises that deliver green,

affordable products to home builders. These building products and related services have reached over 1 million customers who have built new homes and upgraded existing houses and service establishments.

The DA Group through TARA (Technology and Action for Rural Advancement) provides technology transfer services in the areas of energy-efficient and environment friendly brick production technologies and systems, low emission building materials and industrial waste utilisation. TARA also has extensive experience in transfer of technologies in the South Asian and African market. Along with the transfer of technology know-how, it has also imparted training and capacity building to the entrepreneurs and workers to ensure proper functioning of the newly set-up enterprises.

Over the last 15 years, the DA Group has been actively involved in technology and knowledge transfer through South-South Cooperation to other developing countries in Asian and African countries (e.g. Nepal, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Pakistan, and Afghanistan in Asia and South Africa, Cameroon, and Malawi in Africa).

Introduction of energy efficient and environment friendly brick making technologies in Bangladesh



Green brick making with internal fuel in Bangladesh



Energy efficient brick kiln technology in Bangladesh

With Dhaka set to become one of the most populous cities in the world by 2020, the demand for utilisation of bricks for building construction is growing manifold, which in turn will drive the growth of local PM10 and global greenhouse gases emissions. Feasibility studies identified Vertical Shaft Brick Kiln (VSBK) as an energy efficiency option for greening the brick industry in Bangladesh. A consortium led by the DA Group including Skat Consulting, Switzerland and Practical Action, Bangladesh introduced VSBK as a demonstration package to Bangladesh entrepreneurs to create awareness for alternate means of reducing air pollution. The VSBK technology had by then established as a cutting edge, fuel efficient production system through a pioneering North-South initiative supported by Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) during the period 1995 to 2001. The pilot demonstration of the VSBK technology created a substantial interest amongst all the major stakeholders in the brick industry of Bangladesh. The Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of Bangladesh took a keen interest in the VSBK technology as a replacement to the existing energy and resource intensive fixed chimney kilns. Apart from reduced emissions, it also provided an enhanced profitability of around 20 percent from reduced coal and labour saving could also be achieved. Entrepreneurs were interested in adopting the same due to enhanced profits and compliance with environmental standards. Regulatory agencies were interested in enforcing the same since environmental compliance would be enhanced.

A low investment, roofing solution to aid Tsunami reconstruction in Indonesia

The 2004 tsunami left about 500,000 people homeless, in addition to numerous death tolls. Extensive efforts were put in by many organisations in order to ensure reconstruction of property and rehabilitation of the population, including HOLCIM Indonesia. In line with this objective, HOLCIM Indonesia, the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the Indonesian Institute of Architects formed an alliance to support the use of sustainable building materials and alternative construction methods oriented toward self-help housing development in Banda Aceh, the provincial capital. The DA Group collaborated with HOLCIM Indonesia for supplying TARA Micro Concrete Roofing (MCR) machines for rehabilitation-reconstruction in Banda Aceh for tsunami affected families. The consortium was convinced with the TARA Micro Concrete Roofing Tiles, as an alternate solution to the roofing. Local people were trained in setting up and operating these MCR machines. Thus in addition to providing sustainable building material, it also helped in establishing enterprises encouraging livelihood opportunities for the locals. The technology attracted interest as a micro scale enterprise that could be set up in minimum time with minimum capital, providing a quick response to areas stuck with disasters and in need of immediate action.



Production of micro concrete roofing tiles in Banda Aceh, Indonesia



Training of masons for MCR tiles roofing installation at Banda Aceh, Indonesia

Promoting entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka

Batticaloa, was one of the main Districts in East Sri Lanka that was affected by tsunami and the resultant violence. An estimated 4185 houses were damaged or fully destroyed. The Government of Sri Lanka planned reconstruction of the damaged houses as well as schools and common buildings. The supply of building materials was an acute problem due to scarcity of gravel and red earth that is the base for bricks commonly used for the construction. The production of new materials also had potential for employment opportunities as many families lost their jobs. TARA collaborated with Schwab Foundation (Leap Frog Fund) to transfer green building technologies and promote entrepreneurship in Sri Lanka. Technology and equipment for compressed earth blocks, micro concrete roofing tiles and concrete multi product (pavers) technology was transferred. These technologies used available materials thus relieving pressure on scarce resources. In this process 50 youths were trained in new technologies and entrepreneurial skills required to run them. The pilot facility served as a material bank for the region as well as a centre for dissemination of the technology to other areas. Three channel partners were established for further dissemination of the products.



Technology transfer programme – the Malawi experience

DA's technology transfer programme has entry points from the economic and environmental angles. The idea is to introduce an appropriate technology in the country after conducting an extensive feasibility assessment that includes technical, social, economic and environmental concerns. The next step is to then strengthen this transfer and disseminate the benefits to a larger stakeholder group. The objective of the programme is to locally anchor the transferred technology to augment supply of quality materials through a critical mass of production units. The TARA team optimised the use of materials; particularly cement and aggregates, to ensure affordability of the building components.

Technology Transfer



The key building blocks of this approach are described below using the case of introduction of the VSBK in Malawi.

A land locked country in Southern Africa, Malawi has one of the highest rate of urbanisation at 5.22 percent, putting tremendous pressure on the entire building material sector and the forests that are destroyed to fuel building material production. The VSBK was introduced in 2014 with the objective of reducing this pressure on natural resources while providing quality bricks in Malawi. The technology transfer programme has received positive signs in terms of acceptance among the government and support from bi-lateral agencies. However, in order to achieve impact at scale it was important to tie up the technology transfer initiative with support particularly from the policy and finance end.

Need determination

One of the first steps in the technology transfer assignment is to determine the need of the local stakeholders. This will help in establishing the right hook for the technology transfer such that it has the maximum impact. It is important to have a larger local context that establishes the need of the technology products for long term sustainability.

Technologies are not transferred for the sake of technology themselves. In Indonesia and Sri Lanka, the urgent rehabilitation need and the subsequent scarcity of building materials created the need for a rapid response to set up the technology enterprises. Also the added co-benefit of livelihood creation through these enterprises enhanced the sustainability. On the other hand, Bangladesh and Malawi the policy driver to look at alternate technologies provided a keen hook for the transferred technology.

The high urbanisation rate coupled with the bad quality of locally available bricks in Malawi promoted Centre for Community Organisation and Development (CCODE), a leading NGO in the country to explore technology options. The 21,000 housing units are required annually to meet the urban housing demand which in turn will require wood to fire bricks. Current brick production will require around 850,000 Metric Tons of wood each and every year. Bad production practices have affected the quality of bricks as well as houses built with these bricks. Poor quality housing plus the increasing deforestation in the country, has prompted the Government of Malawi to take notice of the situation and introduce cleaner production technologies. Thus the environment was right to introduce a new technology to solve these concerns.

Feasibility assessment

Once there has been a preliminary need established, it is necessary to undertake a detailed feasibility study to explore the potential for transfer of the technology in the local context. The objective is to explore how contributions can be made to improve the environmental, economic, social and institutional situation in the region. This includes the development of potential options and scenarios for the technologies to be introduced and for know-how transfer. The feasibility study comprises of the technical, environmental, social and economic aspects of current production technologies in the region. The study seeks to understand how the transferred technology would fare against these conditions and what is needed to ensure a smooth transition.

A 2012 assessment study on the feasibility of introducing cleaner production technologies in the construction sector in Malawi illustrated that all pre-requisites to transfer the VSBK technology to Malawi exists. The assessment looked at aspects of production capacity, fuel type, product quality,

investment capacity and ability to tap the carbon market. It also explored the institutional aspects and their contribution to the development of the proposed products both from a government and market perspective. There were no technical issues found in designing and constructing a kiln in Malawi. However during the initial couple of years, the design and construction of the VSBK has to be under expert supervision. The financial analysis also proved it to be a better technology than traditional clamps.

High impact demonstration

The programme has provided upcoming terms of construction, installation and commissioning. These demonstration sites had required intensive technical input initially and sustained hand holding for trouble shooting in the initial phases of the transfer. In the course of establishing the units, the technical capabilities of the local technology providers are built. Subsequent kilns will then be constructed and commissioned by the country team with only limited technical back stopping from the expert team. It is important, however to have a critical mass of demonstration units that serve to catalyse accelerated adoption among the region.

Thus DA, supported by the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Malawi introduced the VSBK technology in Malawi to deal with the dual challenge of proving quality housing to communities while mitigating environmental damage. In 2014, the technology was transferred to CCODE, Lilongwe, Malawi, a local NGO and adapted to local context by close coordination between technology providers, local support systems and entrepreneurs. This stage included the construction and commission of the kiln. To ensure sustainability, training and capacity building led to the creation of a cadre of trained workforce who will be able to independently handle the daily operation and maintenance of the kiln.



Partner engagement and network building

This is a crucial step in ensuing local anchoring of the technology for long term sustainability. DA's experience has shown that having a strong institutional local partner eases the process of the transfer. With the presence of a partner, the transferred technology is physically anchored in the region, with the ready potential for further dissemination. Besides the local partners, it is essential to create a network of stakeholders. This includes new and potential entrepreneurs from the sector, who would want to invest and adopt the transferred technologies.

CCODE has a long standing presence in Malawi. With extensive experience of working on housing projects they share a good rapport with key stakeholders in the sector. Getting CCODE as a local partner eased the way for engaging with both public and private stakeholders. Also having a local partner based in the country of transfer creates a local anchor for the technology. This creates a base of further dissemination and accelerated uptake of the technology. While there is no business / entrepreneur network in Malawi due to the informal nature of the sector, the National Construction Industry Council is used as a platform to reach out to other stakeholders.

Capacity building

Capacities are built through skill development workshops and seminars at a multitude of levels to ensure smooth functioning of the units. The pilot units are used as training grounds to build up the first cadre of skilled personnel. The approach adopted for the training is participant centred, with an emphasis on practical experiential learning by doing. They also serve as master trainers who can then set off a Training of Trainers (TOT) programme in collaboration with existing training organisations and resource agencies in order to institutionalise the process and enable sustainability even after the end of the programme.

In Malawi, 9 masons were trained in VSBK construction. 25 Kiln workers including 7 women were trained in operating and maintaining the VSBK, equipment installation and operation and green brick making. Two new technologies were introduced to improve the traditional moulding process. Eight workers were trained in the manual process while another 17 workers were trained in the semi mechanised process of green brick moulding. These were unskilled workers who were trained and have been then absorbed in EcoBricks Ltd. (the private entity currently running the kiln) thus providing them with jobs. Twelve persons (to operate in shifts) were trained in the VSBK firing operation in India and onsite in Malawi. A supervisor was trained to co-ordinate work in Malawi by EcoBricks Ltd. The technical knowledge transfer was done to him, so there is local anchoring of the knowledge.

Ecosystem development

Once the hard technology and skill sets are transferred, there is a need to focus on developing a conducive environment for the transferred technology to prosper in. Systems of knowledge, policy, markets play an important role in developing this ecosystem. Knowledge material is developed for the different stakeholders, to enable wide spread dissemination. Similarly, policy support through product standards, quality parameters, incentives for entrepreneurs adopting these technologies, etc. is another tool to enable the creation of a favourable environment.

An open information strategy was followed in Malawi with concerned government institutions, the building material production community as well as with relevant NGOs. Documentation on different aspects of the technology including details of equipment and accessories, raw material selection, production process, quality control and application was distributed among enthusiastic entrepreneurs and investors. Another activity conducted was facilitating awareness and demonstration visits of various stakeholders.

This included exposure visits to the Green Building Centre to generate interest among new entrepreneurs and other stakeholders regarding the technical features of the technologies, financial benefits associated with local production and enterprise generation capabilities. It was done both on demand as well as through specific workshops organised for this.

Lessons learnt

Experiences in all Asian and African countries have established that technology transfer programmes should include both the hardware and software skills e.g. equipment's, tools and accessories, the entire production system know-how, material testing, analysis and quality control capability. Besides the technical aspects, there are other significant aspects relating to stakeholder engagement that need intervention and influence so that sustainability of the initiatives launched are demonstrated. Thus, it requires a holistic approach that considers the technological, environmental, economic, social and institutional aspects towards a successful technology transfer programme.

Long term engagement for continued support

Mere transfer of technology to a country doesn't ensure its widespread adoption. A longer term support programme is imperative to achieve scale and impact that the technology transfer pilot envisions. There is a need to move beyond the first enterprise to create a critical mass of profitable enterprises to demonstrate the potential for change both for the entrepreneur and the local economy. This would entail a programme for technology support that is financed externally with policy support provided by the local and national government. While technology transfer initiatives often meet with positivity from early adopters, the impact of the initiative will be seen only when more and more entrepreneurs adopt the technology. Thus finance as an enabler cannot be ignored. Most developing countries are plagued by the lack of access of capital and the limited risk taking ability of locals retarding the good progress a pilot technology transfer can make. Thus it is important to seed and provide hand holding support to the first set of enterprises that will be created. There is a need to move beyond the first enterprise to create a critical mass of enterprises to demonstrate the potential for change both for the entrepreneur and the local economy. A financial mechanism for supporting Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) costs with preferential duty and tax structure for the enterprises is very effective in driving growth and consolidation of the technology transfer programme.

Capacity building for sustainability

Capacity building is key to introducing sustainability within the programme design. Most technology operations need organised training and workable skills that are a necessary prerequisite for optimised operation. Thus the critical need is to develop technical and engineering capacities to build, commission, operate and supervise. The non-availability of trained and skilled technical workforce is a major barrier in the technology transfer programme. Therefore, it is essential that training and capacity building of local workforce moves simultaneously with the technology adaptation and transfer in any country. Training on

various aspects including the operation and maintenance of technology, troubleshooting and enterprise development (which would consist of key elements such as market survey, preparation of business plan, business logistics, sales and marketing) is essential to promote the technology and achieve scale. Training cannot be adopted as a one-time initiative. Getting local capacities up to the desired skill level is an intensive long term activity and takes time. Thus, it is important to have a continued long term engagement so principles of technical management are ingrained and well established within the community of practitioners.

Partnerships for local anchoring

The introduction of technologies needs to be anchored in the local context. This is essential to create ownership and also to be able to address to development potential. This can be done either through the classical development route where the initiative and infrastructure is supported by funding agencies. The other is the commercial business approach where private sector engagement acquires a much more important role. With the growing global preference towards social enterprise and public private partnerships, it is expected that the commercial route will be the most important for rapid dissemination and multiplication.

However, initially there is a need to support entrepreneurs as they are unable to invest to build capacities on their own. This invariably is public expenditure. Here partnerships with local bodies become critical in this process of local anchoring. These include local NGOs or enterprises / business bodies who will uptake the technology, government agencies responsible for regulating the sector, training and research agencies for knowledge anchoring. One of the reasons for successful technology transfers has been DA's extensive international network of partners and collaborators. The objective is to put in place systems for local anchoring such that over time there is independence from the host (Indian, here DA) agency.

Conclusion

Technology transfer initiatives to countries in Africa and Asia offer an opportunity to further strengthen the regional capacities. It is obvious that through the strengthening of regional capacities the impact will be multiplied. Such initiatives lead to a four-fold outcome in terms of

Mitigation of environmental degradation

- ▶ Reduced climate change implications due to energy efficient processes
- ▶ Reduced pressure on forests and limited deforestation

Promotion of resource efficiency

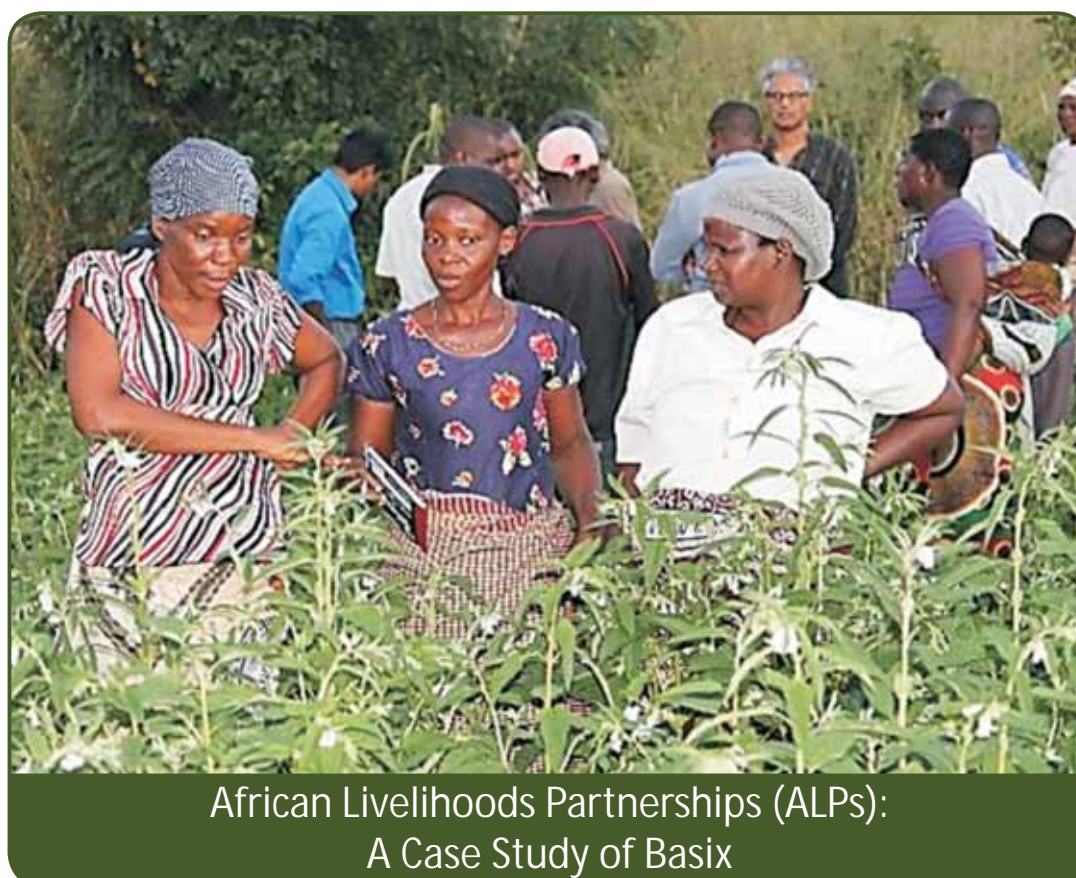
- ▶ Reduced breakages and introduction of new products like hollow bricks leading to reduced soil consumption
- ▶ Energy efficient firing process including use of waste materials leading reduced consumption of fuel (coal)

Creation of sustainable infrastructure

- ▶ Availability of quality building material for construction of infrastructure
- ▶ Reduced maintenance and rebuilding costs due to good quality construction

Development of the local economy

- ▶ Establishment of new enterprises to cater to domestic needs
- ▶ Creation of better paying decent jobs



The beginning

“Africa Rising” was the cover story of *The Economist* in December 2011. Could a rising Africa take Africans out of the clutches of poverty (caused by low agricultural productivity, little or no vocational skills, and massive financial exclusion)? The question was whether double digit growth would make a difference in the lives of the poor, for growth is not always inclusive. To ensure that growth benefited the poor more than just through “trickle-down”, efforts had to be made on the demand side by building capacities of and organising the poor.

Taking a cue from this cover story, Basix Social Enterprise Group presented the African Livelihoods Partnerships (ALPs) idea to its long-time partner, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), to promote the concept of South-South Co-operation in development. Such an ambitious project needed the experience of other participants in the field of development with deep knowledge of Africa and its developmental challenges. Basix thus reached out to CIDR (Centre International de Developpement et de Recherche, France) Bank in France, their associate Participatory Microfinance Group for Africa, France (PAMIGA) network in Africa, MIFED (Microfinance et Development) in Cameroon, K-Rep Bank in Kenya, several organizations in Tanzania, GAPI (Small Scale Investment Support Office) in Mozambique, and its own affiliates (the Institute of Livelihoods Research and Training (ILRT) in India and Livelihood Basix Inc., a non-profit incorporated in the USA, to work together to evolve a strategy to ensure more inclusive growth in Africa by supporting livelihoods for the poor.

The overall goal of ALPs was to enhance livelihoods of the poor in select African countries in a sustainable, scalable and innovative manner. ALPs would work with vulnerable populations like smallholder farmers, including pastoralists and fishermen, women as micro-entrepreneurs and homemakers, and the youth, who are aspiring and jobless. Transformational change would be catalysed through following three interventions:

- ▶ Inclusive financial services through access to savings, payments, insurance (crop and livestock insurance, health and life insurance) and credit, especially for women (for micro-enterprises, home lighting systems, water and sanitation). For youth, the focus would be on savings and micro-equity or participatory finance for start-up enterprises.
- ▶ Agriculture and rural development by increasing the output and productivity of smallholders by linking them with value chains, advisory services, and credit and insurance. Smallholder farmers were stuck in a vicious cycle of low output and low productivity, little disposable income, and thus low ability to invest in increasing output or productivity. The focus of ALP would be to mitigate their risks and help them participate in smallholder value chains of the commodities they produce.
- ▶ Human resource development focused on youth self-employment (promoting youth entrepreneurship through agro-enterprises and franchises) post vocational education and training. The ALP decided to focus on entrepreneurship first and then work with local partners to catalyse the availability of vocational training and self-employment promotion services.

Majority of the financial resources for ALPs is made available by SDC for the full six years of the project (2013-2019). Supplemental funding is to be garnered from the first year itself from other institutions such as The Ford Foundation, The MasterCard Foundation, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the Indian development aid agency and the host country governments. It is envisaged that SDC funding will go down over time.

Nature of south-south cooperation

ALPs began work in March 2013 in Tanzania, Mozambique and Cameroon, representing eastern, southern and central/western Africa¹. Basix has the primary responsibility of designing the programs of ALP, building on the experience of the African strategic partners, after identifying gaps in the developmental efforts related to the three areas of intervention in each country. Best practices have been researched to find innovative solutions to fill the identified gaps.

Basix took the primary responsibility of designing the programs of ALPs, who would use experience of the African strategic partners to identify gaps in developmental efforts related to three themes in each country. Best practices would be identified to fill these gaps. ALPs implementation strategy was to leverage the strength of its strategic partners to act as or identify others as Field Innovation Testing (FIT) partners. These could be financial or promotional institutions working with low income households in target countries, networks of rural banks or Microfinance Institutions (MFIs); actors in agricultural value chains – public or private or cooperatives, providers of vocational or entrepreneurial or self-employment training. Selected best practices would be tried out in the local context through carefully selected FIT partners, who would be local institutions, with the help of experts sourced from institutions worldwide. African knowledge partners such as

¹After 18 months, however, it was decided to wind up operations in Cameroon as the management bandwidth was not adequate to work in three countries.

universities/specialised higher education or research institutions would “accompany” the ALP interventions. They would measure the impact in an objective way and share the lessons.

The field innovations which are accepted locally and have a positive impact would then be taken up for scaling up and mainstreaming through a key institutional partner. The lessons from Africa would be systematically captured. ALP would disseminate these lessons to policymakers, first in the countries of intervention, then more widely in Africa and in India, through aid agency channels as well as the wider development fraternity. Thus the learning would be two way and the lessons of work in Africa would be systematically captured and fed back.



Figure 1: ALP Theory of Change

The field innovations which are accepted locally and have a positive impact would then be taken up for scaling up and mainstreaming through a key institutional partner. The lessons from Africa would be systematically captured. ALP would disseminate these lessons to policymakers, first in the countries of intervention, then more widely in Africa and in India, through aid agency channels as well as the wider development fraternity. Thus the learning would be two way and the lessons of work in Africa would be systematically captured and fed back.



Figure 2: Actors in ALP

Expected outcomes

- ▶ Financial institutions achieve an increased depth of outreach to target segments – small holders, women, youth and breadth by offering a wider range of financial services, in a sustainable and responsible manner.
- ▶ Incomes of smallholder farmers, male and female, were increased and see less variation.
- ▶ Young men and women set up enterprises in agriculture and growing economic sectors and while at least 10 percent become entrepreneurs and all others become self-employed after vocational training.
- ▶ Leaders of relevant institutions in the three thematic areas adopt ALPs offerings to transform themselves into effective developmental institutions, evidenced by them adopting more pro-poor, pro-women and pro-youth policies, processes and products, and practice good governance and achieve sustainability.
- ▶ ALPs set up an investment vehicle – the African Livelihood Investment Fund (ALIF) for developmental enterprises to contribute equity, debt and guarantees to value chain and service enterprises.
- ▶ ALPs would be institutionalised, that it was established as a legal entity in one of the African countries and have its own Board and be sustainable beyond SDC support.

The financial resources for ALPs were made available by the SDC for the project over the full six year period (2013-2019) with CHF 7 million out of a total of CHF 10 million. Supplemental funding would be attempted from the first year itself. It was envisaged that SDC funding would go down over time. The rest was proposed to be mobilised from other institutions such as the Ford Foundation, The MasterCard Foundation, UNCDF, the Indian government and the host country governments.

Summary of the 2013 Survey of Livelihoods in Tanzania by ALPs

The survey covered three zones of Tanzania, viz. Lake zone (Mwanza Region), Mountain zone (Kilimanjaro Region) and Plain zone (Morogoro Region). The sample was 1800 households, covering the categories men / women; youth / non-youth and farmers / non-farm workers

Demographics and poverty

- Half of surveyed youth ended their education by primary level
- Surveyed households had 2.8 dependents for every working person
- Men and women participated equally in the workforce in surveyed households
- Three-fifths of surveyed households were poor
- Wages contributed a major share to cash income of poor surveyed households
- Income poverty was six times higher among surveyed poor farm households
- Surveyed households spend about four-fifth of expenditure on food
- Surveyed households were not covered against risks to lives nor livelihoods

Role of women

- Equal numbers of females participated in workforce in surveyed households

- Women played a partial role in decision making related to livelihoods and household issues in over half of the surveyed households
- Women were partially free in terms of their social mobility in over four-fifth of surveyed households
- Women were individual or joint owners in two-fifth of surveyed non-farm enterprises

Access to financial services

- Only about one-third of surveyed households had access to any financial services from formal institutions
- Two-third of surveyed households were indebted
- Three-fifth among indebted households depended on non-institutional agencies for credit.
- Two-thirds of the indebted households borrowed for livelihood purposes
- Only about one-third of surveyed households saved in formal institutions
- Large proportion of surveyed households was not covered against risks to lives or livelihoods
- Only about one-fourth of surveyed households were protected under life risk coverage. Only about one-sixth covered had enterprise insurance coverage.

Farm based livelihoods

- Three-fourths of surveyed households used mobile technology for money transfer
- Seven-eighths of surveyed farmers used traditional technology for land preparation
- Two-thirds of the surveyed farm households used seeds retained from own production
- Close to half of the surveyed households used chemical fertiliser for productivity enhancement
- One-third surveyed households had difficulties in marketing agricultural produce
- Lack of transportation and non-remunerative prices were the major reasons for the inability to market of agricultural produce
- Post-harvest practices were utilised by only about half of the surveyed farmers
- About one-fifth of the surveyed households did not practice storage in protected structures
- About four-fifth of the surveyed households practiced livestock rearing
- Half of surveyed farm households were not able to get any extension services
- Extension services by the government had very limited outreach – only 1 percent of the surveyed farmers
- Two-fifth of the surveyed households were part of farmers' groups
- About three-fourth of the surveyed households wish to be part of or continue to be in farmers' groups
- Over four-fifth of the surveyed farm households expressed the need for training and extension services
- About two-fifth of the surveyed farmers wanted credit services, while half wanted composite financial services inclusive of credit
- While one third of the surveyed farmers expressed the need for market linkage services (input and output) about half preferred a combination of services which also incorporated extension and post-harvest services

Non-farm activity based livelihoods

- Women were individual or joint owners in two-fifth of surveyed non-farm enterprises
- Access to finance and marketing were the two major challenges affecting surveyed non-farm enterprises, affecting two-fifth of them
- About half of the surveyed non-farm households had received training for business development
- About one-third of surveyed non-farm enterprises had membership in associations
- About three out of ten surveyed non-farm enterprises had access to credit
- Four-fifths of the surveyed non-farm households expressed the need for BDS services
- Half of the surveyed non-farm households wanted a combination of services
- While a little less than half of those surveyed had attended skills training, only about one-sixth received formal skills training
- About seven-eighths of the surveyed non-farm enterprise were desirous of attending skills training

ALP programmes, so far

Establishing Livelihood Business Centres (LBCs)

Livelihood Business Centres (LBCs) were designed to provide farmers a bundle of financial services such as, credit, savings and insurance along with technical assistance to improve agronomic practices that would enhance agricultural productivity as well as higher and remunerative prices for them through aggregation and linking them to markets in an inclusive business model eco-system. Primary value addition that fetches better prices would be part of this eco-system through supporting budding entrepreneurs in establishing agro-based enterprises. The farmers would be partners of LBCs to build their own capacity for self-dependency and their own financial and market infrastructure. For the first two years under a pilot project LBCs would provide the intended services to 3,000 farmers. The centres would provide services to both members and non-members at a differentiated rate. For members it would be embedded prices while non-members would pay a higher price than members. Currently, five LBCs have been set up, two in Tanzania and three in Mozambique.

In Tanzania, ALP works with two private sector enterprises: MSK Refineries Ltd., a solvent extraction plant, and Litenga Holdings Ltd., an agro-business company, to build an ecosystem of seamless supplies of inputs to farmers and of aggregated outputs to the private sector at transparent market prices. The farmers were now formed in groups and were encouraged to start Savings and Loan Associations for eventual financial inclusion with a formal financial institution. The plan was to reach 3,000 farmers by the end of two years in both regions and make the business centre operationally and financially sustainable.



Songea, Ruvuma region: In partnership with Litenga Holdings Ltd (LHL) this LBC seeks to enable farmers to produce high quality maize through market linkages for quality and competitively priced inputs and aggregated sale of output. LHL was an agro-business company based in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania operating as a social enterprise engaged in innovating business solutions to address rural poverty and rural livelihood challenges. It was engaged in contract farming, commodity identification, consultancy services in the area of rural development, farmer capacity building, value chain development and management, value addition technology and export of cereals, fruits, vegetables and processed food. A base line survey and scoping study was completed and detailed action plan was prepared and being readied to be implemented from the ensuing sowing season starting November 2015

Misasi, Mwanza region: In partnership with MSK Refineries Ltd. this LBC seeks to enable farmers to produce high quality sunflower through market linkages for quality and competitively priced inputs and aggregated sale of output, along with introduction of second crop in the year. MSK was a private sector solvent extraction plant based in Mwanza region. LBC was established to carry out agri-business ranging from sourcing, storing, processing, marketing distribution and positioning of agro products. The plan was to reach 600 farmers through LBC model in 2 years. It was expected that LBC would be made financially sustainable by the end of this project intervention. An office has been established in Misasi, Mwanza region and formation of 10 groups which contribute to 195 members and 241 acres of cultivable land.

In 2014, ALPs worked with a few women economic groups in the Beira corridor in the rice and cassava value chains. These economic groups had been established under a previous project but were floundering as the project funding came to an end. Some time was spent on understanding their unmet needs and demands as well as ways and means to make them sustainable and scalable. Based on the feedback, data collected and market conditions, LBCs was set up in three districts along the Beira corridor: in Dondo and Nahmatanda districts of Soffala Province and Macate district of Manica province. A base line study and various interactions with different stakeholders converged at the following needs for the Women Economic Groups (WEG):

- ▶ Financial assistance to implement their business plans
- ▶ Skill development
- ▶ Secondary income generation activity
- ▶ Diversification of agriculture crops
- ▶ Access to additional raw materials to run processing centres at full capacity
- ▶ Access to quality fertilisers based on soil testing reports and agro-climatic zones
- ▶ Infrastructure for storage
- ▶ Market linkages and private sector involvement

Currently, a total of 863 farmers were enrolled across the three LBC locations. A number of awareness meetings were organised for sensitising potential beneficiaries on LBC concept, the role of WEGs and their members to access services. Supply chain linkages were established with Pannar Seeds (Maize Hybrid seeds) and Agro Serve (Rice and Sesame seeds). A special discounted price was negotiated with input suppliers to ensure tangible benefits from collective purchase by the LBCs. High quality improved/ hybrid seeds of sesame, rice and maize have been procured at competitive prices.

Employability and self-employment programme

In Tanzania, ALPs were engaged with youth to find innovative and sustainable solutions for livelihoods. Through Entrepreneurship Development Programmes their employability, income generation ability as well as avenues for self-employment were created.

ALPs partnered with the central, regional and local governments to train Community Development Officers in Training of Trainers (TOT) mode for entrepreneurship development of rural youth and women to build their capacity and improve their existing livelihoods or set up new enterprises. Initially, this had been done in the Mwanza region and now the same project had been extended to Dodoma region.

In Mwanza, the results were positive. Training at all the levels - district, ward and group have been

completed and out of seven districts in the region one district was selected for handholding support. In the last phase several trainings were organised on Entrepreneurial Business Planning for youth and women group leaders. This established financial linkages with government and private financial institutions. Currently, the programme has reached out to 32 groups consisting of 587 members who have been trained and guided by field staff. 17 groups have received credit through financial linkages established with government youth fund, private banks and MFIs.



The successful intervention in Mwanza led ALPs to start the same project in Dodoma region in central Tanzania. A TOT was organised in October 2014 after which the follow up training at district and ward levels for 13 Community Development and Women Development Officers was completed.

Youth entrepreneurship country chicken poultry project

ALPs embarked on an innovative model to raise income of youth and make them self-sufficient in their endeavours. In 2014, they started forming Savings and Loans Associations (SLAs) groups in partnership with a local NGO in Busega. After the groups had engaged in the SLA activities for six months they were provided a small credit to buy local chicken. The cooperatives were developed with their own resources. After five such groups were formed, ALPs organised them to register a Federation to manage day to day operational activities.

The Federation would enable its group and individual members to start SLAs accompanied with an income generating scheme. The aim was to reach at least 300 self-sustainable members under Nyassa Youth Producer Business Centre (NYPBC) and link them with formal financial organisations and markets. Forward and backward market linkages have been set up with private players to provide inputs and for sale of produce. The Federation has opened a bank account for deposits for NYPBC members in the CRDB (Cooperative Rural Development Bank Plc, Tanzania) Bank. Currently, the membership had reached 236 members for 16 groups in three villages.

Financial inclusion programmes

ALPs were working with GAPI for capacity building of CaixaMulher at Matola. CaixaMulher was owned 50 per cent by GAPI and 50 per cent by a women's group of private investors. As the name suggests it was a women only micro bank. It had recently been permitted by the Bank of Mozambique to expand

its outreach by expanding its branch network as well as provide agency banking. By the end of 2015 ALPs expect to expand this programme to two other micro banks in other locations of the country. Their intervention includes but was not limited to the following:

- ▶ Procuring and installing appropriate Information Technology (IT) and Management Information System (MIS) systems
- ▶ Introducing best practices for managing savings and loan portfolios
- ▶ Strengthening the bank's governance
- ▶ Building the capacity and knowledge of human resources
- ▶ Designing customer centric products through market survey and pilot testing
- ▶ Increasing outreach of the branches to 5,000 customers in 3 years
- ▶ Introducing mobile and other technology to lower cost of transactions both for the bank as well as the customer
- ▶ Pursuing social performance measures as per international guidelines
- ▶ Keeping a control over non-performing assets



Currently, a Business Plan, an Operational Manual and a Training Manual have been finalised. One round of on-job-training has been completed and an action plan with set time line was prepared and submitted for further action by branch operation staff. A technology up gradation plan has been approved and is being installed.

ALP programme outcomes

Apart from the baseline surveys of livelihoods (see Annexure A for Tanzania summary) in the three countries, which was a contribution in its own right, ALPs had completed two years of operations in March 2015. It was too early to talk of impact but the following outputs have already emerged during this period:

Food security and agricultural value chains: The programme has reached 1058 (195 in Tanzania and 863 in Mozambique) small holder farmers under the LBC projects in Tanzania and Mozambique. This number was expected to reach 3100 (1600 in Tanzania and 1500 in Mozambique) by the end of current financial year. The current services like quality inputs, training on best agricultural practices and group

management, market linkage support and aggregation benefits would reach out to more farmers. All these services were expected to raise production of better quality agro-commodity and hence increase the income level of rural household along with resolving the issue of food security.

Development of entrepreneurial skills: ALPs were working with 823 young individuals to develop their entrepreneurial skills. They have created a pool of professionally trained government officers in Mwanza and Dodoma regions of Tanzania, within the government systems and reached till the level of youth and women groups in the field to develop their entrepreneurial skills. Through this mechanism ALPs were able to reach 25 District Youth Officer and Women Development Officers, who in turn reached to 14 districts and trained 587 group members through ward level Youth and Women Development Officers. Under another programme which was developing entrepreneurial skills of youth through local chicken rearing ALPs were working with 236 members from 16 groups.

Access to finance: This service was cross cutting all the approaches and activities taken under consideration. Till date ALPs have touched 1698 individuals [236 members under poultry project, 1058 members under LBC, 200 members under micro bank, Matola in Mozambique and 17 groups (204 members) under Entrepreneurial Business Planning (EBP) in Mwanza, Tanzania] through SLAs and some were linked with mainstream financial services.

Implementation constraints and ways to overcome them

- ▶ Getting work permit in Tanzania and Mozambique continues to take more than the estimated time. Similarly it is also difficult to get visas for short term consultants, thereby impacting the operational planning and execution of the project.
- ▶ Political situations were shifting and needed close watch. The response time of government agencies was quite long.
- ▶ Though National Strategic Partners (NSPs) were extending proper support, but getting NSPs to yield space for ALPs was a challenge. There was a change of NSP in Tanzania as the first partnership did not yield expected results.
- ▶ Geographical distance, safety and security while traveling and management of local staff and government officer were constant challenges.

Lessons learnt

- ▶ A developmental intervention needs to have longer time line than was anticipated.
- ▶ Partnership model was the way forward for developmental intervention, however, many a time the local partners cannot be pushed to meet the agenda. Progress at times may be slow but relationship must not be compromised to achieve deadlines.
- ▶ It is important to find capable and willing partner with similar mind set who was equally committed to objectives. This takes time and cannot be rushed.
- ▶ Exchange visits to India were appreciated by the partner institution in broadening the scope and method of ALPs programme implementation in their respective countries.
- ▶ A local legal entity was needed without which it was difficult to own and operate the project.
- ▶ Some donors and governments have been handing out doles for a considerable length of time. A mind set change was needed and this takes considerable time and proof of concept.

ALPs – future plans

During the operations ALPs found operational barriers in the absence of a legal entity status. They had to depend on local partners even to operate bank accounts. To overcome such issues like owning project assets, ALPs registered a local organisation by the name LBI Tanzania and planned to move forward with the registration of LBI Mozambique.

A revolving fund had been set up in the Livelihood Business Centres for small holder farmers of Tanzania and Mozambique to provide credit for crop inputs. ALPs were working on some strong potential proposals for this financial year to receive donor funds in the areas of livelihood promotion. They would be strengthening the partnerships with an approach to garnering donor funds in the areas of agricultural value chains, financial inclusion and youth employment.

During the third year ALPs were building momentum with their various programmes launched so far and make them sustainable in order to continue to provide uninterrupted services to fulfil ALPs mission.



Reforming Competition Regimes in Developing Countries: The Experience of CUTS International

Understanding the competition regimes

Competition between enterprises is important for any country's economy especially on account of the benefits for consumers as well as for enterprises that operate in that economy. It encourages enterprises to strive for efficiency and innovation which ultimately lead to diverse products and services at lower prices and/or of superior quality. It provides better and broader range of choices and greater purchasing power to consumers – especially ordinary consumers.

It is also important that such competitions between enterprises remain just and fair. Many unfair trade practices, particularly restrictive agreements, abuse of a dominant position and state provided subsidies, etc. often distort competition among rival firms in a market. It is therefore immensely important that appropriate policies and laws are designed and enforced to ensure just and fair competition in them – such that the country and its people can derive the anticipated benefits. Proper interpretation, application and enforcement of such policies, laws and rules (to curb anti-competitive practices in the market), is carried out by competition authorities, created and empowered appropriately by the government. In a dynamic economic environment the competence of the competition authorities to reinterpret, change and amend policies and laws are also critical for keeping the economy growing.

Many developing countries in the 'south' are, however, apprehensive about such competition regimes which run the risk of exposing domestic enterprises to global completion in a liberalised global economy. In many developing countries the capacities for drafting legislations which are in the best interest of

the countries' economy, yet compatible with the international frameworks, particularly in a liberalised global economic regime are often weak. Both the apprehension and lack of political will to introduce a competition regimes often become stumbling obstacles to sustainable economic growth. This is also compounded by the lack of stakeholder support. Further, the experience and competence of competition authorities, even when they are in place, is also constrained which in long-run affect fair business practices and intention of evolving well-functioning markets.

CUTS' engagement on reforming competition regimes

CUTS International (Consumer Unity and Trust Society) is one of the few civil society organisations (CSOs) with its headquarters in Jaipur, India to have chosen to strengthen competition regimes (policies, practices and institutional architecture) in developing countries since its early years after inception in 1983. Its intervention in India got an impetus with an amendment in 1984 in the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Act (MRTPA), 1969 – that brought unfair trade practices within the purview of the MRTPA. This mainly covered misleading advertising and deceptive practices that affect ordinary consumers – and therefore had considerable interface with CUTS are of core interest – consumer protection.

Having worked in India for several decades, CUTS had developed enormous ground experience rooted in the southern context. It was encouraged by local stakeholders to have presence in other southern countries – which started in the year 2000 with its first overseas office in Lusaka (Zambia). Till today CUTS has provided its knowledge and capacity building support to over 30 Asian and Sub-Saharan African countries in the areas of Competition Reforms and Consumer Empowerment involving many state and non-state actors. The projects were conceptualised and designed to make them relevant for southern developing country context. It has developed a method for capacity building and advocacy support called 7Up. Till date, four rounds of 7Up projects (7Up1, 7Up2, 7Up3 and 7Up4) have been implemented in various Asian and African countries. Apart from these, CUTS had also initiated a process for implementing a regional project on Competition and Consumer Protection in select countries in the Middle East and North Africa (referred to as the MENA) region in 2010-11. The organisation's plans to expand its activities in this region were affected by the Arab Spring and the subsequent instability in the region. The latest project on the issue of competition reforms named 'Competition Reforms in Key Markets for Enhancing Social and Economic Welfare in Developing Countries' is presently being implemented in India, The Philippines, Ghana and Zambia.



Apart from continuing its intensive presence in India and engagement with the national Competition Commission, CUTS has a long history of engaging with international and regional authorities on competition and consumer protection issues. It became a member of the International Organisation of Consumer Unions (IOCU – now known as Consumer International) and participated in its 13th World Congress held in Hong Kong in July 1991. CUTS International was also in the forefront of a global discussion around the Uruguay Round of the then General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) which was wrapped up in April, 1994 and resulted in the establishment of World Trade Organisations (WTO) in January, 1995.



By early 90s, India had embarked on path-breaking economic reforms which had a profound impact on the lives of its citizen-consumers and the economy at large. Because of its articulation of southern voices CUTS was invited to become a member, and later a convenor of the Global Policy and Campaigns Committee on Trade and Economic Issues of the Consumer International. It helped CUTS in participating in various debates in international forums as well as building and nurturing relationships with like-minded organisations.

Two issues, among several others, which remained unsettled during the Uruguay Round negotiation were – (i) Investment and (ii) Competition Policy. They were part of the built-in agenda under the Agreement on Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMs). Both issues reverberated with the global consumer movement, with the thinking that good business behaviour and healthy competition regimes can be promoted in the member states of the WTO through these two instruments. At the first Ministerial Meeting of the WTO at Singapore in December, 1996 it was inter alia agreed to establish working groups to study the relationship between investment and trade, and trade and competition policy. The narrative and discourse arising out of these discussions on competition policy triggered CUTS to deepen its interventions in 1996.

A second driver which resulted in expanding CUTS' interventions in Africa and Asia was the formation of the South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), a network of CSOs in South Asia, in 1994 to build capacity to cope with the pains of transition arising from globalisation and the WTO. Many African CSOs which participated in the Ninth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD IX) in Midrand, South Africa in 1996, demanded to replicate the SAWTEE model in their respective countries and region.

The first 7Up project proposal was conceptualised during the “Asia Pacific Regional Seminar on Competition Law and Policy”, organised by CUTS and UNCTAD in association with Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission (MRTPC) in Jaipur in April, 2000. Representatives of Department for International Development, UK (DFID), World Bank, UNCTAD and WTO agreed to support CUTS in its first ever major overseas project. There was a need for assessing how markets would develop in the developing south as economic liberalisation was being embraced across the world. It was realised that right checks and balances were necessary for ensuring that national stakeholders could derive anticipated benefits from expanding markets.

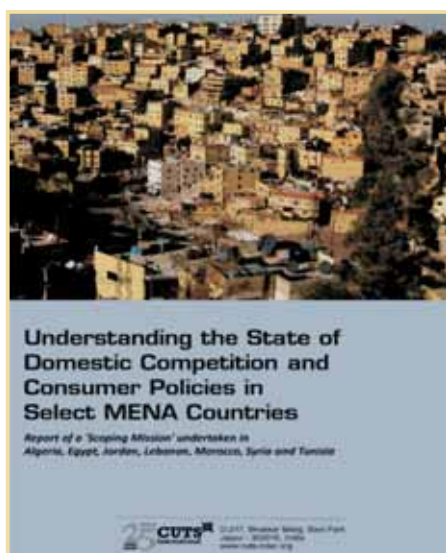
DFID recognised the importance of this project and agreed to provide necessary financial support to be implemented in India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Kenya. This initiated CUTS’ work on competition policy and law issues and reforms internationally, which remains a key area of specialisation of the organisation.

The subsequent rounds of projects also attracted other international donors to cover larger number of countries in Asia and Africa. While DFID remained a consistent supporter in all rounds, other donors like State Secretariat for Economic Cooperation (SECO), Switzerland; Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Norway; International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada; Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sweden; Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Germany and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Germany provided financial support to the projects. The five rounds of projects implemented over the 15 years (2000-15) had approximately Rupees 300 million (approximately US\$ 4.7 million accordingly to current conversion rate) budgets.

Key interventions

In each country an initial assessment was done to understand the impediments to evolving national competition regimes. The assessment also identified the ways for addressing such impediments through a participatory process involving multiple stakeholders.

CUTS had lined up a well-thought out plan for expanding its work in the MENA region, and received support from IDRC (Canada) in 2010 to undertake a ‘scoping mission’ and based on the findings develop contours of a full-fledged project. This was thought



CUTS MENA Scoping Mission Report (2011)

to be particularly necessary in the region, given its cultural uniqueness and the fact that CUTS was new to this region. Considerable preparatory work was required in terms of getting background information, data, establishing contacts, partnership before the actual ‘mission’ could be accomplished. The mission was quite successful and its report highlighted specific issues/areas for CUTS and its (new found) partners in the region to focus on. However, the plans for a follow-up intervention got disrupted by the ‘Arab Spring’ – and this has remained an unfulfilled task for CUTS till date. Though, CUTS has maintained its contacts in the region with individuals and institutions.

Capacities in terms of appreciating the need for a competition regime including relevant policies, laws and institutions by

various stakeholders and paucity of resources for establishing a well-functioning competition authority are major impediments that have prevented wider understanding and greater policy attention on competition reforms as a useful public policy tool, in the developing world. Hence, all the projects designed by CUTS included a well-defined capacity development strategy. Capacity development of national stakeholders including policy makers, regulators, civil society organisations (particularly the consumer groups), academics and media persons to understand and appreciate competition concerns from national, regional and international perspectives was emphasised.

National and regional training workshops on Competition Policy and Law have been a regular feature of all 7Up projects. The aim of such workshops is to develop the capacity of key state and non-state actors on basic elements of competition policy and law, so that they start taking interest on these issues and engaging with the government agencies/departments on them.



National Training Workshops as part of the 7Up3 project across E&S African countries

In many developing country contexts the channels for communication between civil society, business and the government were either weak or non-existent. The project created, nurtured and strengthened such communication channels in order to deliberate on the best way forward for promoting competition and consumer protection at the national level.

In some countries the understanding of partner organisations on competition issues was enhanced considerably, so much so that they were considered as champions of competition reforms not only by peers but also by government departments/Ministries. Some of the officials from these organisations were therefore included in senior level positions in Government Departments/entities dealing with competition policy and law issues.

One of the most critical aspects of an efficient competition regime is an effective legislation. The projects provided extensive inputs into the process of either drafting new competition legislation or reforming the existing competition legislation in several countries including Kenya, Zambia, Mauritius, Botswana, Vietnam, India, etc. Drawing on the best practices from other countries including least developed, developing, and developed countries, such input was contextualised, adapted, and made relevant to the specific country contexts. For example, in small and resource constrained countries like Malawi, The Gambia, Bhutan, etc. CUTS recommended that the administration of Competition Law and of Consumer Protection could be combined in one Agency (the national Competition Authority).

CUTS' experience from India and other countries suggested that the competition policy needed to be understood in the overall policy ecosystem of a country which often interacted and got affected by other public policy issues.

For example, one of the reason that competition policy has not received the kind of visibility and recognition in many developing and least developed countries, can be evidenced by the existence of various government policies that affect competition in markets. One of the first steps to operationalise

a National Competition Policy is to identify laws that have such provisions – something that was done by Botswana. This is one of the reasons that Botswana has been able to have in place a fairly effective Competition Agency within a short period of its adoption.

One of the characteristics of CUTS projects is continuous public interface (a key constituent of evidence based policy work) through dissemination of information materials like study reports, briefings, monographs, etc. that elucidate the linkage between competition and other public policy issues in order to mobilise public support for competition and regulatory reforms.

CUTS' experience also suggested that however attractive and important the lessons from other contexts might be, it cannot be transplanted in a country from outside by the outsiders. The importance of developing an internal constituency cannot be overemphasised. CUTS right from the beginning helped build national constituencies for promoting competition and consumer awareness by identifying a representative group of national stakeholders and facilitated transforming them into internal champions on competition policy, regulatory issues and consumer protection.



NRG Members of CUTS 7Up4 project in Togo

So, in each country that CUTS has undertaken projects on Competition Policy and Law issues, it has created a small group (12-15 people) of key stakeholders and opinion leaders – referred to as the National Reference Group (NRG). The NRG is considered as both the 'guides' and also the 'ambassadors' of such projects in the country. They are constantly consulted by CUTS for guidance and necessary course corrections during project implementation, while the NRG members also spread the findings and the purpose of the intervention through their networks, etc. The NRGs comprise of diverse stakeholders at country level who play a key role in identifying research gaps and capacity building needs, reviewing the project studies and participating in training programmes, contributing to advocacy campaigns to promote policy change as identified by them and the broader project etc.

In a globalised and connected economy, the decisions made by the regional and global governance institutions can make a huge impact nationally and sub-nationally. It is therefore imperative for civil society and other national actors to remain connected regionally and globally. CUTS has been facilitating dynamic linkages between the national stakeholders (as for example, national reference groups) and the regional and global networks and coalitions working on competition and regulatory issues. It helped to augment capacities, sustain interests and continue activities for promoting a healthy competition culture.

CUTS envisaged the development of a unique global network of institutions and individuals interested on Competition Policy and Law issues. The International Network of Civil Society Organisations on Competition (INCSOC) is such a unique network developed by CUTS. INCSOC has been at the forefront

over the last several years for advocating the United Nations (through UNCTAD) to adopt 5th December as World Competition Day to raise awareness and wider understanding on the issue.

The social media platforms (particularly websites and email-groups) have been used extensively to share information and such outputs as brochures, papers, reports and action alerts with the global community that could not be directly reached by the project. For instance the use of e-groups like CUTS Trade Forum, Competition Online Forum, East Africa Development Forum, etc. to reach out to thousands of interested individuals/institutions.

Roles played by various actors

The projects were conceptualised, developed and implemented by CUTS after carefully designed consultations and dialogues with the relevant country partners. CUTS, being an NGO based in India, was accorded with a lot of credibility as its experience was seen of immediate relevance to other developing countries. Secondly, CUTS being regarded as an organisation primarily dedicated to consumer protection, its promotion of competition law enforcement and policy lends a different degree of credibility in the eyes of actors from other developing countries as compared to somewhat abstract claim by scholars that competition automatically promotes consumer welfare.

On the contrary, people presume that a consumer organisation would not promote competition unless it was fully convinced that it will make a real difference for consumers in developing countries. Thus, CUTS competition advocacy work in the context of the 7Up projects was likely to be more effective than the advocacy of economists or competition authorities of the developed world.

Thirdly, the analysis conducted by local partners with input and guidance from CUTS in various countries, started with a detailed assessment of the country's economic and legal environment and its level of economic and institutional development. CUTS 7Up projects were not restricted to studying the specific technical features of the local competition law (where such a law existed); it also analysed the situation of local markets, strength and weaknesses of competition authorities including their interaction with other organs of the government and other stakeholders. The suggestions were made on how to strengthen the institutional capacities of local competition authorities or ways to increase the awareness of the benefits of competition. This ingenious approach was both useful and appreciated by developing countries which were keenly aware of the fact that policies relevant for developed countries could not always be transplanted easily or even successfully in their domestic environment.



Fourthly, while designing its 7Up projects, CUTS tried in each country to secure the widest possible participation of stakeholders including the representatives from academia, consumer organisations, government institutions and business enterprises. In so doing CUTS facilitated the emergence of local networks of like-minded and pro-competition advocates who could support the local competition authority when it existed or push for the adoption of a competition law when it did not yet exist.

The country partners were involved in all key stages of the programme development including designing, inception, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. They were also involved in framing and developing the Terms of Reference (ToR) for policy research studies including involving the local experts in search exercises as peer review. The partners have been involved in designing advocacy strategies and plans relevant at the country level. Some other key responsibilities of the partners included:

- ▶ Conducting the project launch meeting marking the inception of the project
- ▶ Developing the implementation plan for project to be delivered in their respective country
- ▶ Stakeholder mapping and engagement for the purpose of the project activities
- ▶ Country research including data collection and analysis
- ▶ Engagement meetings with various stakeholders of the project
- ▶ Training and capacity building activities for local as well as national stakeholders
- ▶ Dissemination of reports, newsletters and other relevant materials

Results and impacts

The 7Up projects through its various phases contributed to a number of discernible positive changes:

- ▶ In countries like Botswana, The Gambia, Mauritius, Nepal, Namibia and Vietnam the national competition laws were adopted and/or resulted in establishment of the agency in some project countries. This occurred either during the lifetime of 7Up projects (and associated spin-off activities), or within a year or two after the conclusion of the project.
- ▶ In Bangladesh, Nigeria and Ghana the consolidating efforts involving research, effective networking, awareness, capacity building and continuous engagement resulted in facilitating forward movement for enactment of competition laws.
- ▶ The 7Up programme has been recognised by the Development Assistant Committee (DAC) of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) as an effective method of engaging on competition issues in the developing world.
- ▶ It also revealed the need for supporting investment climate reforms in Tanzania, which motivated the Facility for Investment Climate Advisory Services (FIAS of the World Bank) to initiate an Investment Climate Reforms programme in the country.
- ▶ CUTS partners from The Gambia, Senegal and Nepal have taken up positions in the competition agencies as senior officials
- ▶ CUTS initiated activities on competition policy and law reforms, were closely associated with the process of development of national competition legislation in countries such as India, Kenya, Zambia and Vietnam

- ▶ It contributed to the development of a methodology to measure benefits arising from the competition reforms and flanking policies or the lack of it.
- ▶ CUTS has applied its methodology of working with CSOs in developing countries, thereby empowering them to lobby policymakers and decision makers with sound evidence for greater attention to competition issues. CUTS and its partners have identified key policymakers, decision makers to support competition reforms across the 'south'. In several countries of sub-Saharan Africa like – Botswana, Ghana, The Gambia, Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, etc. such a strategy has worked well. In Rwanda, for example, the Ministry of Commerce considers CUTS as a strategic and long term partner on competition issues.
- ▶ National policymakers consider CUTS and their civil society partners' work and opinion of competition issues with considerable respect. However, government resources are often limited and get allocated to areas of public policy that are more easily understandable and visible to policymakers, while there is low policy buy-in on competition. Resources that are ultimately available in these countries for competition reforms are therefore, limited. A strategy that CUTS is now pursuing in partnership (under the CREW project) with civil society partners from four countries is to develop a methodology that can help demonstrate tangible benefits of competition reforms on consumers and producers, easily to national policymakers. This has led to the development of a tool that can help policymakers and practitioners design, implement and assess pro-competitive reforms.
- ▶ From an international policy perspective CUTS has had access to northern policymakers including Ministers and lobbied them of the need to maintain or up-scale their support to competition reforms across the developing world.
- ▶ It would be unrealistic to expect that the national government agencies alone would be able to effectively implement national competition laws themselves and evolve well-functioning markets on their own. Engagement of civil society actors in the process is critical, not only to be able to complement the efforts of the national government and make it more effective, but also to effectively identify key developmental objectives that could be met through effective enforcement of national competition regimes. It also makes the process participatory and transparent, and creates local ownership.
- ▶ In spite of the fact that some CSOs have attained prominence on the subject, there is still need for developing country CSOs to be sensitised and their capacity built for undertaking research based advocacy on competition issues. Some of these CSOs have to engage on the subject, but sometimes their messages are not given attention by national governments as they are not backed by evidence.

In addition to the impacts made in the intervention countries a significant impact has also been achieved in India. Some key ministries in India have recognised CUTS which has resulted in following interventions:

- ▶ CUTS Institute for Regulation & Competition (CIRC), CUTS International and National Law University, Delhi organised a two week long international training programme on Competition Policy and Law for African countries from 16 February to 1 March, 2015, with support from Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India (GoI) under the Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) programme. This international training programme saw participation of professionals from

competition authorities of thirteen countries: Seychelles, Mauritius, Swaziland, Ethiopia, Morocco, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Botswana, Namibia, Senegal, Tanzania and Tunisia.

- ▶ CUTS is also considered as one of the knowledge partners of the Competition Commission of India (CCI). It has been working closely with the commission on building knowledge and awareness on anti-competitive practices in India
- ▶ CUTS' Secretary General has been a Member of the Committee on National Competition Policy Constituted by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MoCA) who has been playing a constructive role in guiding the ministry's work in this area

Lessons learned

A number of lessons have been learned from the experience of implementing these projects in a variety of contexts. These lessons can be broadly categories as: (i) lessons relevant for other developing and least developed countries as well as for donors who are willing support these countries for effective operationalisation of competition regimes, and (ii) lessons relevant for promoting south-south cooperation by the Indian actors including the Indian government.

Lessons for strengthening competition regimes

- ▶ **Technical assistance in drafting/refinement:** In a number of countries competition laws are still not in place, and this is a need that should be met at the earliest.
- ▶ **Reforming existing legislations:** The overall goal of this process should be to make the law more comprehensive (including a robust and effective competition agency), to enable effective enforcement.
- ▶ **Awareness generation:** A continuous, long-term process of awareness generation and sensitisation should be taken up at all levels to garner public support for competition reforms.
- ▶ **Building coalitions and linkages:** Coalitions (within and across countries) need to be developed and maintained, especially to advocate enforcement of competition laws, highlighting benefits that would accrue to both the economy and the consumers.
- ▶ **Capacity building of competition agencies:** This is critical for building capacity and confidence among other regulatory agencies and departments in the country.
- ▶ **Enhancing knowledge on competition regimes:** Capacity development of young professionals on competition policy and law related issues is critical and can be achieved by developing courses on competition policy and law issues in the universities.
- ▶ **Parliamentary outreach and sensitisation:** This activity holds the key to a successful competition reforms process and providing stimulus to and attention to competition issues as a priority.
- ▶ **Cooperation with other regulators/institutions:** Often competition issues have huge implications for other regulators and institutions and efforts should be integrated to design interventions for securing cooperation from other regulators and institutions.

Lessons for promoting south-south cooperation

- ▶ Implementing multi-country project is both an opportunity for learning and challenging to effectively deliver. The projects implemented by CUTS provided tremendous learning for both the personnel involved from CUTS as well as those from the partner organisations. A lot of investment had to be made to bring these personnel on the same page in terms of developing appreciation, understanding and skill-sets for pursuing common objectives.
- ▶ Working in a multi-country project with diverse languages and professional working culture is also a challenge. CUTS ensured that the staff are trained to be bilingual or recruit at least one person in the project team who had bilingual language skills. A lot of discussion had to be organised with the country partners in order to develop a mutually accepted professional quality of work and the time in which it should be completed, as this understand and appreciation varied from country to country.
- ▶ In fact all the projects were implemented in a trilateral development cooperation approach. CUTS received resources primarily from a northern donor for a particular project and then implemented in partnership with other CSOs in a third country. On several instances, CUTS had to operate with pre-designed and pre-approved budget lines which have been difficult to change even when local situation demanded it. In recent years, with stricter accountability guidelines, this flexibility has further decreased. Moreover, not only the flexibility of funding, but also the decreasing availability of funding from the traditional northern donors have posed new challenges for even experienced CSO like CUTS. In the face of such emerging challenges, assistance from the Indian government to carry forward institutional development and governance reforms in other developing countries through experienced Indian CSO can go a long way.
- ▶ The project also faced several challenges arising out of the legal requirement in India as well as in the partner countries. As the CUTS offices abroad were registered as local NGOs in several partner countries, the transfer of resources from India to other countries required a lot of paper work to satisfy the legal requirements. Many a times, information about the legal regulation in a partner country was not readily available in India. This required a lot of efforts to gathering such information, interpreting them and creating compliance mechanisms. In addition, the stricter and often ambiguous visa requirement of Indian government made it difficult for the participants from partner countries to visit India for learning exchanges. This hindered the learning pace and effective implementation of the project. An enabling visa regime by the Indian government and orientation of staff in the Indian Embassies and High Commissions about the work Indian CSOs abroad can go a long way in promoting south-south cooperation.
- ▶ The Indian private sector organisations have strong presence in many countries where CUTS has implemented its projects. The Indian private sector can also be benefitted from collaboration with credible and experienced CSOs like CUTS.



Making Municipalities Participatory and Accountable in India, Bangladesh and Cambodia: The Experience of Participatory Research in Asia

Introduction

Continued economic growth fuelled by urban centres in many Asian countries will largely depend on the quality of municipal governance in cities, which is unfortunately constrained by multiple governance deficits resulting in inefficient and inadequate provisioning of public services like water and sanitation, limited accountability of municipalities to citizens, lack of transparency in decision making, and inadequate opportunity and space for citizen participation. The history of civil society engagement in city governance is also limited due to inadequate experience and capacities.

Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) works to strengthen citizen participation to enhance transparency and accountability in municipalities, provides support to marginalised communities to realise their rights and entitlements, and assists municipalities develop capacities to respond to the needs of these communities. This case study is written based on the Deepening Local Democratic Governance through Social Accountability in Asia (DLDG-SAA) project implemented by PRIA in partnership with PRIP Trust in Bangladesh and SILAKA in Cambodia between March 2011 and March 2013, supported by the UN Democracy Fund (UNDEF). It illustrates how Indian experiences helped municipalities in two cities – Rajshahi in Bangladesh and Takhmao in Cambodia – to initiate some significant governance reforms through organised citizen engagement.

The project was conceived with a shared analysis of governance deficits in municipalities in India, Bangladesh and Cambodia. In all three countries, local government laws provide varied degrees of

space and opportunity for citizen participation and institutional mechanisms for transparency and accountability in municipalities. India, having introduced constitutional reforms in 1993, is regarded as a pioneer in decentralisation in the Asian region. The practice of citizen participation and social accountability is more advanced when compared to Bangladesh and Cambodia. Decentralisation in Bangladesh gained impetus with the enactment of the City Corporation Act and City Corporation Rule, 2009 and in Cambodia with the Organic Law, 2008. However, these laws do not adequately consider citizen participation as an important tenet of local democracy.

Against this backdrop, the DLDG-SAA project aimed to:

- (a) *enhance* capacities of marginalised families to engage in regular, sustained and constructive dialogue with municipalities through citizen monitoring and demanding quality services;
- (b) *enhance* capacities of municipalities to institutionalise social accountability mechanisms and include the needs of marginalised families in planning and decision making;
- (c) *enhance* capacities of local CSOs to promote democratic practices in municipalities;
- (d) *inform* policies and programmes based on lessons learned, particularly in relation to social accountability and citizen participation in municipalities; and
- (e) *enhance* linkages with practitioners of urban governance in Asia.



Key strategies and activities

A combination of strategies was used to address deficits in democratic practices, particularly of participation, transparency and accountability. Citizen mobilisation, campaigns, capacity building and participatory monitoring were the some of the methods which enhanced organised civic action, participation and accountability. Models of social accountability mechanisms like citizen charter, proactive information disclosure and grievance redressal mechanisms were established to enhance citizens' access to information and basic services. Lessons harvested from these interventions and specific policy analysis at the sub-national and national levels were shared in dialogues in order to influence policy changes. Partnerships with local civil society were developed, and trainings, exposure visits and on-site hand-holding support was provided to enhance their capacities for sustained engagement with policy making institutions on issues of participation, social accountability and urban governance.

The following key activities helped in implementing the strategies and achieving the objectives.

Context analysis (including baseline survey)

Detailed assessment of existing functioning and governance issues of municipalities, practice of accountability mechanisms, and available spaces for citizen participation were undertaken in Rajshahi and Takhmao. Relevant data was collected at the national level and a baseline report prepared. Based on similar experiences from Indian cities, PRIA provided support to the partners in designing the study and guided interactions with various stakeholders. The assessment study was also designed to facilitate interactions with important city and national stakeholders to ensure their participation and cooperation in subsequent stages. Despite paucity of data with municipalities, particularly on status of service delivery, the mayor/governor, councillors and officials extended their support. Officials from national ministries were also contacted during the assessment study. A preliminary mapping of civil society actors helped in designing the



Developing a shared perspective

A shared perspective among partners on the roles of civil society in promoting participatory governance existed through previous working relationships. However, the current project required developing shared commitments among project staff and orientation on new social accountability tools and approaches. PRIA conducted a Training of Trainers (TOT) in both countries for staff of partner organisations and some local CSOs. The TOTs helped in developing a shared understanding on the dynamics of municipal governance, how existing spaces for citizen participation could be used effectively, and how to implement social accountability tools like citizen report card, citizen charter, grievance redressal system, pro-active information disclosure and citizen monitoring. Various capacity building and interface strategies for citizen groups and municipal officials were also discussed.

Capacity building and learning efforts were not confined to one-off trainings. The project teams from all three partner organisations used cost-effective ways of online communication (initially every fortnight and then once a month) to discuss emerging issues and share learnings.

Multi-stakeholder capacity development

The intervention was designed with a perspective that learning and practicing new mechanisms for participation, transparency and accountability need to take place both with citizens and civil societies

(demand side), and with municipal councillors and officials (supply side) in order to accelerate municipal governance reforms. Two study tours were organised for a 10-member multi-stakeholder team from each country comprising of the mayor/governor, selected councillors, representatives from civil society and media. The team from Bangladesh visited Jaipur and Ajmer in Rajasthan and the Cambodian team visited Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh. PRIA has been working with these city municipalities to deepen citizen engagement using social accountability mechanisms. The visits helped participants develop understanding on how social accountability mechanisms can be adapted and implemented. On their return, the teams shared their experiences with their respective municipal authorities. The accompanying media persons wrote articles in newspapers reflecting on how some ideas can be adopted in their cities. A strong bond developed during the study visit helped these multiple actors work together, garner mutual cooperation and support each other during implementation.

A regular series of dialogues, meetings and trainings were facilitated with municipal officials and councillors. These events sensitised municipal officials and councillors to understand the importance of making municipalities accountable and built rapport with respective authorities. The CSOs developed an appreciation of the challenges and limitations that officials and councillors encounter in urban governance. PRIP Trust and SILAKA, both being credible training and capacity building organisations, were quite confident in facilitating city level interactions and trainings with municipal authorities. PRIA's role was to provide support in designing content, preparing relevant materials and sharing of best practices from India and other Asian countries.



Mobilisation and capacity development of communities

A multi-pronged strategy was implemented – organising citizens by forming neighbourhood committees, scaling up citizen mobilisation city-wide through campaigns, providing training for citizens to learn social accountability tools and facilitating interface dialogues with municipal authorities. Twenty-four trainings were held in the two countries among more than 1000 citizens (majority women and youth from most marginalised communities). The trainings focussed on citizen leadership development, governance roles and responsibilities of municipalities, communication, advocacy and citizen monitoring of municipal services. Refresher trainings were also organised to embed knowledge and skills.

Guidelines for formation of neighbourhood committees with roles and responsibilities for each city were prepared. Emphasis was put on inclusion of marginalised youth and women. In Bangladesh, these committees were called parshi dals, and each had an executive body comprising President, Secretary and Treasurer elected by members of the dal. In Cambodia, citizen representatives worked towards

mobilising citizens and assisted in forming neighbourhood committees. In Takhmao, with some initial challenge due to lack of history of citizen engagement, it took little longer to mobilise citizens. Once committees were formed, they started to identify key issues from their areas and discussed them with local councillors. Later, these neighbourhood committees in both countries monitored municipal services every month and organised interface meetings with municipal authorities.

City-wide campaigns were designed and organised jointly by CSOs, citizens groups and municipal authorities. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials in Khmer and Bangla, such as booklets and pamphlets on roles and responsibilities of municipalities and findings of citizen report cards on water and sanitation services, were distributed. Social accountability mechanisms like citizen charters, grievance redressal system and information disclosure formats were shared with citizens through posters and put up on notice boards at prominent locations in the cities. Discussions and public hearings were conducted where citizens directly interacted with municipal councillors and officials. In Bangladesh, gamvira (a form of popular street play) carried messages about roles of municipalities and citizens and purpose of social accountability. In Cambodia, rallies were organised where citizens walked through streets with placards and banners.

Application of social accountability tools

The project designed and implemented a number of social accountability tools with participation from citizens and municipal authorities. City-wide citizens' reports on water supply and sanitation services were prepared by citizens and CSOs; citizen charter, grievance redressal system and pro-active information disclosure were designed and implemented by municipalities. PRIA's prior knowledge and experience from Indian cities (Varanasi, Raipur, Jaipur, Ranchi and Patna) was useful in assisting partners design and implement these social accountability tools.

In Bangladesh, 300 households representing different income groups, ethnic minorities, socially excluded, slums dwellers, etc., from 27 wards of Rajshahi were surveyed to prepare the citizens' report on water and sanitation. In Cambodia, 305 households from 6 sangkats representing different income groups were surveyed. This provided a comparative status of differential access to services by income groups in both cities. Information collected through surveys was validated and verified with citizens before sharing it with wider stakeholders. Reports were finalised on the basis of feedback from citizens and authorities. Sharing workshops were organised with multiple stakeholders. Service improvement plans were prepared in each city through a series of follow-up meetings and these plans were monitored by the neighbourhood committees.



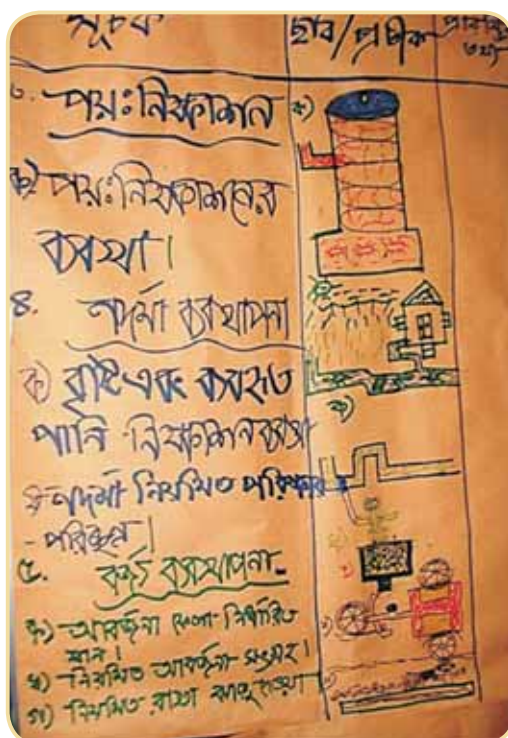
A model citizen charter was developed in partnership with municipalities. In Rajshahi, the municipality had a draft citizen charter, which was reviewed and shared with citizens. It was finalised based on the findings of the citizens' report, campaign reports, neighbourhood committees' reports and extensive consultations with citizens and municipalities. Critical points from the finalised charter were extracted and shared with citizens in monthly meetings. In Takhmao, a Social Accountability Facilitation Committee (SAFC) comprising officials from the municipality and sangkat councillors was formed which finalised the charter on water and sanitation services; it was shared widely with citizens.

In each city, a model information disclosure format was prepared. In Bangladesh, the existing Right to Information Act (2009) constitutionally mandates municipalities to disclose critical information to citizens; there was no such law in Cambodia. Based on the findings of the citizens' report and monthly neighbourhood committee meetings, information needs of citizens were assessed, and the format was developed using existing guidelines on information disclosure. These were shared with municipal authorities. Relevant information needed to fill the formats was gathered from concerned departments and a consolidated information disclosure prepared. This was shared with citizens and neighbourhood committee members for feedback. In Rajshahi, critical information was displayed through notice boards at strategic locations and in Takhmao the information disclosure formats were disseminated through campaign and community meetings.

Grievance redressal systems were also developed and implemented. Review of existing systems revealed that in Rajshahi there was a complaint box at the municipal office and the municipality also had an online grievance redressal system. The online system, however, was not accessible to all citizens, particularly in low income localities. In Cambodia, the only system of registering complaints was informal, through councillors. Citizen feedback on an effective system of grievance redressal was collected through the citizens' report and community meetings. This feedback helped in understanding what kind of system needs to be developed which is accessible and will be used. In Bangladesh, a decentralised system at ward level was strengthened by supporting ward offices to set up complaint boxes and complaint registers. In Cambodia, the SAFC developed a system in which they divided the roles and responsibilities among different officials to collect complaints and then disseminated them to concerned departments. Once this system was ready, it was shared with communities through campaigns and community meetings. With large numbers of citizens getting to know of the grievance redressal system, more citizens started coming forward and lodging complaints.

Learning and advocacy through convening and dissemination of lessons

In addition to facilitating citizen participation and social accountability mechanisms, an objective of the project was to inform national policies and influence practices regionally by sharing lessons learned. The national policy dialogues, which brought together 150 citizens, councillors, municipal officials, officials from national ministries, representatives from civil society and media, provided a venue to showcase positive results, particularly on how citizens and civil society can contribute to improving governance. Lessons of municipal councillors and officials working together with citizens and civil society, showing how productive results can be achieved through sustained engagement and partnership, were also shared. Issues and challenges identified while working with citizens and municipal authorities on social accountability and governance and how these could be addressed through enabling policies at the national level were highlighted.



The Asian Regional Conference in Phnom Penh, Cambodia brought together 50 participants comprising representatives of national ministries, policy institutions, city mayors/governors, municipal officials, academic institutions, citizens groups and civil society from eight Asian countries. Lessons from this project along with experiences from other countries were shared. Best practices on issues like devolution to municipalities; spaces, practices and challenges of citizen participation; practices, impacts and challenges of citizen monitoring of municipal performance; use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in making municipal governance participatory and effective; use of social accountability tools; and improving access to services for urban poor through participatory planning were discussed. The participatory nature of the conversations allowed horizontal exchange of ideas across multiple stakeholders. Experienced facilitators ensured that hierarchical consciousness did not inhibit candid sharing of challenges and learnings.

Awareness among citizens was raised through active engagement with the media. The media published articles in order to sensitise the general public on issues and challenges faced by marginalised urban people. In Cambodia, Voice of Democracy (a civil society group specialising in community radio programmes) aired important information through community radio.

Documents catering to specific stakeholders were published (printed and online) for targeted dissemination. Two policy briefs on institutionalising citizen participation and social accountability in urban governance (translated from the English into Bangla and Khmer) were prepared for national and sub-national policy-makers. Three facilitators' manuals (in English and local languages) on citizen report card, citizen charter, and information disclosure and grievance redressal mechanisms were disseminated. These documents were also shared with practitioners in other Asian countries. Two synthesis papers on citizen engagement and social accountability on the key lessons learned from the project were also prepared.

Key results achieved

The DLDG-SAA project has achieved a number of results which are relatively sustainable in the long run. Changes can be seen in both countries in the increased capacities of citizens, civil society and municipalities to collectively practice participatory governance.

Enhanced capacities of citizens

The neighbourhood committees formed have provided an effective space for citizen engagement. They provide citizens with a platform to discuss their issues and concerns. There has been a visible change in terms of increased participation of citizens. Most committees have a mixed composition of women, youth, senior citizens, etc, from different walks of life, which makes it a vibrant structure, where opinions, suggestions and ideas are shared and deliberated. These committees are evolving as institutions (evidenced through regular monthly meetings and their proceedings maintained in registers). A primary task that these committees have assumed is to monitor delivery of municipal services periodically and share results with concerned stakeholders. They have prepared a framework for monitoring public services. As a result of such citizen monitoring, authorities have become more responsive and accountable. In Bangladesh, municipal authorities on citizens' demand shifted a garbage disposal site from the vicinity of a public school. In Cambodia, the garbage collection van started collecting waste from areas where it never used to after committee members shared this issue in an interface meeting with municipal authorities.

Enhanced capacities of municipalities to institutionalise social accountability mechanisms

Capacity building helped municipal councillors and officials get sensitised towards the need and importance of making the municipal governance system transparent and accountable. This resulted in several positive changes in attitudes of municipal authorities. Municipal authorities in both countries were cooperative and supportive and welcomed the idea of adopting and piloting social accountability tools. In Cambodia, municipal officials and councillors formed SAFC which catalysed systems like citizen charter, grievance redressal and information disclosure. In Bangladesh, municipal authorities pro-actively participated and cooperated in addressing and resolving emerging community needs. These systems of social accountability were developed in partnership with municipalities, engaging them from the beginning of the project.

Enhanced capacities of local civil society

The capacity building interventions for CSO partners gave them new knowledge on concepts and issues of urban governance and social accountability. The study visit to India helped them understand how municipalities and CSOs can work together on social accountability and governance in urban areas. A confident approach helped Silaka and PRIP Trust successfully implement project activities in spite of numerous challenges. The CSO partners and local organisations with whom they worked were provided hand-holding support and guidance. The CSO partners convened national level policy dialogues, organised campaigns and facilitated municipalities to adopt social accountability mechanisms. PRIP Trust and SILAKA are now considered as pioneers in social accountability and urban governance issues in their respective countries. In recent years, both have been invited to contribute in designing major social accountability programmes for other international donors and governments.

Informing policies and practices

The national and regional level policy dialogues helped in creating platforms to raise issues and challenges of urban governance, social accountability and citizen participation. In both cities, municipal authorities and other concerned state institutions have been supportive and have cooperated with CSO partners. Municipal officials and councillors who participated in the study visit to India were more engaged and active and have brought about changes.

The facilitators' manuals, synthesis papers, policy briefs and a documentary film have been disseminated widely and made available online in the form of an e-book for practitioners and policy makers.

Key challenges

- ▶ In Bangladesh, delayed approval from NGO Affairs Bureau affected the start of the project for almost three months. Political disturbances in Bangladesh also hampered the pace of work (holding community meetings and interface dialogues) in the last leg.
- ▶ In Cambodia, initial lack of willingness from citizens to participate and engage on governance issues was a big constraint. However, this was addressed in due course through regular capacity building and awareness programmes.
- ▶ Although, municipal authorities in both cities were helpful and showed interest, unavailability of data meant the required information they helped get was often incomplete or dated.
- ▶ Planning, sampling, data collection and data collation processes to conduct citizens' reports consumed a lot of time. Although other social accountability tools like community score cards and community monitoring had been used in Bangladesh and Cambodia before, use of citizens' report was new for both citizens and partner CSOs. Local citizens (youth, women) and community based organisations had to be oriented and given enough time to understand and internalise the concept and methodology before they could be engaged in the data collection process and preparing citizens' report.
- ▶ Silaka and PRIP Trust both engaged local CSOs for community mobilisation, formation of neighbourhood committees, facilitating community monitoring, meetings and trainings, etc. This was strategically planned because: first, the local partners were well aware and acquainted with ground realities, and, second, it was anticipated that these civil society groups would continue to engage with municipalities post project completion. However, lack of resources meant some of their expectations related to financial and technical support went unmet.
- ▶ Lengthy administrative rules and procedures had to be followed in dealing with municipal authorities, especially in Cambodia, where approval from provincial and national authorities had to be taken for most project activities. The formation of SAFC was delayed as without approvals municipal authorities could not move forward.
- ▶ Communication with CSOs partners regarding interventions, status updates of activities, and feedback through e-mails, telephone or online video conferences faced technical difficulties.

- ▶ PRIP Trust and SILAKA had considerable knowledge and skills on social accountability. However, both were working on the theme of urban governance for the first time. Applying these concepts in an urban setting was new for them. Therefore, the implementation of some tasks and activities took time in the beginning. However, over a period of two years, their knowledge and skills on social accountability and urban governance was considerably enhanced.
- ▶ The project initially planned for horizontal exchanges between PRIP Trust and SILAKA staff. However, these activities had to be dropped due to resource constraints. The teams had to rely on online video conferences and written reports. The learning could have been more intensive and effective had there been opportunities for face-to-face interactions among all project members.



Strengthening People's Organisations and NGOs in Africa:
SETU Africa Programme of VimoSEWA

Introduction

There are many similarities between issues of informal sector women workers of India and different African countries. Poor women can share and learn from each other's struggles, strategies, successes and challenges. The experiences of Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) based in Ahmedabad in empowering and building organisations of self-employed women can be of use to Africa.

SEWA initially worked with street-vendors and has close associations with unions in South Africa, Ghana and Nigeria to promote the rights and well-being of informal workers, especially women, in these countries. There have been several exchange visits between SEWA leaders and their African counterparts to learn from each other and support collective action. In addition, there have been visits from civil society colleagues, Members of Parliament and officials from various African countries. In sum, there is substantial interest in collaboration and mutual learning and exchange of ideas and experiences between African countries and India.

Based on interactions with African colleagues, it was felt that SEWA's integrated approach could be relevant and helpful to people, especially women workers, in some African countries. VimoSEWA² was chosen by

²VimoSEWA is an integrated insurance programme aiming to provide social protection for SEWA members to cover their life-cycle needs and the various risks they face in their lives through an insurance organisation in which they themselves are users, owners and managers of all services. Crises such as illness, widowhood, accident, fire, communal riots, floods and other such natural and man-made calamities result in loss of work, income and assets for poor working families. In September 2009, the Government of India's Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture and Cooperation, registered VimoSEWA as the National Insurance VimoSEWA Cooperative Ltd, Ahmedabad a multi-state cooperative society with areas of operation in the states of Gujarat, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Delhi and Bihar.

the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, to design, develop and monitor a project to strengthen people's organisations in five African countries (South Africa, Ethiopia, Ghana, Tanzania and Senegal) over 36 months beginning in November 2012. The objective of the project was economic empowerment of informal women workers through an integrated approach led by the women themselves.

The project aimed to:

- ▶ Promote an integrated approach to poverty reduction and self-reliance for women and families in five African countries, through microfinance, microenterprise and livelihoods promotion, micro-insurance, health and child care and capacity-building for leadership and management by local people, especially women.
- ▶ Undertake studies to assess local people's needs with regard to microfinance, microenterprise and livelihoods promotion, micro-insurance, health and child care and capacity-building for leadership and management by local people, especially women, with the help of local African and Indian researchers.
- ▶ Organise workshops in each country to disseminate the findings of the studies and develop action plans on the five areas of activity mentioned above.
- ▶ Provide training, including exposure visits, on the five priority areas for each country.
- ▶ Develop future collaboration and support to other African countries based on the findings of the studies, the workshops and the action plans developed in conjunction with African partners.



History and nature of south-south cooperation

In the early 1990s, the South African trade unionist Pat Horn made her first visit to SEWA. She had heard of SEWA's efforts to organise women workers of the informal economy in India, and wanted to adapt its approach and strategies in her work of organising street-vendors in Durban. This was the beginning of a special solidarity with African sisters, and the deepening of SEWA's working in partnership with organisations outside India.

Pat Horn went on to register Self-Employed Women's Union (SEWU), an organisation of street-vendors, with SEWA's active support. Today, South African SEWA, or SASEWA, is a registered organisation working to address the concerns of women workers in the informal economy. SEWA and SEWU are also founders of StreetNet, a global organisation of street-vendors which represents their issues and

struggles for their rights. StreetNet International was launched in Durban, South Africa, in November 2002. Membership-based organisations (unions, co-operatives or associations) directly organising street-vendors, market vendors and/or hawkers (i.e., mobile vendors) among their members are entitled to affiliate with StreetNet International. The aim of StreetNet is to promote the exchange of information and ideas on critical issues facing street-vendors, market vendors and hawkers and on practical organising and advocacy strategies. Many African street-vendor organisations and unions from Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and other countries are active in StreetNet. Representatives from SEWA in Ahmedabad, India; SEWU in Durban, South Africa; Women's World Banking in New York; and the International Coalition of Women and Credit in New York have played a key role in the genesis and evolution of StreetNet International.

SEWA is member of a global network of informal workers called Women in Informal Economy: Globalising and Organising (WIEGO) focused on securing livelihoods for the working poor, especially women, in the informal economy. SEWA was invited to share its experiences in livelihood generation and women's economic empowerment as a way to promote peace and well-being in conflict conditions in Afghanistan and Sri Lanka's northern areas. It has helped set up membership-based women's organisations to take the integrated approach of work and social security further in these countries.

HomeNet South Asia (HNSA) is a dynamic and vibrant network of home-based workers organisations representing over 290,000 home-based workers from five countries in South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). HomeNet South Asia has evolved as a focal point for action for home-based workers of the region, and for their collective voice. The strength of HNSA lies in its grassroots membership and the technical support it extends to its members. At the same time, HNSA carries the voice of the home-based worker to the national, regional and international levels, to influence legislation, policies, plans and programmes. Since 2008, in partnership with SEWA and supported by the SAARC Development Fund, HomeNet South Asia is implementing a project called SAARC Business Association of Home-based Workers (SABAH) to strengthen the livelihood of home-based workers in the SAARC region.

VimoSEWA was invited by the Namibian government's financial services authority, NAMFISA, and FIDES Bank, a microfinance institution, to develop a micro-insurance programme in Namibia. The Namibian government was encouraging banks and financial institutions to provide micro-insurance and VimoSEWA assisted in setting up the process.

Specific activities

SEWA undertook the project in collaboration with five of its sister organisations from India, and partner organisations in the African countries.



Activity Component	Implementing SEWA Organisation
Microfinance	Shree Shakti Vikas SEWA Trust, Ahmedabad
Micro-enterprise and Livelihoods	SEWA Bharat, New Delhi and The Gujarat State Women's SEWA Cooperative Federation Ltd., Ahmedabad
Micro-insurance	National Insurance VimoSEWA Cooperative Ltd., Ahmedabad
Health and Child Care	Lokswasthya SEWA Trust, Ahmedabad
Capacity Building	Indian Academy for Self Employed Women, Ahmedabad

As this was the first time that VimoSEWA and its sister organisations were undertaking a project of this kind, it was felt that a proper understanding of the needs of poor people, especially women, in each country was critical. SEWA has always initiated its work with this people-centred or bottom-up approach. SEWA collaborates with local organisations in each country to assess the needs and priorities of people, what exists and what inputs are required. In the first year of the project, needs assessment workshops were held in South Africa, Ethiopia and Tanzania and needs assessment studies were undertaken – one each in South Africa, Ethiopia, Ghana, Tanzania and Senegal.

Microfinance activities centred on promotion of self-help groups to provide integrated financial services (savings, credit, insurance and pension), their capacity-building and extension of financial literacy.

Microenterprise and livelihood promotion activities examined what is feasible, markets, etc., and then helped organisations set up their own viable micro-enterprises.

Micro-insurance activities developed plans for extending micro-insurance to local communities, especially women, and then capacity-building to help local organisations implement this.



Health and child care activities developed appropriate systems (tailored to local conditions and needs) to reach local communities, especially women and children, with basic primary health care, including health education and life-saving information.

Organising women into unions, cooperatives and strengthening of their existing leadership was undertaken and capacities built, particularly of women, on organising and co-operative management, management of own activities and running their own organisations.



SEWA established a strong working relationship with different people's organisations and government agencies in each project country - with StreetNet International for effective implementation of field visits and conducting workshops in South Africa, with The Organisation for Women in Self-Employment (WISE) in Ethiopia, with The Conservation, Hotel, Domestic and Allied Workers Union (CHODAWU) in Tanzania and Trade Union Congress (Ghana) in Ghana. SEWA engaged with its partners at all levels, keeping in constant touch, listening to their suggestions and guiding them accordingly. All other stakeholders, including the Indian High Commission and High Commission of African countries in India, were kept in the loop as well. The project was well supported by them.

Exposure visits of community leaders from South Africa and Ethiopia to SEWA and exchange visits of SEWA leaders to South Africa and Ethiopia were organised. SEWA met with Ethiopian embassy officials and a high level ministerial delegation from Tanzania in New Delhi, which included the Minister of Labour and Employment. The minister appreciated the project's efforts in Africa and promised to extend full support from the ministry to the partner organisation in Tanzania, endorsing the idea of providing access and market-linkage support to poor women for their produce and setting up trading linkages between women of India and Tanzania.

Trading linkages between women-to-women producers' cooperatives were established, including an exhibition of Ethiopian handicrafts in New Delhi. The Ethiopian Embassy in India played a very significant role in this.

Macro-level studies in South Africa and Ethiopia were carried out and disseminated through a workshop in South Africa. Regular outreach through newsletters, a dedicated website (www.sewasetuafrica.org), and social media was key in communicating about the programme's experiences. A specific logo for SETU Africa which reflects the ethos of this programme - a bridge between India and Africa through SEWA - was designed. A brochure was created and the Facebook page of the SETU Africa programme was set up to remain in touch and keep sharing different updates with everyone associated with the programme. The monthly newsletter of SETU Africa was launched for readers to get an overall idea

of the programme, latest updates on events, and read about different experiences from the voices of the African partner organisations. The newsletter was shared in all the training workshops and with the embassies of India in Ethiopia, Tanzania and South Africa, and the embassies of Ethiopia, Tanzania and South Africa in India. The newsletter is also posted on the WIEGO website.

Key results and achievements

- ▶ After visiting and seeing SEWA Bank's pension programme, WISE in Ethiopia has designed a micro-pension scheme called "Saving Today for Tomorrow" for their co-operative members.
- ▶ Direct women-to-women trading of craft and other products, preferably made by women's cooperatives, between Ethiopia and India has been established, cutting out the exploitative middlemen and traders, with the aim of moving women workers of the informal economy out of poverty and towards self-reliance. The first exhibition of Ethiopian products and workshop with Ethiopian artisans and Indian designers took place in February 2015.
- ▶ The Minister of Women's, Children and Youth Affairs and the Ethiopian ambassador to India have shown very keen interest about women-to-women trading/marketing between Ethiopia and India and have promised to examine how this can be done between the two countries. In order for women to reach the markets to sell their products and to strengthen marketing. SEWA's idea of shops and the Indian government's DilliHaat marketplace are ideas under discussion in Ethiopia.



- ▶ A detailed concept note about establishing child care centres for working poor in Ethiopia has been shared with the Government of Ethiopia and with WISE. The Ministry of Women, Child and Youth Affairs is actively considering the proposal, and WISE is preparing to test a pilot based on this idea for their members in Addis Ababa.
- ▶ The idea of establishing a women's co-operative bank focussed on poor working women in Ethiopia on the lines of SEWA Bank has been discussed at length with partner organisations in Ethiopia. The Ambassador of Ethiopia to India is supportive about establishing it.
- ▶ There are plans to start community-based micro-insurance programmes in South Africa.
- ▶ There is interest and cooperation in setting up a National Co-operative Academy in South Africa.
- ▶ Minister of State, Ministry of Labour, Zanzibar is interested in knowing more about the SEWA Bank experience. Director of Operation, National Social Security Fund, has shown interest to know more about the development of different insurance products for poor and its marketing.
- ▶ This programme has also resulted in significant capacity building of VimoSEWA and the other SEWA sister organisations involved, particularly for staff and the grassroots level leaders who had the opportunity to interact with African women and men for the first time. The rich experiences under this project has built their abilities to adapt the SEWA experiences to different conditions and strengthened their resolve and commitment to work for change through organising informal workers. Capacities have been built on how to manage such partnership programmes, how to work with people from different countries and cultures, how to deal with senior Indian and African government functionaries, how to work with embassies and high commissions, and how to manage researchers, policy-makers and grassroots organisations in other countries.
- ▶ Based on this experience, the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, has invited VimoSEWA to help different people's organisation in other African countries.

Key challenges

- ▶ VimoSEWA was implementing such a programme involving different countries and various government and non-government institutions for the first time. It took some time to develop internal systems, develop technical know-how related to different issues including legal, financial and administrative issues. A people's organisation like SEWA has limited resources and exposure to manage different technical issues and in this regard the help of government agencies like the Ministry of External Affairs, high commissions of India in different countries and high commissions of partner countries in India was very crucial.
- ▶ Most members of partner organisations are grassroots level workers. Language is a barrier initially for communication and trying to promote ideas. But as engagement deepens and becomes more frequent, language as a barrier becomes less visible and ideas are exchanged freely. As a people's organisation inspired by the values of Mahatma Gandhi, valuing and respecting different cultures and beliefs is part of SEWA's day-to-day work. But when working in new cultures for the first time it is very important to be particularly sensitive to cultural issues.



- ▶ It is challenging to engage policy-makers and decision-makers across diverse countries to propagate the issues and challenges of poor, informal sector workers. Current rules and systems are not conducive to promoting regular engagement between grassroots informal women workers in different countries.
- ▶ Ensuring needs and outcomes to different government agencies in India was time consuming.
- ▶ It is not possible for a people's organisation to have financial resources to implement such multi-country projects. These types of projects are very resource intensive and need some specific skilled human resources. The fund flow from the Government of India was irregular and involved a lengthy process, which caused some bottlenecks in smooth implementation.
- ▶ There are high trade barriers poor women face if they want to trade with another country. This challenge was particularly faced when trying to promote trading between India and Ethiopia. The trade barriers are so complicated and taxes so high that it is almost impossible for poor women to trade. These types of issues need to be addressed to facilitate grassroots level relationships.

Key lessons

- ▶ Over the years, it has been SEWA's experience that an integrated and comprehensive approach which helps women and their families become self-reliant is the most effective solution to empower women and bring them out of poverty.
- ▶ To implement a multi-country project, strong organisations in the partner country is key, especially those run by and focussed on women workers. They must commit to taking forward agreed upon action.
- ▶ African women can develop their own concrete action plans and commit to follow up, but need ongoing hand-holding.
- ▶ African women and men, especially informal workers, are eager to engage, interact and learn from Indian counterparts. Much scope for mutual learning and developing low cost, sustainable models like cooperatives exists. Long-term commitment is essential from both sides, and especially the government.
- ▶ Wide range of partnerships and collaborations between organisations working on similar lines in the partner countries adds significant value.

- ▶ People-to-people partnerships, including informal engagement between governments, businessmen, commercial institutions and people's organisations are an essential part of country-to-country partnerships, and must be woven into all development cooperation.
- ▶ Engagement of all stakeholders, including government and private sector, undertaken from the very inception of developmental cooperation can add significant value.
- ▶ Different types of long-term capacity-building interventions in NGOs and people's organisations are needed.
- ▶ Policy-makers from all partnering countries should be sensitised about the issues, challenges and experience of addressing solutions for the problems of the poor. Institutions like SEWA can play the role of mentor and facilitator in developing and strengthening solutions to these issues. By sharing experiences and reports with the government it is hoped that different country-specific strategies will be formulated and local institutions will be strengthened to take forward economic empowerment of informal women workers through an integrated approach.



On-Farm Productive Water Development and Management -
Greening the Central Rift Valley of Ethiopia: The Experience of KABIL

The country

Ethiopia is a country of contrasts. The highland region of Ethiopia, which produces surplus food every year, is called 'Productive Ethiopia' whereas the semi-arid zone of the Central Rift Valley (CRV) and the arid zone of the pastoral area face chronic food insecurity and are known as 'Hungry Ethiopia'. The pilot project was introduced in the semi-arid zone of CRV, where most of the farmers are rural small-holders. The zone with scanty (around 600 mm) annual rainfall does not have any mechanism to store or manage run-off. Thus, there is currently not enough water to meet household needs (people travel long distances on donkey-carts or on foot to fetch potable water for household chores). The use of water for irrigation, thus, is a distant dream. Precipitation in the rainy season (June until October) is the only source of water to grow crops. There is frequent crop failure due to dry spells within the rainy season. The World Bank estimates that hydrological variability currently costs the economy over one-third of its growth potential and has led to a 25 per cent increase in poverty rates.

The project

The On-Farm Productive Water Development and Management (OPWDM) pilot project was funded by the Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture (SFSA) and implemented by iDE, Ethiopia, in partnership with Kabil (an Indian NGO of development professionals, with a rich experience in addressing similar challenges), to contribute to enhanced stability and resilience of agriculture-based rural livelihoods of poor, small-holder households. Together, these organisations promote community

managed, in-situ water harvesting technologies, and soil and water conservation, and raise awareness about alternative livelihoods and green economy in the targeted kebeles of Dodicha and HalakuGulenta Boke of AdamiTulJiddoKombolchaworeda(district), Oromia Regional State.



iDE, Ethiopia, has been working in this region for a long time, but it was only when iDE became aware of the people-led Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) in one of the semi-arid zones of Central India that they were struck by the similarities of the developmental challenges between the CRV area and India. Inspired by the Indian innovations and seeing how these had transformed the lives of the small-holders, iDE sought the support of Kabil, to introduce similar practices in Ethiopia. A pilot project on INRM-based livelihoods for small rain-fed farmers of CRV was conceived as cooperation between these two organisations. In its initial phase, the project covered 65 households (520 household members). The project was of one year duration, starting January 2013.

The broad goal of the project was to set up a replicable model on water availability and farm-based livelihoods, using Indian innovations in community-led INRM for the semi-arid CRV zone in Ethiopia. The project was funded by SFSA, with contributions from iDE. The SFSA fund has been used for training, exposure, farmers' group formation, and soil and water conservation structures. iDE contributed to the man-power (salary and travel) and other logistics required for implementation, as well as with the costs of supervision and administration.

The focus of the project was to revitalise the relationship among the Institutions (I), the people (P) and the natural resources (R), to set off a growth spiral. Here, 'people' refer to the community of small, rain-fed farmers of rural CRV; 'institutions' include all the institutions – the people's own, the public and the private; and 'resources' include natural endowments – land, water, vegetation and human (labour). Growth includes the increase in productivity of land and water through the participation of the community all through, the capacity building of the community, the customisation of various techniques for rainwater harvesting, the in-situ soil moisture conservation, the introduction of improved agriculture practices particularly in staple food crops, vegetables and agro-forestry, the organisation of the community and establishing linkages.

Key implementation processes



Achievements of the project

For the first time, 46 farmers levelled (terraced) their land and dug contour trenches by contributing labour for around 100 person days per farmer. Half a hectare of land of each farmer was treated. Rainwater was conserved through the terracing, and the trenching increased field moisture. This intervention helped farmers take up high-yielding corn for cultivation; in addition, it opened up the possibility of a second crop such as gram or linseed, which was unprecedented.

Twenty-three other farmers dug field tanks of 143 cubic meter capacity each and terraced their land. These farmers contributed almost 100 person days of labour. Rainwater was harvested in tanks and, for the first time, it was used to grow vegetables such as onion, tomato, chilli and Ethiopian kale in around 1,000 square meter area by each of the 23 farmers.

All of them have planted fruit trees such as grafted mango and avocado. About ten training programmes (on-field and off-field) were conducted on land treatment, soil and water conservation, rainwater harvesting, techniques for cultivating crops such as corn, vegetables and mango.

The farmers now have more technical knowledge, for example, the de-siltation of contour trenches and ponds is currently being done by the farmers themselves. They have also started making make-shift tents in the farmland, to protect their crops, which they were not doing earlier. These farmers are now

ready to teach others the new initiatives. And more farmers are now digging ponds, having seen the results of the pilot farmers.



The intervention has also helped in the transformation of food insecure families to food secure families. The average corn productivity increased from 11.8 quintal /hectare to 52.4 quintal/hectare (344 percent of the baseline) in Dodicha and from 12 quintal /hectare to 34.4 quintal /hectare (187 percent of the baseline) in Gulenta, from a sample of 40 percent of the population. All the participating farmers have produced surplus food grain.

For the first time, vegetables such as onion, tomato, chilli and Ethiopian kale were grown in around 0.1–0.15 acre area per farmer. Each farmer earned an additional USD 450 during their most stressed period of the year from sale of vegetables and surplus corn in the local market. The people have now started consuming the fresh vegetables, produced from their own fields. After the age-old subsistence rain-fed farming they had been following, farmers are now looking at their lands as productive assets.

Ayo Gaguro of Dodichakebele (village) becomes very emotional as she tells her story. “I was married at the age of 12 and now I am a 40-year-old widow with five sons and three daughters. I have seen this village go through very hard times. On the one hand, our village suffered from severe water scarcity (we had to walk 5 kilometres to fetch drinking water); and, on the other, our agriculture field would get washed away during the rains. The bunds around the fields would break due to the heavy rains and the high speed of the sudden run-off water, and, later, the same field would suffer from moisture stress. The hill in the eastern side of the kebele causes the havoc.



We were the most marginalised lot in this kebele. There was a time, the year before the intervention, when I had to sow corn-seed three times because every time it got washed away. Finally, when I sowed teff seeds (a millet grown in Ethiopia and used as staple food) for the fourth time, I managed to get 50 kilogram of grain. Facing such food shortage was common but, in that particular year, it was severe. I coped by selling our ox for 4,000 Birr (1 Ethiopian Birr = 0.052 US\$). That was not sufficient; therefore, I was forced to sell my four goats. After six months, I had no other option but to withdraw two of my sons from school and send them for daily wage labour in the investor farm, for less than the normal wage.

I was struggling against hopeless conditions. It was at that time that iDE officials and some Indian people came to visit our farm land. This was the first-ever visit by any outsider to our area. They consulted us, visited our fields and the surrounding areas, and enquired if we would be willing to participate in an effort to reduce the threat of run-off water from the hill. We were in complete doubt about what could be done because we had always lived with this problem. We agreed, albeit with some fears in our minds.

They visited us frequently, training us on various aspects of rainwater collection and agriculture. Surprised by the success of the methods they demonstrated, we slowly began to trust them. Inspired by them, we dug the 54 metre well on our own and we overcame our apprehensions. Even so, only 43 farmers among the poorest willingly joined hands with the iDE and the Indian people, to plan and implement various measures such as land-levelling, excavation of soil bunds in the individual fields, application of fertilisers and use of improved seeds.

When it rained this year, we realised that our area had undergone a transformation from being non-productive to productive!

I had produced nothing on my plot of land earlier; this year, however, I excavated soil bunds around it at 20 meter gaps and have solved the run-off problem completely. These interventions in my field have led to a yield of 30 quintals of corn, for the first time, bringing a smile to the faces of all my family members. In fact, I had no place in my small home to keep such large quantities of corn. I would like to thank iDE, which recently provided me a new barn, made of aluminium, where I have stored a quintal of surplus corn (after estimated home consumption and loan repayment) as my own cereal bank.



This year, I also sowed improved maize seed once on half a hectare of land, on credit basis, facilitated by iDE. I planted grafted mango and papaya as well as fodder for the animals on the embankment of the soil bunds. Many of us started small kitchen gardens and were able to provide our families with fresh vegetables. I have now achieved self-sufficiency in food grain and I am thinking of purchasing an ox, to replace the one which I had sold to cope with my family's food deficiency.

I am no longer alone. I, along with all the women from 43 families, have formed a group. We support each other and are recovering from what we had lost due to our poverty. We save small amounts of money at regular intervals in the group, to use during the agricultural season. We need not be dependent on outsiders. We have started a new life with a lot of hope. Now, the others of my kebele are seeking the help of iDE to become like us."

In another kebele, Gulenta, there was no water body at all. People had to travel 5 kilometres to fetch extremely muddy water for drinking, as well as for other domestic purposes. Rain-fed corn of a traditional variety, which had no nutritional value, was the only agricultural crop cultivated, and the production of that too was extremely uncertain. In spite of having access to about an acre of such land, food sufficiency was a distant dream. Except rainwater, there was no other viable source of water and access to it was identified as the greatest challenge by the community.

Abu Tona of Gulenta spoke of his experience, “It was a dream for all of us to have our own pond in our field. Now iDE and the Indian people have taught us how to do that. We have excavated it on our own without any monetary support, used the water to save our corn crop during spells of drought, and cultivated vegetables such as kale, tomato, chili and onion. Corn is now a sure crop. I have produced surplus corn from the same piece of land. Until last year, only a few of us could afford to buy and consume vegetables; but just within one year, we are not only consuming vegetables at home but also selling them in the market and earning cash. After using the vegetables for home consumption, I have earned 4,000 Birr by selling the surplus in the market.”

He continued, “Long back, our government officials tried to promote mango cultivation in the area, but we were totally unaware of the cultivation method. Now, iDE and our Indian friends, have not only supplied the saplings, they are with us to help us learn the cultivation methods. We have learned new techniques such as deep-pit-planting, the application of fertilisers and manure, and more efficient irrigation. Seeing our ponds and fields, others in our kebele are trying to connect with iDE for support.”



Outcomes of the project

1. **Shift in agricultural practices**
 - ▶ Farmers shifted from the traditional method of farming to improved agriculture
 - ▶ Farmers experienced the advantage of improved agriculture – improved seeds, fertilisers and different cultural practices
2. **Enhanced capability of the farmers**
 - ▶ Farmers learned experientially about the cultivation of vegetables, fruit trees
 - ▶ Farmers learned experientially about soil conservation and water harvesting
3. **Creation of a pool of community resource persons**
 - ▶ At least 20 percent of the farmers are confident enough to help teach fellow farmers
 - ▶ Farmer-to-farmer expansion is possible now
4. **Attracted the attention of the mainstream**
 - ▶ Local woreda farmers used the farmers' fields during exposure visits of other farmers.
5. **Successful demonstration of Indian innovations in INRM and sustainable agriculture for small-holder farmers**

Way forward

The success of the present project enhanced confidence about the viability of the idea of bringing in customised Indian experiences (of INRM and sustainable agriculture) to Ethiopia. The size of the pilot, that is, the number of beneficiaries (65 families in two kebeles) is too small for developing a model. Besides, because the whole activity is rainfall dependent, the experience of one year is not sufficient to consider it a replicable model. It has to be repeated for at least three consecutive years with regular fine-tuning in the same place, with the same scale, to be considered replicable. Thus, the same is required to be repeated with all the small-holders of these two sub-kebeles (by bringing in now-willing farmers, estimated at around 400) for the next three years. Finally, the cost of this year's pilot has been heavily subsidised by the iDE, and only 69 percent of the budget has been utilised; thus, the current expense should not be considered as the unit cost of the intervention. The challenge is to mobilise the full cost on developing a replicable model over the next three years.



Addressing Challenges of Inclusion for the Urban Poor: Experience of Shack/Slum Dwellers International

Introduction

Towards the end of the twentieth century, urbanisation expanded exponentially as did the wealth of nations. Along with this, disparities between and within regions, nations and provinces have also grown. As a consequence, stark and obvious manifestations of these disparities began to characterise the cities and their governance. There is also clear expansion of the number of urban dwellers living and working informally in many cities of the global south and these numbers are overtaking the formal city dwellers.

This case study seeks to explore some of the most crucial issues that urbanisation presents to nation-states as well as to development investors, locally, nationally and globally. How is the obvious and expanding disparity between people residing in the same city going to be addressed if it is not acknowledged in the first place? How can cities manage further expansion of urbanisation in the coming decades if past and present poverty, informality of habitat and livelihoods is not addressed presently by national, provincial and city governments? What approach will be explored to accommodate this reality and address its challenges? Who will be the stakeholders or significant actors in this urgently needed transition?

The case study illustrates how communities of urban poor from developing countries produced solutions which worked for them as well as for others. In doing so, the case study presents a very short history and description of a social movement of the urban poor which began in India, networked

initially in Asia and then moved to South Africa and to the rest of Africa. It describes the processes that created knowledge and strategies to help communities of the poor to transform themselves from beneficiaries and consumers of aid and assistance into actors who demonstrated possible ways for cities and governments and international agencies committed to development to explore solutions. These were designed and developed by the poor but were also very useful for promoting inclusive city wide development and ensuring just governance.

Emergence of Shack/Slum Dwellers International (SDI)

The National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) was formed in 1975 to network slum dwellers attempting to stop evictions of their settlements in Mumbai, India. In 1984 the Society for Promotion of Area Resource Centre (SPARC) was formed and its work with the women residing on the pavements of Mumbai led to the formation of Mahila Milan (MM) a network of women's collectives. In 1986 these three organisations formed an Alliance which is operationalised with SPARC with a legal institutional identity signing contracts, managing resources inflowing to assist the alliance, and NSDF and Mahila Milan explored systems to aggregate and federate communities, develop peer learning strategies and build confidence and capacity to create momentum in the poor becoming problem solvers rather than the source of problems for the city. This process breaks away from the more conventional strategy of external entities of professionals working with an informal settlement, or a project delivery process and/or project that organises the residents to ensure delivery of the resources for objectives defined and developed by external entities. Within SDI this gave rise to a concept of the federation model. The slums and informal settlements facing challenges of exclusion get organised into federations. "Movement Building" emphasises the most crucial part of the Alliance's work which is to build, deepen and expand organised communities who participate collectively to produce the voice of urban poor. Its aim is to develop the federation model, its various 'rituals' and knowledge creating and sharing mechanisms that remain the most foundational commitment without which nothing the Alliance does is possible. The Alliance constantly strives to strengthen the strategy by which the communities develop insights into developing solutions. It strives to publicise the insights and solutions to large numbers of slum dwellers, thus granting them accessibility. Its commitment to build a space and voice for women within the leadership of slum dwellers is directly connected to the practice of forming savings groups that women nurture within slum communities and network them with other such groups to form Mahila Milan. Creating a voice for the informal inhabitants of the city requires the creation of institutions they can own, through which they can create new knowledge, leadership that explores new possible solutions and a confidence to negotiate with those who traditionally make decisions in the city.

In 1988, the Alliance met in Bangkok with other Asian activists and together they formed Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR). Asian cities were facing and continue to face challenges of eviction of the informal settlements, and in the absence of civil society organisations in each country working on these issues, networking across countries was a strategy to exchange ideas, produce solidarity and explore new possibilities. Initially ACHR was a network of professionals and NGO leaders, but with NSDF and MM involvement and encouragement for peer exchanges between communities, exchanges between the community leaders and NGOs many practices were learnt from each other and collectively issues which were discussed at the Asian level now had representation from Asian Coalition for Housing Rights (ACHR).

In many ways this Asia level engagement also helped local and national level leadership of civil society organisations (CSOs) and community based organisation (CBOs) to realise the huge influence that

global knowledge and practice of private sector and international development agencies had on local development. The collective reflections among the Alliance members often demonstrated how descriptions of their own practices were often interpreted in ways the members found unacceptable but since they were never part of that discourse they could never challenge it. Similarly, when bilateral and multilateral agencies hired consultants, and local activists challenged their positions and design of projects, these challenges remained unequal almost as though the global knowledge overpowered local logic and protest. ACHR as a network provided both communities and professionals an opportunity to create voice at the Asian level which voiced these concerns, and since the discussions were both credible as they were practical more and more Asian level multilateral engagements began to seek the presence of ACHR in discussions.

In 1991-92 after Nelson Mandela was freed and the possibility of majority rule was anticipated, The Council of Churches in South Africa who had been supporting black townships across South Africa with advice from Father Jorge Anzorena³ brought together leadership from 80 townships from all provinces in a workshop in Boedestrom, Johannesburg. The leadership were quite jubilant with the anticipation that with their own government now all their problems would be solved. Only Jockin, the founder leader of the Indian NSDF, challenged that view. He said that India was a democracy for over five decades at that time and yet the plight of the poor and the challenges they faced remained unattended. Democracy did not automatically ensure that all problems of the poor would be taken care of. This led to a huge debate and hostility as it was seen pessimistic in their moment of triumph. Yet finally they accepted his challenge. He said to them that majority rule removed the oppression they faced through apartheid and they would have the right to make demands on their state, but unless they were able to transform their political agitation capacity into a social movement seeking resources and equality for the poor, their situation would be like all the other poor communities in the global south. At the end of the workshop, all the members of ACHR (including the Indian delegation) invited Joel Bolnick to visit them to explore the different types of organisational forms and activisms taking place in various countries and choose whatever seemed appropriate to address the challenges the new South African nation would face vis-a-vis housing. Joel visited Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and India and some countries in Africa and chose to explore the Indian federation model. The first exchange of 5 township leaders and two professionals to India formed the basis of the India-South Africa learning exchange programme.

In 1991-92 the Indian Alliance of NSDF, Mahila Milan and SPARC began interaction with South African township residents and helped them form the South African Homeless People's Federation and People's Dialogue for Land and Shelter and through exchanges developed federations in all the provinces of South Africa. These federations also established dialogues with the newly formed majority government and participated in a wide range of activities. Before long several other slum organisations were formed in southern Africa seeing what these two people's organisations were doing. Since the engagement was between community federations from these countries, many Asian and African slum federations found they were at the centre of the learning process, designing possibilities, managing transnational relationships, and with agreements of the NGOs who had facilitated their processes, they became the primary agents of association rather than the NGOs.

³Father Anzorena is an Argentinian Jesuit priest with a Doctorate in Architecture and living in Japan. He is associated with an agency called SELAVIP. He advised Peter Templeton who ran programmes of welfare for the Church, to facilitate a meeting of the leadership of the townships with activists working on habitat across the world. This was critical so that local people would network with activists around the world and also get them to learn from their successes and failures. Miserioir a German catholic agency commissioned Peter Templeton and his organisation to develop this idea, and he asked Joel Bolnick (who had returned to South Africa along with many others who had fled the country to avoid being arrested) to design and manage the event that would bring the township leaders and the housing activists together.

ACHR in the meanwhile was working actively with the Indian Alliance to develop and strengthen federations of slum dwellers in Asia. In 1996, Slum/Shack Dwellers International (SDI) was formed by the federations from eight countries from Asia, Africa and Latin America. To date, federations from 33 countries are the members of SDI. SDI has a Council comprising of federation leadership from matured federations. These are federations which are assessed by their peers to be stable, operate at scale across cities and demonstrate commitment to the collective principles of SDI. They elect a Board comprising of two NGO representatives from the NGOs aligned with the federations and 7-9 community leaders, half or more who are women. This process is assisted by its Secretariat in Cape Town, South Africa and facilitates an institutional interface between the social movements of the poor in these countries helping many to develop partnerships with NGOs who work with them to undertake a wide range of activities which are often called SDI rituals. Initially SDI focused mainly on building federations, facilitating peer exchanges and facilitating horizontal capacity building.



Process transfers

The exchanges between communities began with building the imagination of the leadership about the solidarity that always assisted them when facing evictions. It was also a realisation that the greater the critical masses the more powerful the advocacy and this networking initially produced and helped build a federation. Most community leadership imageries were to work at their neighbourhood level, occasionally aligning with a political party, but also accepting that of rarely getting their demands even articulated let alone financed. NGOs and grant makers would choose to work with them coming and leaving at their own time taking up activities, projects and resources that were based on external priorities. The federation model, transformed this. Motivated leaders, women and men, began to visit each other and to develop networks. The more they met each other the more collective their voice began to be. This initial process began when NSDF was formed. Mahila Milan which was formed when SPARC began working with pavement dwellers also created solidarity but through networking of women's collectives, and assisting women explore their city, its resources and build confidence to demand these services. What was powerful was that when one group of women learnt to negotiate a service, be it of school admissions, getting a birth certificate they then helped other women's groups to get those services by accompanying them and demonstrating how to obtain access. Women helped each other

set up savings groups, work with SPARC and NSDF to undertake surveys of their neighbourhoods, understand the politics of how land gets allocated and utilised in cities and develop confidence to “learn to learn”. Being migrants and often illiterate, women and their communities began to shed “I didn’t know and how could I know” to “I can find out”.

Between 1992 and 1995, several groups of South African came to India, and Indian delegations of NGOs and CBOs went to South Africa. The rituals mentioned later in the paper were shared, explored and adapted to the local situation. Unlike Indians, whose informality was obvious in abundance and entrepreneurial behaviour apparent on the streets of Indian cities, the South African found all these alien. Their lack of trust in each other, deep violence embedded in townships had to be addressed by the local leadership before surveys and savings could be started.

Exchanges which SDI refers to are a team of 5-8 leaders from one country visiting another country. SDI helped them get passports and the hosts would help get visas. With a modest grant paid for the exchange and the learning began from the moment they came to the time they left. Initially it was mainly the NGOs and the federations. Soon technical professionals who would be working with them on projects also came, and then municipal and government administrators also came to see the process. More recently provincial and cabinet ministers have also joined the exchanges.

Creating federations of the urban poor NSDF and Mahila Milan are often referred to as the “SDI University”. Community leaders from other Indian cities as well as from other countries would come for visits to experience and discuss the activities of community networks in Mumbai and observe the transactions and dialogues and negotiations between the community networks, city officials and government departments. This clearly had a huge impact. More than any other aspect of what SDI does, it strives to move away from a single slum based organisation driven by external priorities and focused on easily solved issues while deep seated concerns remain unrecognised. It builds knowledge and practices that deepen and strengthen networks, those who learn become trainers. Knowledge got refined every time it circulated. Every time leaders shared what they did their articulation got sharper and their insights more reflective.

Surveys and enumerations

Counting, measuring and aggregating. A very powerful instrument of the SDI process is the poor collecting data about themselves. In almost every country where SDI is present, data about the poor is often inaccurate, outdated and never used to produce good developmental interventions. SDI facilitates three types of data collection. One which is of slums, marking them and developing a profile that helps the city and communities know all slums in the city; getting them increasingly accommodated in the city’s planning and frameworks. Household data and individual data are collected to deepen and sharpen household and individual identities within neighbourhoods. Professionals and government agencies nationally and globally discounted this process for a long time, until contested parallel data sets provided that data collected by the poor themselves was gathered more efficiently, updated more accurately and produced organisations that cities could dialogue for various issues. Today, SDI is in dialogue with the World Bank, UNHABITAT and others to incorporate this process in urban developmental projects.



Women's participation and savings groups in slums

Developmental interventions always valorise women's participation. Yet mainstreaming this rarely occurs and social movements always sequence this after their other priorities are addressed which means it does not happen. Unlike the micro credit movements where women savings groups serve mainly economic functions and become financial delivery mechanisms, within the Indian Alliance of NSDF, Mahila Milan and SPARC and SDI savings is a means and an end.

It is a means by which women pool very small amounts of money initially and lend to each other from crisis or immediate needs. To collect the money, account for it and create rules for lending, they begin their journey into financial management and trust building. After all you don't give even a small change for safe keeping if you don't trust them. Inversely creating accountability and transparency also occurs. Because the amounts are very small, this "humble" activity does not get appropriated by the traditional male leaders.

Although the concept of daily savings is a major part of the process, in every country more traditional forms of savings as well and the newly emerging rituals of micro credit have to be negotiated through. It is hard to accept that savings can be safe with a treasurer. It is harder to understand that governance as a practice requires everyone to be vigilant and that holding the treasurers accountable is part of the new learning. In almost every city daily savings gets challenged. Often its financial volumes get ridiculed, and it is only through exchanges and the transformed communities that gradually and rather grudgingly change to daily savings takes place.

Gradually as their process begins to mature, they begin to get external money to slowly expand their capacity to lend. A ritual called "daily savings" is at the heart of this process which is the "energy" that drives the federation process. Once a settlement agrees to federate, one in 15 to 20 households is invited to collect savings and record them. Within half an hour every day she visits each house to collect the money left from last days' expenses. While collecting savings she gets request for loans, she gets to know what is happening in the house.

When the collectors meet to pool the money and elect a treasurer, they also discuss what they came to know and gradually for the women's collective which addresses these issues whatever they are. Their leadership skills develop slowly and gradually and they begin to establish credibility in their neighbourhood. The federation process further networks these collectives as it networks slum leadership at city level and soon men and women work together to address their city issues. This savings and loans process in many instances moves on to provide a wider spectrum of loans, collectively take on developmental activities and women continue to manage the money. So communities get new skill sets and women mainstream participation also occurs.

Savings groups are also impacted by national economic environment. Federation in Zimbabwe had to face hyperinflation. Their amazing capacities to create assets from savings that could withstand this devaluation of the currency have produces many interesting dimensions for learning in the SDI processes.

SDI ensures that on every exchange regardless of whether it is local or transnational, women are the majority. As more and more women develop confidence they become role models for the next generation of leaders and the trend begins to demonstrate sustainability.

Precedent setting and partnerships for change

Precedent setting is an often mentioned phrase/ritual within SDI. It began when discussions about how to make something that worked for the poor but is not accepted by the city government as yet, got discussed. Federated communities have been and continue to be sceptical of policy advocacy which is not connection in parallel to practice. On the other hand thousands of poor people do things at work and at home that are "illegal" or "against the law" but which they need to do for their survival. Those are risks that they take to survive as they have no choice and they often pay the prices for it. Federations systematically identify practices which make complete sense to the poor but the city government does not accept it and they collectively present it ... be it a practice, or a physical structure... and invite the government officials and technical professionals to see it and see the "essence" in that. When that gets accepted in that context it gets promoted as a precedent so that the multiplication of the act produces its acceptability.

Developing voice and advocacy externally

SDI sees the issues of advocacy deeply wrapped within its ongoing pursuit of making cities inclusive and work for all. SDI leadership believe that designing solutions and alternatives is vital for social movements in the present millennium. These solutions and strategies are the physical manifestation of the demands the social movements of the poor make on themselves. Unless the poor become transformed themselves they cannot change what others perceive them to be. So if sanitation is a crisis of the urban poor, the urban poor have to focus on creating a strategy to highlight its value to them, seek a wide consensus about it themselves within their own organisations, and develop the confidence to start seeking involvement of the state and other actors in addressing this challenge. It has always been a deep belief of the SDI and has been maintained as the centre piece of its advocacy process, that the advocacy that works best for the poor, even if it takes time, is to first work on poor people's priorities, examine what issues it raises, examine what the larger discussions amongst them consider as critical elements of the solution, try and assemble that alternative, then demonstrate through some actual demonstration what it would look like, keep tweaking it, refining it, while sharing it with others and allow

leadership of informal communities, men and women to articulate it through dialogue and conversations with the outside world. In all activities its processes and practice SDI federated settlements are multi-tasking all the time. While the advocacy process is put into three phases below, in reality opportunity, occasions and optimism direct what happens and in reality everything is mixed up and always in motion.

Opportunity to explore, expand, extend what they do is a quality of survival strategy that SDI has used collectively in their processes. SPARC (as NGO) and its professionals would confess that on many occasions they would not have taken this option on, but without the push and pressure from NSDF (as community federation) the opportunity would not have been seized. Many times it works, other times it does not, but their motto is more the attempts more the hits!

Occasions are created to seize the opportunity. They serve to build confidence and capacity within the federations to make representations, and the topic itself provides the content. Developing the capacity to produce occasions leads to federation ability to be hosts. Hosting occasions provides potential to become “actors or stakeholders” in a particular city and draw attention of all other actors in that process, the formal city, its administration, politicians and citizens that the organisations of the poor exist, they have an opinion, and it is good for them as the poor and it is good for the city. The Melas (the exhibitions), which accompany precedent setting are all part of the show and tell of occasions.

Optimism is crucial to the federation building and advocacy for the cause of the poor in cities. Federations invoke the can do spirit that has helped the poor and vulnerable to create a life for themselves in the city despite all odds. Self-image that is positive and optimism that they can be the change makers is crucial for social movements of the poor to transform their lives.

Dealing with state and professionals the network sought to interact with

SDI believed that the state had a responsibility to its poorest citizens, and even though the state was often the “oppressor” making demands, changing the nature of that relationship to one of engagement and ultimately partnership was critical. The Indian experiences were critical kick starters to this process. Firstly, inviting professionals and politicians always ended up attending large gatherings of the federated communities initially out of curiosity. They were intrigued by the level of organised management of the event, the clear and simple representation, the possible alternatives that the communities suggested were in stark contrast to the accusatory and confrontational responses they got elsewhere. Secondly, the federation leaders also invited the politicians, administrators and professionals to accompany them on learning exchanges to see how a similar problem was solved elsewhere through engagement and negotiation and how it was good for the city and the poor.

Joe Slovo was the first Housing Minister of South Africa. When the South African federation made a representation to him to meet them, he agreed. The nascent SDI invited people from India, Thailand, Brazil and other countries, and they presented to the minister “WHAT NOT TO DO”. He not only committed to explore alternatives with them, he subsequently gave the federation 10 million Rand to kick start a community driven process for the housing programme he had initiated. Derek Hanekom was the minister of lands in the same cabinet. In a public meeting of the federation in Port Elizabeth, Jockin who was there at the exchange challenged the minister’s rural focus for land repatriation, and urged the minister to be forward looking. That discussion ended with an invitation for the minister to come to India. In 1995 the minister and his senior bureaucrats came for a visit to India which NSDF and MM hosted. He visited federated slums, attended NSDF events met the Chief Minister of Maharashtra

and the urban development minister of India, and left fully committed to work with the South Africa federation to address township and urban land issues. Subsequently, these ministers have encouraged other African and Asian ministers to work with their federations. Dr Lindiway Sisulu, when she became the housing minister in South Africa invited ministers of African countries to attend the national event of her ministry that was jointly organised with SDI and explored ways by which ministers could work with federations. Administrators and professionals were subsequently given permission to accept invitations from SDI to participate in the exchanges and often jointly reported to the minister about these visits. They had to agree to stay and work side by side; they met their counterparts who helped them understand how their relationship with the host federations had developed and how it was being navigated. Relationships were strengthened and plans were often made during the visit and increased linkages and associations back home. However, there were some instances when good friendships and collaboration got disrupted when politicians moved to other spaces as when administrators also moved. Professionals similarly participating in the exchanges found it useful to link to NGOs working with the federation hosts. In all these relationships, the change in power relationship, the change in who produces new knowledge and creation of a peer and horizontal relationship away from the deeply hierarchical and vertical power relationship formed the most important change leading to better dialogue and engagements. The strategy is to see what is possible. Who all are involved in making changes happen, and what preparation is needed by each of the non-state and state actors to make change work for city and the poor. Peer dialogues between ministers, mayors, administrators and slum dwellers occurred during the same visits. The concepts, ideas and strategies once understood, would be adopted, adapted or it would morph into something else depending on the situation where it had to be transplanted. The principles and certain very basic guiding vision had to remain for that to be an SDI process. Women had to be at the centre of the process. Men and women would work together. The focus was to network as many as possible to produce a critical mass seeking similar solutions, and the poor had to be part of the process driving and managing it. The state had to be drawn into all aspects of the process, while no formula was strict about who did what, there is a deep seated belief that the poor have a right to the attention of the state and its contribution has to be demanded ... where it came and how it came depend on the situation and context.



Outcomes

Much of what SDI has achieved here and in other instances emerges from the power of what communities demonstrate what they can do. Over the years, SDI in partnership with international donors has catalysed several trans-national instruments with the objective to support community led and community owned developmental outcomes.

Community Led Infrastructure Financing Facility (CLIFF)

The Community Led Infrastructure Financing Facility (CLIFF) was created out of the association of the Indian alliance as part of SDI working with Homeless International (HI) a UK based charity. It was set up in 2000, with 10 million GBP and DFID continues to invest in it as we speak. The Indian Alliance of NSDF, Mahila Milan and SPARC has been associated with HI since its inception and this UK based organisation has been a partner of many of its processes including validating the exchange process and creating the basis of the exchanges between India and South Africa that led to SDI. The Director of HI in the 1990s Ruth Macleod convinced DFID to fund a study that examined the financing gap in community driven construction project. At that time, DFID and many other bilateral agencies had given money to banks to encourage them to work with emerging social organisations. Yet, paradoxically those banks that had the money did not find bankable projects, and those social movements which had projects emerging from the activism were not given finances to initiate their projects.

“Bridging the Finance Gap” is a study done by HI and SDI ultimately led to DFID creating CLIFF. It was a fund initially with 10 million GBP which were made available to the Indian Alliance of NSDF, Mahila Milan and SPARC and to two other SDI affiliates in the Philippines and Kenya. Sida whose Indian embassy was working with the Indian Alliance of NSDF, Mahila Milan and SPARC on the behest of SPARC put its 2 million GBP into CLIFF rather than give it directly to SPARC as this was a more strategic process and CLIFF was born. Today in the third phase of CLIFF over 15 organisations in Asia and Africa are exploring ways to produce habitat and infrastructure for the urban poor. The programme has some unique features, which are: it creates a process where the CBOs and the NGOs that work with them becomes trustee to the funds they get as implementing partners. Those who fund, those who manage and those who execute develop a learning alliance to develop skills, capacities and manage money. While the process seeks to work with the poorest and their habitat needs, its first priority is to develop strategies and produce projects that work for them can move up the scale ladder and through that become sustainable.

Having started in 2000, the programme will presently continue till 20019-20. It has about 18 implementing partners and retains its exploratory and learning function, it encourages its partners to deal with municipalities, financial institutions to leverage more funds and will produce a wide spectrum of projects that will improve habitat for the poor, as well as develop financing instruments for them (See website of SSNS, Homeless International).

Urban Poor Fund International (UPFI)

All CBOs after being organised have to demonstrate to their members a way how to initiate activities that can serve the needs of its members. Communities of the poor are in need to so many entitlements that they are denied. Exploring possibilities, setting up precedents and learning to produce outcomes that work for them led to the exploration of precedents. Before UPFI, SDI which funded exchange between organisations, found members requesting for funds to test the possibility of designing and

executing what they had seen in exchanges and testing that precedent in their own context. Those SDI affiliates who were part of CLIFF clearly demonstrated that there was a space prior to being able to absorb external funds, and negotiations with the city and state on a wide range of activities that needed to be done. UPFI was the formalisation of an instrument within SDI to explore that space.

While CLIFF selected organisations which had reached a certain threshold, SDI affiliates of federated informal settlements needed to explore taking on construction in the first place. In many ways within SDI UPFI serves to help organisations take the first leap into translating habitat and amenities aspirations and explore actually building it. UPFI created instruments and practices that encouraged community savings to be pooled where possible to initiate lending and to demonstrate that to engage the city to make a contribution to that pool so smaller projects within informal dwellings could be financed. It led to a partnership where possible with the city. SDI created a mechanism which would allow its grant makers (bilateral and foundations) to pool money separately into this, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Norway and Sweden, Miserior from Germany, Ford Foundation and Rockefeller foundation all made contributions. Mary Robinson and Archbishop Tutu were the Fund's Patrons, and Housing Ministers from South Africa, India, Brazil, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Norway, and Sweden became Board of Governors. Since SDI has relationship with housing ministers from north and south other ministers also attended on invitation. In this unique platform, federation leaders report their activities, both to demonstrate their capacities and abilities but also to share the impediments that come in the way, some possibilities of how the ministries or urban development and housing can work in partnership with slum dwellers and their organisations. The UPFI operates under the supervision of the Board of SDI and it reports to the Board of Governors once a year, and SDI gets invited to various countries which host these meetings.

Land Services and Citizenship Programme of Cities Alliance (LSC)

The SDI process was clearly working but had yet to be adopted by the national governments or by international development financing agencies. SDI, NGO and federation leaders have demonstrated these processes to the World Bank, UN Agencies and Cities Alliance as well as to governments and grant makers. The city wide framework was to develop a central partnership between slum networks and the municipality and to develop data base on slums, develop development priorities and investment plans together so that development presently and in the future is available to all. Cities Alliance set up by the World Bank and UNHABITAT after Habitat II to develop innovation and new strategies to address the challenges of slums. Many OECD countries and some southern countries such as Brazil, South Africa, Nigeria, Philippines and other UN agencies became members, and initially SDI was advising policy and more recently became a member of Cities Alliance. Together with the secretariat of Cities Alliance, SDI designed the LSC (Land Services and Citizenship Programme) that was funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, in which the kind of partnership envisaged by SDI and cities supported by the national government was planned to five countries.

Uganda in which SDI had made investments at various levels was recommended by SDI to Cities Alliance for working in Africa. Five medium size cities were selected and SDI affiliates in Uganda, the federation and its NGO were involved with all five cities and their municipalities, carried out slum surveys and began discussions on development investment. It was also the time the national government of Uganda was negotiating for an infrastructure loan and since the World Bank was also a member of Cities Alliance was drawn into the possibility that this process should be seen as a preparatory period to build city and slum dwellers partnership to develop the more formal infrastructure plans. Later the plan to work in 5 cities was extended to 24 cities and now the negotiation for SDI to facilitate the process in all these cities is also being negotiated.

Cities Alliance and its present medium term plan is now structured around SDI style city wide slum and city partnership, where cities and communities build capacity through exchanges to and from the cities while undertaking a range of activities that produce data, slum dwellers organisation, their growing association with cities and also encouraging other bilateral and multilateral agencies to align their investments with this process. Since the United Cities and Local Government (UCLG) is also a member of Cities Alliance like SDI, the global alliance of these two organisations is seen critical by the Cities Alliance. Now the LSC programme is being developed in Ghana, Burkina Faso, and negotiations are on in Mozambique and Ethiopia.

Challenges imposed on SDI

In today's urban millennium, globalisation has produced many good and bad outcomes. Capital circulation, its unequal access and its lack of national accountability are exponentially exacerbating the distance between the rich and the poor, and this is producing an expansion what was a geographical global south to invade many northern countries as many of their populations are experiencing poverty of a kind that they had never seen before. Aid and trade produce deep inequality that gets reflected in urban areas in ways that local and national political processes cannot stop, and produce strange alignments of local elite with these forces. So, land for instance in cities of Africa, Asia and Latin American is purchased for speculation by global investors through shadow organisations without any accountability to local situation. The overarching crisis of climate looms over the whole planet yet those most vulnerable are the poor for whom existing situations cannot produce and social justice, so seeking that for climate change linked conditions seems unlikely in normal circumstances. New technology, new investment opportunities, new funding streams remain as exclusive and inaccessible as earlier resources to the urban poor. The rhetoric of "all in the name of the poor" rings a familiar sound at an age and time when global discussions about sustainability and future planning of Sustainable Development Goals 2030 are being negotiated. Development strategies and resources are increasingly designed and managed by global institutions without much involvement of constituencies whose lives are affected by these processes. National and international elite be they multilateral, bilateral, private sector or foundations do not see value in creating constituencies that represent the interests of those who are vulnerable. Social movements are feared and dismissed just like the trade unions and organised labour. When in fact the growing population of voiceless is increasing and its demography is changing, the need to accommodate these emerging social movements and include them in the development is urgent. It is in these circumstances that organisations like SDI emerge and hope to survive. The high demands and expectation from within its organisational process and its external accountability expectations while it evolves produces the pressures. In discussions with similar social movements of waste pickers, home based workers and vendors, it is evident that the world of informality remains in the shadow of the formal city. It is much maligned, even though it subsidises the city its formal resident's lifestyle and formal business productions. Informal residents find their assets constantly depleted through evictions of informal neighbourhoods, and confiscation of vending goods and lack of protection from issues of climate episodes, and other challenges that besiege cities that do not accept or acknowledge they cannot include the informal and urban poor in their planning and resource allocations.

All forms of civil society organisations of the poor and NGOs find their space and legitimacy being challenged. Regulatory frameworks, taxation laws, political harassments all produce a state of siege for the organisations seeking to help find voice and entitlements to the vulnerable. When such institutions get attached by their own state institutions, the possibility for international inter-governmental agencies to work with them gets diminished.

Today there are more urban poor in middle income countries in volume than all the low income countries, this aberration of income distribution is further distorted with state resources never reaching those it is meant for, and of course resources to organise those constituencies can hardly come from the very state that diverts that money.

Organisations like SDI which are transnational in nature help the poor from middle income and poor countries explore organisational forms that can withstand these local and national pressures. In middle income countries external assistance helps leverage the state resources to reach the poor, while in low income countries it ensures that aid reaches the poor. Often in all these countries, the processes and activities that can assist the inclusion of the poor in urban contexts do not exist. SDI finds it often had to explore new ways for municipalities', national governments and the poor to develop strategies to demonstrate possible innovative ways to deliver services, and to organise communities while this happens.

The good news is that examples like the ones mentioned in this paper have occurred due to these unusual partnerships, alliances and strategies. But for the few that exist, many more need to occur. The real challenge is that urbanisation will produce informality and changing urban situation for the next 50 years as populations in Asia and Africa stabilise as they have in Latin America. The challenge for global and local development interventionists is, should the poor pay the price for their vulnerability for those five decades or can development interventions produce a response as part of the 2030 agendas to prepare cities and their informal residents to start explore new modalities to absorb this changing demography in volume and age to collectively manage this huge transition in times of uncertainty and changing climatic challenges.

Where to next?

For SDI, it is self-evident that the practices of how national and international developmental projects get designed and executed do not facilitate the creating and development of all-inclusive involvement of the poor. The final solutions are yet to come through, but SDI does believe that the strategies that create national organisations of the poor that seek to engage the city and state, which learn from each other and encourage cities and their leaders to engage others from the south and produce both outputs and outcomes that seek to breach the present boundaries of formalisation and exclusion is the way forward. Participation processes and strategies have to be explored, risks have to be taken and new forms of engagement dialogue and investment have to be explored through new alliances north and south for the global south to get integrated into the development process.



Catalysing Sustainable Environmental Practices in South Asia by Centre for Science and Environment

Introduction

As part of a range of programmes supported over a five-year period (2008-2013) the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) committed to undertake a series of actions that were structured under four objectives – information collation, awareness raising on environment and development challenges, building alliances in the region on key environmental issues, and capacity development among key change agents in the region.

Since 2008, various CSE programme teams have conducted a variety of interventions in the South Asian region, ranging from formal partnership with governments for rule-making to awareness raising and network building action with civil society, media and educational institutions; and working closely with regional partners in various countries to catalyse transfer of technical knowledge for direct implementation.

History of south-south cooperation

For CSE, this regional programme was not something entirely different or novel. Rather it was an outcrop of CSE's multifarious work in India. It demonstrated that there is an immense resonance of issues across the region, with shared geographies and common problems of environmental pollution and degradation, poor governance and weak regulatory capacity.

CSE has widely acknowledged competencies in research, reportage and environmental advocacy. Many key stakeholders are familiar with and closely follow CSE's work (in many cases, modelling their interventions on a perceived 'CSE strategy'). Many of the region's first generation environmentalists have been important in catalysing CSE's regional efforts – from Dipak Gyawali and Ajaya Dixit in Nepal to SaleemulHaq and Dr. Atiq Rahman and Rizwana Hasan in Bangladesh, or Dr. Sarat Kotagama in Sri Lanka. Their endorsement and help in plugging CSE into important country-wide networks and with key government agencies in various countries was an important contribution to the programme. Many NGOs had first hand encounters with CSE and its work on a global stage – especially the stand on equity in climate change negotiations, which helped facilitate partnerships and joint actions across the region.



Specific activities

During the inception period, a key goal was to develop a more specific work plan for subsequent years, and scope for potential partners and stakeholders in various countries in the region. This involved exploration by CSE staff to understand and document wherever possible leading environmental issues, explore institutional frameworks and government and community initiatives. Clear opportunities were identified in each country. Some common themes that emerged across the region include renewable energy, coastal issues, air quality and mobility challenges in South Asian cities, water and wastewater management, building environmental regulatory capacities, and climate change. Also of clear interest in the region was environment education, in addition to media outreach and documentation. These remained the key themes even as the programme expanded to other countries.

The programme had a slow start in Sri Lanka due to civil strife and in Bhutan due to the fact that there were no established linkages for any team to build upon. Safety concerns and logistical challenges made work in Pakistan and Afghanistan difficult. As a result, CSE programmes were easier to establish in Nepal (initially at least) and in Bangladesh. In hindsight, despite the relatively hesitant start, it was relatively easy to quickly upscale regional efforts.



In Bangladesh, CSE contributed to enacting a lake protection law and helped to spread the policy and practice of rainwater harvesting, including inclusion of decentralised water management courses in universities; it also helped the Bangladesh government to reform its environment impact assessment law. In Bhutan, CSE worked with the Thimphu Municipality to help develop a mobility and air quality plan for the city and worked with the National Environment Commission to develop codes and guidelines for pollution control and green buildings.

In Sri Lanka, CSE supported the water resource ministry by undertaking a scientific study to pinpoint the cause of the Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Etiology (CKDUe) in Central Provinces.

CSE helped build capacity of environmental regulators from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Engaging with the region's news media in the form of country media briefings on specific issues conducted in partnership with local agencies in host countries, capacity building workshops, region-wide media briefings on climate change, as well as with fellowships to regional journalists helped widely disseminate information, set the agenda on several environmental issues, influence public debate, and, importantly, helped in perspective building.

Capacity development emerged as a leading activity, and several programme teams fashioned specialised training programmes to help develop capacities of a wide cohort of stakeholders in the region, including of key government agencies, industry representatives as well as civil society actors, to absorb and implement a wide range of solutions. The figures are telling: a total of 161 training programmes were conducted from 2010-13, which helped train a total of 2151 people from across South Asia.



CSE was able to expand its imprint and impact in the region without a significant increase in programme staff. In many ways therefore the regional programme validated CSE's approach – a strategy to achieve scale (of impact). As an essentially policy advocacy institution, CSE's knowledge-based research was strengthened by hands-on practical engagements with key stakeholders that catalysed and spread action.

The case of the interaction of various CSE teams with Bhutan's National Environment Commission is illustrative, in that it shows the variety of engagements and the progressive expansion of scope. The relationship began when a couple of officers expressed an interest to participate in a CSE training event in Delhi on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). Following their positive feedback to their senior officers in Bhutan, CSE's sustainable industrialisation team was invited to help train National Environment Commission officers on EIA. Later, they were requested to conduct similar trainings for allied ministries and government departments in Bhutan.

Subsequently, under an MoU that broadened the scope of cooperation, CSE produced 'inspection manuals' for eight industrial sectors of Bhutan. Following this, the team was asked to help set country-wide guidelines for vehicle-washing facilities in Bhutan. The CSE team was also asked for inputs into how to set the country's industrial zoning parameters – in this case, for the Pasakha industrial area, Bhutan's main industrial estate near Phuentsholing (India-Bhutan border).

CSE's various interventions do not depend on any out of the box solutions; there are no ready-made templates or one-size fits-all approach. Instead teams understand their stakeholders, partners as well as the region's unique challenges, and customise approaches and 'solutions' for each. This is true in nearly all CSE interventions in the region – from customising trainings across a host of issues to tailoring manuals and model projects on water and wastewater treatment – all were based on partnering at the local level for assimilating local intelligence, local research and proposing locally and site-specific solutions.

In this programme, for example, the environment education programme was able to incorporate key Sri Lanka-specific parameters into the environmental audit manual for schools, a main reason why the manual was quickly adopted and mainstreamed into the school curriculum across all government schools in the country. Similarly, the sustainable industrialisation team was able to propose a customised land use plan for the industrial corridor in Bhutan. The air pollution and sustainability mobility team grounded their research in Bhutan's city planning models and transport policy to help formulate a specific mobility plan for the city of Thimphu. The sustainable industrialisation team conducting EIA trainings were instrumental in providing important guidance to the water management team on the Bangladesh government's interest in promoting rainwater harvesting and decentralised wastewater treatment.

Cross-learning

Interestingly, many teams within CSE have imbibed the experiences and learning from the region into their national/ domestic initiatives. For example, the air pollution and sustainable mobility team has found Sri Lanka's vehicle taxation strategies a very progressive instrument designed to control dieselisation of the vehicle fleet, and is finding ways to incorporate this into their national advocacy actions. Similarly, Bangladesh's unique social business approach and subsidy pattern on promoting renewable energy has informed the team's policy advocacy efforts in India.

Likewise, the community-led electrification drive in Nepal has helped CSE reorient its programme from an initial concern on technology and pricing to a concern now on equitable energy access. Following the Sri Lanka model, CSE's environment education programme is now pushing school systems in India to incentivise environment education by rewarding top performers in environment education initiatives with 'bonus grades' that would help secure seats in college admissions. More concrete networks and opportunities to cross-fertilise ideas have also been created – for instance, between environment regulators in the region who have shared experiences and hosted each other on many occasions.

The regional work injected a sense of enthusiasm and energy across many layers of the organisation, as programme staff got opportunities to travel and engage on a broader canvas of issues with their peers across borders. Cross-team cooperation was paramount. Regional work necessitated hitherto insulated programme teams cross-fertilise ideas and initiatives. For example, CSE's media team worked in close tandem with the air pollution and sustainable mobility team and often piggybacked their country media briefings on air pollution and mobility in various countries.

Some initiatives have been mainstreamed into everyday practice. For instance, in Sri Lanka, CSE's environment education unit has been able to leverage a pilot in 100 schools into a nationwide environment audit that will be conducted across every government school (most schools are government run in the country) after the education ministry adopted CSE's audit into the country's school curriculum. Importantly, the government has committed to making an investment in this programme.

Key results and achievements

In many ways, the best endorsement of CSE's regional work – and particularly the relevance of its multifarious interventions in the region – is that CSE was responding to the large demand for its work expressed by a variety of groups – from civil society actors to journalists to regulators and line managers in government agencies. The urgency and scale of demand for CSE interventions by a variety of actors across various countries in the region was especially surprising, given the massive and entrenched presence of a host of private consultants and international NGOs having the experience of working on a global scale and with linkages with government and regulatory bodies.

The programme helped CSE evolve institutionally. Many teams evolved from single mandate to taking on related, progressively important (and often policy-related) tasks. Regional focus and broadening of work across the region helped push up a new cadre of young professionals as leaders within CSE. In fact, many regional interventions were led by the second-rung of (typically) young programme leaders, who took on challenging, independent charge of important regional initiatives – from developing capacities of regulators in Bangladesh, Bhutan and Sri Lanka to working closely with NGO partners in designing rainwater harvesting and decentralised wastewater model projects in Nepal and Bangladesh. Many of these leaders have helped develop a vibrant, informal network of practitioners across several programme areas.

Some CSE programmes with an established track record in India, such as the air pollution and sustainable mobility team, routinely receive requests to advise government agencies in several South Asian cities. Bhutan's National Environment Commission has requested CSE's help to guide policy for the country's foray into the green buildings sector. The board of SajhaYatayat, a cooperative public transport company in the Kathmandu valley, has sought advice on how to revive this cheap public transport service. In Sri Lanka, the Sustainable Energy Authority and the ministry of environment's policy/ regulatory wing, Air

Resource Management Centre (AirMAC), requested CSE to help set fuel economy standards for Sri Lanka. Such demand validates the need for an independent, policy advocacy institution with firm roots in the South, and the programme helped establish CSE as a regional think tank.

The programme's geographical spread is today wide. Initially only in Nepal and Bangladesh, CSE today conducts programmes also in Sri Lanka and Bhutan, while there is increasing interest of CSE's work in Afghanistan (on EIA, mining, and capacity building on media), Pakistan (in air pollution and energy access and news media capacity building) and Myanmar (poverty and livelihoods issues). Within countries too, CSE's work has spread beyond national capitals to tier two towns and cities.

CSE's regional presence has matured, as is evident from the spread and variety of engagements with many kinds of stakeholders. Various CSE teams have established durable partnerships with the environmental regulatory agencies and environment-linked related ministries of Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. CSE teams work in close collaboration and under formal collaboration agreements with more than 25 government, NGO and academic partners in Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. The range of regional interventions is truly diverse – from capacity building to in-depth reportage and information dissemination to direct policy-level interventions to guiding the implementation of sustainable infrastructure.

Several regional journalists continue to depend on CSE research for background information to important stories, and call upon CSE experts for perspective and expertise. Several CSE media fellows have won prestigious awards for their coverage, and have acknowledged CSE's role.

Challenges and lessons learnt

Entirely contrary to initial expectations, in most countries CSE teams could fashion steadier partnerships with government agencies rather than with civil society actors. Part of this can be traced to the overall lack of capacity in CSOs to absorb a larger scale of work (underfunded, under-capacitated). Also, there are few multifarious CSOs with strong policy level as well as grassroots level reach working in the environmental sector. Those that worked closely with CSE had strong linkages with government; but overall, there are very few independent policy-level NGOs in the region.

Another challenge was the political instability across the region, in some more pervasive, making it very difficult to work. For instance, frequent changes in government and the lack of a stable elected government in Nepal meant constant changes in the top bureaucracy. Relationships that were painstakingly built had to be rebuilt each time there was a change at the top – this was particularly true in the case of the environment education programme that attempted to rebuild relationships with the education ministry on three different occasions.

It may be useful to view this regional programme as having completed an initial phase, which was opportunity driven, and which helped establish relationships with key actors and change agents. A bigger challenge lies ahead – on how to evolve into second-generation work, of deeper, more enduring and even financially viable relationships. Policy requirements – across sectors and across the region – will stay; the challenge will be how to continue to address these.

Another (and related) challenge has been to continue to manage expectations, especially since the programme ended. Stakeholders and partners continue to demand more from CSE. Clearly, CSE will

need its partners to also contribute and play a more active part in helping it do more policy-oriented work. Continuing trainings and experience-sharing workshops targeted at partners help facilitate this. An important lesson that has emerged from CSE's regional work is that the institution is relevant, and its work needs to be urgently scaled up. Regional efforts have underscored CSE's technical and scientific capacities to drive policy and public action in the rest of the developing countries. At the global level, there is clear scope for CSE to act as a votary representing south-sensitive perspectives in global processes.

This regional programme represents the latest stage in the institution's maturity – initially from an awareness raising institution on southern imperatives of environment and development to playing a more direct advocacy role to influence policies for sustainability, to mentoring regulatory and societal actors through capacity building efforts and supporting a new generation of policy making and implementation, to providing technical research support and hard scientific evidences to enable decision making and support community action. The latest 'regional' evolution sets the stage for CSE to participate and engage with global processes, integrating regional issues and solutions within global frameworks and processes.

As a thought-leader, CSE is in a unique position in the Southern world to understand, engage and convey the unique issues of the trajectory of growth of developing countries, which is vastly different from the industrialised nations, and direct its energy to help reinvent growth without pollution, energy guzzling and resource degradation.



What's the problem at global level?

Illicit financial flows (IFFs) are illegal movements of money or capital from one country to another that are illegally earned, transferred, and utilised. These illicit flows can come from corporate tax evasion or avoidance, criminal activity like drugs or human trafficking, or corrupt public officials siphoning off government funds for personal use.

Over the past half century, illicit financial flows have proliferated in the global financial system. The problem of IFFs cannot be tackled by an individual country as the very characteristic of illicit capital is that it is global and it leaves one country to land in another. These issues, therefore, can be fought only at a regional/ global level with coordinated response by a large number of countries. However, there seem to be vested interests at play, which discourage countries from doing so. For instance, governments in developing countries focus excessively on improving their respective foreign investment climate presumably for enhancing the growth of their respective economies and in that process glaring loopholes in policies regarding movement of capital remain unaddressed. Many a times, countries fight crime with one hand and welcome dirty money with the other hand. Globally, dirty money continues to be an opaque subject, fraught with murky uncertainties and inadequately addressed by government officials. Though there have been efforts to check IFFs, the effect of these measures on countering IFFs is yet to be seen.

Financial Transparency Coalition (FTC) is a global network of civil society organisations, governments, and experts working towards curtailing illicit financial flows through the promotion of a transparent, accountable, and sustainable financial system that works for everyone. With its secretariat located in Washington DC, FTC draws together technical expertise and the legitimacy by representing mass based people-centred organisation from the Global North and the Global South. FTC is steered by a nine membered Coordinating Committee which comprises non-governmental organisations from five continents. These are Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), Christian Aid, European Network on Debt and Development (Eurodad), Global Financial Integrity, Global Witness, Latin American Network on Debt, Development, and Rights (LATINDADD), Tax Justice Network, Tax Justice Network – Africa, and Transparency International.

Asia Network of FTC

The Financial Transparency Coalition uses its wide reach and expertise to influence global norms and standards for financial transparency, and close loopholes in the global financial system. Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), a non-profit and non-partisan organisation with a mandate to promote transparent and accountable governance, is the only representative from Asia region on the Coordinating Committee of FTC.

With a view to bring organisations from the Global South on board and deepening their engagement with the global financial transparency agenda, an Asia Network was launched under the Southern Regions Programme of FTC about two years ago. The 17 member organisations of the network come from those countries in Asia region that are most affected by IFF issues. The network stretching across nine countries in the region is facilitated by CBGA; and all organisations/ think-tanks that are part of it endorse the goals of the FTC on promoting a transparent and equitable global financial system.



The organisations listed below representing nine countries form a part of the Network:

- ▶ Transparency International, INFID, Inisatif, Pattiro, FITRA, FITRA – Indonesian Forum for Budget Transparency and Tax Advocacy Group in **Indonesia**;
- ▶ Action for Economic Reforms and Jubilee South – AsiaPacific Movement on Debt and Development (JSAPMDD) in **Philippines**;

- ▶ Integrity Watch in **Afghanistan**;
- ▶ Voice, Centre for Policy Dialogue and COAST/Equity BD in **Bangladesh**;
- ▶ People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) in **Korea**;
- ▶ PILDAT in **Pakistan**;
- ▶ Global South Initiative in **Nepal**;
- ▶ Participation Centre in **China**; and
- ▶ Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability, **India**

Within the network, a group of six organisations have actively taken up substantive research and evidence-building efforts on IFFs. The six organisations who are investing their energies on IFFs related evidence building work include:

- ▶ **Integrity Watch Afghanistan** which is an Afghan civil society organisation committed to increase transparency, accountability, and integrity in Afghanistan. Focus of its work revolves around measuring trends, perceptions and experiences of corruption through research, advocacy and community monitoring- by mobilizing and training communities.
- ▶ **Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)**, Bangladesh promotes participatory, inclusive and accountable development process in Bangladesh. With a view to advancing governance development, CPD pursues policy activism that draws on its research.
- ▶ **Transparency International (TI), Indonesia**, established by anti-corruption activists, TI Indonesia operationalises anti-corruption approaches and tools into various policy areas such as transparency in public budgets and participatory budgeting.
- ▶ **Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development Philippines**, a regional alliance of peoples' movements, community organisations, coalitions, NGOs and networks. It identifies 'expanding the contribution of Asia/Pacific movements to the strengthening of south-south and south-north global campaigns and movements' as its main role.
- ▶ **Participation Centre, China, a civil society group in China** which works on issues of governance, decentralisation, urban management etc., through research and monitoring work.
- ▶ **Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability (CBGA), India**, a policy research organisation in India, which analyses public policies and government finances in India, and advocates for greater transparency and accountability in budget processes.

The organisations were approached to join the Asia Network on the basis of their mandate and research priorities. Their research focus varies from financial transparency issues like putting corruption under the spotlight to governance issues like participatory and accountable development processes in their countries. Funding support for carrying out the activities pertaining to FTC agenda was provided by FTC directly to these network members through MoUs between the host organisation of FTC with the respective organisation.

Though the Asia region continues to be impacted by the growing problem of illicit flows, owing to lack of technical expertise of countries at this juncture, our ability to comprehend and analyse the complexities involved in the issue has been constrained. Hence, for confronting this problem, the guiding approach

of the FTC Asia Network led by CBGA has been to invest in collective capacity building and mentoring of the partners in the region. The plan is to support development of desired technical expertise of member countries and enable them to engage with these issues substantively. This is work in progress, with the long term strategy of developing local civil society capacities in a number of Asian countries to engage with the issues related to IFFs. These efforts will help generate region specific evidence on different dimensions of this mammoth problem and enable these organisations to carry out high level policy advocacy with the governments of their respective countries. These attempts will contribute towards and boost the global advocacy around this issue.



Significance of the issue in Asia

Developing countries lost US\$ 5.86 trillion to IFFs between 2001- 2010 (Global Financial Integrity, 2012). Asia accounts for the largest share of IFFs from developing countries with 61.2 percent of total outflows. Five of the top ten countries with the largest illicit outflows are from Asia- China, Philippines, India, Korea, and Indonesia. Factors driving money laundering in Asia have been domestic criminal activity like drug trafficking, gambling, bribery, corporate tax evasion, human trafficking etc. Drivers behind money laundering in Asia also include informal financial mechanisms to prominence of use of cash in business and financial transactions. Cash smuggling activities across borders are also at the heart of this problem.

In India, the focus of policymakers has been largely on bringing the black money back from foreign bank accounts. While the commitment to addressing the issue is welcome, the political attention on bringing this money back is partly skewed and needs to shift towards how the generation of black money and its outflow from the country can be curtailed in the first place. There needs to be greater clarity on the concept of black money to move towards a more informed debate on these issues. According to a report on black money by the Union Government's Central Board of Direct Taxes, 'Measures to Tackle Black Money in India and Abroad' (2012), "the main source for generation of black money in India is commercial tax evasion by under-reporting revenues and inflating expenses adopted by a range of business entities." Not all black money is lying in offshore bank accounts, in reality a large portion of the money that flows out comes back into India through 'round tripping' i.e. the money that had left the country (and generally ends up in a tax haven) is invested back into the country as 'white' money. Research notes that almost 70 percent of inflows in the past were through tax havens and at best

half the total inflows could be considered as genuine FDI. In such a scenario, it would be much more prudent to invest in mechanisms that will help restrict the generation and outflow of such money.]



CBGA's role in Asia Network

CBGA organised a Mentoring Workshop in December 2014 which provided a platform to these CSOs from Asia network for having an informed discussion with subject experts from a variety of global organisations. The purpose of this workshop was discussing and presenting overviews of country context issues and civil society efforts on the same.

Some important areas on which the participants brainstormed in different sessions of the workshop are:

- ▶ ***Demystifying Illicit Financial Flows***
 - covering the concepts, typologies and data on IFFs
 - also technical methods of estimation of trade-based IFFs
 - the Financial Secrecy Index by Tax Justice Network that ranks countries as per the financial secrecy under which they operate and also the international legal frameworks, existence of which would facilitate the job of fighting this problem.

- ▶ ***International standards for exchange of information between jurisdictions***
 - it threw light on legal frameworks for exchanging information between countries – like Double Tax Agreements (DTA), Tax Information Exchange Agreements (TIEA), Multilateral Tax Convention, Federal Account Tax Compliance Act, and the European Union Saving Tax Directive

▶ **Regional perspectives giving an overview of:**

- some initiatives of European Union (EU) towards addressing this issue
- the BEPS (Base Erosion and Profit Shifting) initiative in the Indian context- discussing how MNCs shift profits from a high to a low tax jurisdiction
- the Argentinian case of Transfer Mispricing

These sessions were handled and discussed at length by technical professionals like D P Sengupta, well known tax expert, by Alex Cobham of the Tax Justice Network fame, by Koen Roovers, a financial transparency specialist from FTC and other experts.

The insights shared in the workshop spreading over four days helped the member organisations of the Asia network to understand the tax evasion/ avoidance techniques adopted by some of the MNCs, governments' willingness to address these issues as well as priorities in terms of issues and stakeholders in the country, with the overall aim of strengthening their capacity to do research and advocacy on these issues in their countries.

Evidence generated by members of Asia Network

Post this workshop, the five network members have carried out national level research and developed papers around country specific IFF issues. All these research papers have been presented at the 6th **FTC Annual Conference** held in Jakarta in October 2015. Some of the findings as emerged from the in-depth country specific research papers by Asia Network members are summarised below.

The report of the study carried out by Integrity Watch, Afghanistan discusses that illicit financial flows allow criminals, corrupt politicians, and warlords to send the proceeds of their crimes throughout Afghanistan and the world to purchase elaborate houses, cars, and weapons, pay salaries for militias and criminal gangs, and buy their way to immunity for their crimes. Providing an overview of the key issues presented by illicit financial flows (IFFs) in the Afghan context, it first discusses the concept of IFFs and its various components, the issues of money laundering, tax evasion, and corruption. Next, it examines the volume of IFFs from developing countries, including estimates from Afghanistan and analyses the devastating impact of IFFs, particularly on nascent democracies and developing countries such as Afghanistan, with focus on the case of Kabul Bank.

The report of the research undertaken by Asian Peoples Movement on Debt and Development, Philippines points out that Philippines' IFFs is not recent phenomena. The "ill-gotten wealth" amassed by Ferdinand Marcos and the "capital flight" into secret tax haven accounts became cutting edge issues. It narrates that IFFs – in the broadest sense of domestic revenue erosion through abusive tax behaviour – continue to persist in the country and through ways supported by a policy context insistent on pinning development on the ability to attract foreign investments. A comprehensive and un-rationalised investment incentives system is in place and is a major cause of significant revenue losses. They include generous tax exemptions and tax holidays granted to locators in an increasing number of free trade zones all over the country. Like other Asian countries, government has also been negotiating more tax treaties, which has resulted in more loss than gain for investment-hosting countries such as the Philippines. With typical Most Favoured Nation and "non-discrimination" clauses, tax treaties widen opportunities for corporate profit-shifting to low or no-tax jurisdictions within and outside the Philippines; they have also resulted in steadily eroding the source-of-income taxability principle underpinning Philippine tax laws and policies.

The report Illicit Financial Flows in China elaborated that money laundering mostly occurred in mainland China, and was intricately linked with corruption and profit shifting in the country. It further said that base erosion and profit shifting also continued to be another essential form of illicit financial flows in China, which existed in both domestic enterprises and multinational corporations.

Moving ahead in this domain, CBGA plans to focus on four set of activities: building capacities of partner organisations enabling them to engage with IFF issues, building evidence on various aspects of IFFs, conducting high level policy advocacy on IFFs and attempting to bring together tax administrators in the country. CBGA also plans to engage with competent authority with international tax issues in India, to better understand the emerging policy framework.

As FTC and its members mobilise governments and citizens to take action against IFFs, while advocating for a more transparent financial system that better serves for financing development, as a next step, the idea is that skills and insights of this stronger Asia group would translate the evidence generated into guidelines, thereby contributing towards global advocacy.

The Asia network is emerging as a strong block of FTC in urging international organisations and the financial community towards substantial improvements in transparency in the global financial system by taking a few clear steps to level the playing field.

Established in 1982, **PRIA** (Society for Participatory Research in Asia) is a global centre for participatory research and training based in New Delhi. Currently, **PRIA** has field offices in several states of India and partnerships with 3000 NGOs across the global North and South to deliver its programmes on the ground.

PRIA's current field interventions to promote inclusive development of all focus on:

- **ensuring safety of girls and women** by creating an enabling environment and removing constraints in the functioning of various public agencies to help prevent violence against girls and women at home, in schools and shopping centres, at workplaces and on the road. The successful piloting of Kadam Badhate Chalo (KBC), a youth-led campaign to prevent violence against women in rural Haryana, is being scaled up to other locations.
- **innovative solutions for universal access to water and sanitation**, focusing on efficient and equitable delivery of basic services, especially to Scheduled Tribes and urban poor habitations. **PRIA** builds capacities and skills of youth, paying special attention to girls and women, to bridge serious gender-based distortions and discriminations. Youth (boys and girls) from urban poor communities are learning new technologies, like GPS and mobile-based surveys, to provide community feedback to municipalities on water and sanitation services.
- **building human and institutional capacities** to ensure effective and accountable functioning by strengthening capacities in government, business and civil society, and mainstreaming gender and women's leadership. Such capacity constraints are particularly addressed in regions of India and countries in the global South which have traditionally and historically been under-developed.



SOCIETY FOR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH IN ASIA

42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi – 110062

Tel: +91-11-2996 031/32/33 **Fax:** +91-11-2995 5183

E mail: info@pria.org **Website:** www.pria.org