# Partnerships in Action: A Web-Based Toolkit on UNDP Engagement with Civil Society

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSOS AND ACCOUNTABILITY: ISSUES AND APPROACHES</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY AFGHANISTAN</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY CROATIA</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY ETHIOPIA</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY: COMPARATIVE EXPERIENCES</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY GHANA</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY GUATEMALA</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY INDIA</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY JORDAN</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY PAKISTAN</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY SERBIA</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY SRI LANKA</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CASE STUDY UKRAINE</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESOURCES</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Partnerships in Action: A Web-Based Toolkit on UNDP Engagement with Civil Society

I. INTRODUCTION

- Thematic Sections and Case Studies
- Quick Tips
- Resources

About this tool
Over the past two years, there have been a number of discussions on the global UNDP knowledge networks concerning civil society-based partnerships and programmes. These have led to a wealth of country-based information and experiences being shared across UNDP and captured in the consolidated replies issued by the network facilitators at the end of each discussion. Questions from country offices relating to the “how” and “what” of civil society programming and partnerships continue. In addition to seeking policy guidance, many colleagues ask for practical advice from other country and regional experiences.

*Partnerships in Action* is a tool designed to help UNDP staff in country offices and regional centres learn from other organizational experiences in developing programmes and partnerships with civil society. It also seeks to help policy advisors in HQ units and regional centres better address queries and guide country offices in developing civil society-based strategies and programmes.

The tool presents examples from various country offices to illustrate how UNDP has engaged with civil society partners in a specific area of work. It complements the policy and procedural guidance provided in the toolkit, *UNDP and Civil Society Organizations: A Toolkit for Strengthening Partnerships* (2006) with country examples and good practices from four knowledge networks: Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Democratic Governance, MDGs, and Poverty Reduction.

UNDP defines civil society organizations (CSOs) in its *policy of engagement* with CSOs (2001) as:

> CSOs are non-state actors whose aims are neither to generate profits nor to seek governing power. CSOs unite people to advance shared goals and interests. UNDP collaborates with CSOs whose goals, values and development philosophies are in accord with its own.

The term civil society organization as used in this tool encompasses intermediary non-government organizations (NGOs), cooperatives, trade unions, service organizations, community-based organizations (CBOs), indigenous peoples' organizations (IPOs), youth and women's organizations, academic institutions, policy and research networks, faith-based organizations and citizens.

The tool is organized in four sections. Section I gives an overview of the purpose of the tool and some key definitions. Section II contains country case studies, categorized by the roles that civil society partners play in partnering with UNDP, e.g., a) mobilizing public participation; b) policy-making and dialogue; c) providing services; and d) promoting social cohesion. Each thematic
section contains country case studies organized by sub-theme and includes two discussion summaries of ways in which UNDP can strengthen its civil society partners through capacity development and accountability mechanisms. Section III provides some quick tips gleaned from the case studies and discussions in the practice network consolidated replies. Lastly, Section IV provides key resources, internal and external, for additional reference.

Why engage with civil society?
Civil society plays an important role as facilitator, watchdog, catalyst and policy advocate in implementing national development agendas. It mobilizes people to become involved in decisions that affect their lives. Effectively organized, civil society can improve the responsiveness of national policies and programmes to citizens’ needs and ensure transparency and accountability in policy-making and implementation processes. Civil society organisations have comparative advantages in being able to respond to reach specific groups, engage diverse stakeholders, promote broad consultation, and assist governments in advancing the Millennium Development Goals.

Traditionally, NGOs and grassroots organisations have been involved in service provision in areas such as health care, housing, micro-credit, humanitarian relief, and combating environmental degradation. In many countries, civil society organisations are implementing partners to central/local governments and international agencies where they can offset (although not replace) government responsibility for delivering services. This is particularly the case in rural areas and in the aftermath of a disaster.

In working with civil society partners, UNDP advances mutually agreed goals such as inclusive globalization, promoting accountability, increased political participation, gender equality and community-based development. Partnerships with civil society are especially critical to achieving the MDGs, given the effective roles played by civil society actors in mobilising public opinion and raising public awareness.

Engaging and developing grassroots organizations can be a precondition for programmatic success, especially since many national policies currently do not achieve significant impact at the local level. Through strategic interventions, UNDP can help address local bottlenecks, namely the lack of absorptive capacity and/or the absence of an active civil society or disinterested local authorities, particularly in regions affected by ethnic conflict, industrial restructuring, and natural disasters.

II. THEMATIC SECTIONS AND CASE STUDIES

Examples of UNDP experience in engaging with civil society to achieve effective development outcomes are captured in the following thematic sections, each with illustrative examples presented as case studies. The cases are organised by this myriad of roles that civil society plays in development agendas. Because of its growing international profile and emphasis on demanding government accountability, debate has ensued concerning mechanisms for civil society’s own accountability. Therefore, the final section summarizes recent network discussions on this topic. Specifically, the individual sections include:

- Mobilizing Public Participation – Organizing public demands for responsiveness, transparency and accountability in the provision of public services and in participation in democratic processes;
• **Policy Making and Dialogue** – Engaging in the preparation, communication, monitoring and implementation of national development strategies, and localizing MDGs through local development planning;

• **Providing Services** – Filling gaps in government services by extending sustainable livelihood programmes, expanding access to social services for marginalized groups, and cooperating in disaster response efforts;

• **Promoting Social Cohesion** – Ensuring that societies and development benefits include all peoples to prevent exclusion, remove stigma, manage conflict, and facilitate recovery and reconciliation;

• **Civil Society Accountability** – A look at recent trends and issues concerning the accountability of civil society organizations to themselves, to their missions, to peers, to beneficiaries, to the state, and to donors.

A. **Mobilizing Public Participation**

Civil society participation is essential to good governance. Effectively organized, it can improve the responsiveness of national policies and programmes to citizens’ needs and ensure transparency and accountability in policy-making and implementation processes. Genuine participation, however, involves engaging not just a few non-governmental organizations but all citizens. It must go beyond elections to active and ongoing participation of people in making decisions that affect their lives.

For example, when government turns indifferent to problems of inefficiency and corruption in the provision of essential public services, citizens need to be proactive and demand better performance. Social mobilization methodologies, such as Citizens’ Report Cards, give users of public services a voice in demanding quality and accountability. When reinforced by advocacy campaigns, such actions by citizens, civil society groups and the media can create the pressure that brings about reform.

Some effective approaches to mobilizing public participation include:

- **Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA):** PRA refers to a growing family of participatory approaches and methods that emphasize local knowledge and enable local people to make their own appraisal, analysis, and plans. PRA uses group animation and exercises to facilitate information sharing, analysis, and action among stakeholders. The purpose of PRA is to enable development practitioners, government officials, and local communities to work together to plan context-appropriate programmes.

- **Citizen Report Card and Community Score Card** – Citizen report cards are participatory surveys that provide quantitative feedback on user perceptions on the quality, adequacy and efficiency of public services. Community score cards are qualitative monitoring tools that are used for local level monitoring and performance evaluation of services, projects and even government administrative units by the communities themselves.

- **Beneficiary Assessment** – Beneficiary assessment involves systematic consultation with project beneficiaries and other stakeholders to help them identify and design development activities, signal any potential constraints to their participation, and obtain feedback on reactions to an intervention during implementation. It investigates the perceptions of a specific sample of beneficiaries and other stakeholders to ensure that their concerns are heard and incorporated into project and policy formulation. It aims to give voice to poor and other hard-to-reach beneficiaries, highlight constraints to beneficiary participation, and obtain feedback on interventions.
Participatory Poverty Assessment (PPA) – This is an iterative, participatory research process that seeks to understand poverty in its local, social, institutional, and political contexts, incorporating the perspectives of a range of stakeholders and involving them directly in planning follow-up action. PPAs can be defined as an instrument for including the views of the poor in the analysis of poverty and the formulation of strategies to reduce it through public policy.

Country Case Studies

Government Monitoring

Civil Society PRSP Monitoring through Citizen Report Cards – Ethiopia case study

Citizen Participation in Democratic Process

Civic Participation in Constitution Making – Afghanistan case study

B. Policy Making and Dialogue

The preparation of national policy documents and strategies, including PRSPs and other national development policies, is an important space for engaging in dialogue with civil society and for building links with MDGs. Successful involvement of stakeholders in policy-making promotes national ownership and public accountability in policy and programme design and implementation.

The PRSP document is intended as a medium-term "road map" to achieve the goals. Civil society has a critical role in advocating for, implementing and monitoring the MDGs. As internationally backed goals, the MDGs can be used to hold governments accountable and provide legitimacy to ongoing civil society advocacy campaigns. Moreover, they allow CSOs to link their activities with the broader national and international contexts and offer opportunities to develop new skills in poverty analysis, monitoring, advocacy, and policy dialogues. Civil society participation can take different forms and depends upon the sectoral structure and context in a country or region. Strategic communication tools developed by CSOs can enhance the potential for informed debate and feedback at all levels of society.

Tools and techniques to engage stakeholders including civil society in policy-making include:

- **National consultation / consultative forums** – UNDP, as a trusted partner, can provide a space where dialogue can take place between government officials and other stakeholders.

- **Poverty Observatory** – The Poverty Observatory acts as a consultative body, consisting of the government, civil society, and international partners, providing an opportunity for wider consultation and consensus building

- **Multi-stakeholder working groups** – Working groups, consisting of representatives of the Government, donors, and CSOs, conduct performance assessments on selected indicators and provide direct input on the content of the review.

- **CSO mapping** – Provides an overview of CSOs in the country and identifies key players, their capabilities and needs, and how and what kind of support can be mobilized, building realistic expectations of what can be achieved and finding complementarities.
• **Community-based CSO networks** - Stakeholders at the community level organized as networks within their constituencies are critical agents in ensuring a bottom-up approach to development.

• **Poverty hearings** - Poverty hearings, which give the marginalized an opportunity to express their views, are a key instrument in empowering the poor to take part in decision-making. They provide the poor with a forum to give oral or written testimony on the impact of national poverty policies and programmes on their lives.

*Country Case Studies*

**PRSP Consultation and Monitoring**
- *Civil Society Inclusion in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* – Serbia case study
- *Civil Society PRSP Monitoring through Citizen Report Cards* – Ethiopia case study

**Communicating MDGs**
- *Establishing Civil Society MDG Coalitions* – Egypt case study

**Local Development Planning**
- *Development Planning through the Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE)* – Pakistan case study

**C. Providing Services**

Civil society organizations often assume responsibilities to offset government and market failures in the provision of basic services. Traditionally, NGOs and grassroots networks have been involved in service provision in areas such as health care, housing, micro-credit, humanitarian relief, and combating environmental degradation. In most cases, their contributions are welcomed when they complement, and not confront the role of the state in service delivery. In a number of countries, CSOs are considered an implementing partner of central/local governments in delivering services, particularly in rural areas where they are often in closest contact with the target groups.

The role of CSOs in service provision should not undermine that of local authorities, nor allow them to shy away from their responsibility. Partnerships with CSOs in this area must focus on how to build complementary relationships, understand comparative advantages and disadvantages, and establish appropriate division of labour suitable to the specific situation.

*Country Case Studies*

**Sustainable livelihoods and Marginalized Groups**
- *Community-Based Tourism as a Tool for Sustainable Development* – GEF comparative experiences
- *Towards Better Integration of Persons with Disabilities through ICT and Networking* – Jordan Case Study
- *Strengthening Local Development and Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups Through Volunteering* – Croatia case study
Disaster Response

- Transition Programme – Sri Lanka case study
- Transition Recovery Project in Gujarat – India case study

D. Promoting Social Cohesion

Civil society – both as an arena and actor – is vital in promoting social cohesion by preventing exclusion and conflict, facilitating recovery and reconciliation, removing stigma, and heightening security. From a human rights perspective, social inclusion is important for development, stability and peace. Social exclusion leads to disenfranchisement of people, which can result in the underutilization of resources and decreased productivity.

Country Case Studies

Social Inclusion

- A Comprehensive Approach to Community Recovery – Ukraine case study
- Strengthening Local Development and Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups Through Volunteering – Croatia case study

Conflict Prevention, Recovery and Reconciliation

- Managing community conflicts through Peace Councils – Ghana case study
- Civil Society Participation in Peace Accords – Guatemala case study

E. CSO Accountability

This section addresses the complexities of the issue of the accountability of civil society organizations in conceptual and practical terms. The findings, drawn from an e-discussion hosted on MDG-net in January 2007, are organized in three parts:

- Conceptual Understanding
- Programmatic Aspects and Implications
- Resources

III. QUICK TIPS

- **Support local initiative** - Explore important initiatives or ideas civil society organizations themselves are promoting rather than inviting civil society organizations to participate in pre-conceived project proposals.

- **Build ownership** - Actively engage civil society in determining priorities, implementing the process and monitoring results. Ownership is not simply consultation with partners on projects but begins at the conception stage and built through the design, implementation and documentation of the programme and its experiences.

- **Encourage participation** - Go beyond consultation to actively engage target groups in determining priorities and taking part in the implementation process. Social accountability mechanisms that seek to directly involve citizens in processes of allocating, disbursing, monitoring and evaluating the use of public resources can be very effective.
• Use rights-based approaches in programming to ensure that every segment of the population is included in developmental initiatives.

• Include the government at the provincial and district levels for sustainability. Utilize participatory processes that open informal channels of communication and accessibility between people and government.

• Build a pool of potential civil society partners. Broaden and deepen engagement with the civil society within diaspora communities, faith-based organisations, minority, ethnic groups, and international civil society organisations. Particularly look to partner with organizations that already have civic participation at the core of their agenda.

• Consider the cost of participation to partners - Be wary of the “opportunity costs” of participation for civil society participants, particularly in an environment of weak institutional capacity.

• Use clear and transparent selection processes - When partnering with CSOs, underpin selection with sound reasoning and evidence.

• Do not underestimate skill gaps - Areas such as economic literacy, research methods, and weak among civil society organizations.

• Use clear capacity assessment goals and methodologies - Be clear of the kind of work the organizations will undertake, the purpose of the partnerships, and the opportunities as well as limitations of working with them in order to adequately assess capacity according to need.

IV. RESOURCES

UNDP Policies and Practice Notes

• Supporting Capacities for Integrated Local Development Practice Note. UNDP 2007
• Practice Note on Capacity Assessment, UNDP Capacity Development Group 2005
• Human Rights in UNDP Practice Note. UNDP 2005
• Anti-Corruption Practice Note. UNDP 2004
• Simplification of NGO Execution for Crisis and Post Conflict Situations. UNDP 2004
• Access to Information Practice Note. UNDP 2003
• Human Rights-Based Reviews of UNDP Programmes Working Guidelines. UNDP 2003
• Poverty Reduction and Human Rights Practice Note, UNDP 2003
• Parliamentary Development Policy Note, UNDP 2002.
• UNDP and Indigenous Peoples: A Policy of Engagement, UNDP 2001
• UNDP Policy of Engagement with CSOs, UNDP 2001
**UNDP Toolkits and Guides**

- Post-Disaster Recovery Guidelines, UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention & Recovery Disaster Reduction Unit, undated.
- Online training for UNDP staff on Democratic Governance, UNDP / Oslo Governance Centre 2007.
- Good Practices on the MDGs: Advancing Country-Level Action, UNDP website.
- UNDP and Civil Society Organizations - A toolkit for Strengthening partnerships, UNDP 2006. *PDF version*
- The Blue Book: A Hands-On Approach to Advocating for the MDGs. UNDP 2004
- Sourcebook on Building Partnerships with Civil Society Organizations. UNDP 2002
- A Human Rights-based Approach to Development Programming in UNDP – Adding the Missing Link. UNDP 2001

**Other UNDP Resources**

- Civil Society Perspectives on the Millennium Development Goals. UNDP 2005
- Concept and Implementation of Social Mobilization: UNV Orientation Training. UNDP 2005
General Governance Indicators Literature. UNDP 2006.

Indicators for Human Rights Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming. UNDP, 2006.


Programming for Results Management training courses, UNDP undated.

PRSPs and Pro-Poor Policies, UNDP undated.

Source for Democratic Governance Indicators. UNDP undated

World Bank and Other UN Agency Resources

Citizen Report Card and Community Score Card, World Bank resources webpage.


Conflict prevention, peace-building and development, website. UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs


GEF Small Grants Programme.


Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation World Bank website.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), World Bank webpage.


PRSP Sourcebook: Chapter 7 - Participation - World Bank undated.


Transitional Results Matrix, Operational Note. UNDAF 2005.

External Documents

- The NGO Sustainability Index: For Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia. USAID 2006.
- Participatory Poverty Assessment - A Rough Guide to PPAs. Overseas Development Institute 2001
Some Key CSO Resources

- Action Aid, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- Centres for Civic Initiatives (CCI), Bosnia-Herzegovina.
- Citizens' Participation Toolkit.
- CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizens Participation.
- Community Development Resources Association – Cape Town, South Africa.
- Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, Netherlands.
- International Alert, London, UK.
- International Training and Research Centre (INTRAC), Oxford, UK.
- Knowledge Centre on Capacity Building, PSO, Netherlands.
- Nonprofit Enterprise and Self-sustainability Team (NESsT), Chile, Hungary and USA.
- PACT Building Capacity Worldwide, Washington, DC.
- International Resource Centre for NGO platforms www.ong-ngo.org
- Resource, Citizen Engagement and Democratic Governance: A Topic Guide. LOGOLINKL, IDA. Univ. of Sussex. UK.
- SaferWorld, London, UK
- Save the Children, London, UK.
- Search for Common Ground, World wide network.
- The Impact Alliance – Global network of capacity building organizations and information.
- The Synergos Institute, New York, NY.
- Transcend: A Peace and Development Network.

Where to go for help

- Civil Society Organization Division, UNDP Partnerships Bureau.
- Governance Indicators Project, Oslo Governance Centre.
- HuriLINK Webportal for linking Human Rights and MDGs. UNDP.
- National Civil Society Advisory Committees to UNCT - This workspace has been set up to facilitate learning and exchange among UNCT civil society focal points and other country-level staff on setting up advisory committees. It includes:
  - Guidelines
  - Country Focal Points
  - Questions and Comments from UNCTs
Important Network Discussions from the Archives

- E-Discussion - CPRP-Net: Virtual Round Table on Social Exclusion, June 2007
- eDiscussion- MDGNET: The MDGs: Global Goals to support Local Solutions 15 December 2004.
- Consolidated Reply - DGPN: Public Service Reform – Coaching and Mentoring for Capacity Building, April 1, 2004
- Consolidated Reply - DGPN: Training CSOs in Advocacy, July 13, 2000
- E-discussion - CPRP-Net: Conflict Prevention and UNDP: Experiences, Challenges and Ways Forward Final Summary and resources.
Acknowledgements

*Partnerships in Action* is a collaborative effort of the CSO Division/Partnerships Bureau, the Oslo Governance Centre/Bureau for Development Policy and the Knowledge Services Team/Bureau for Development Policy. We express our sincere thanks to Thierno Kane, Bjoern Foerde and Patrick Breard of these units respectively for supporting this learning initiative.

Our special thanks go to colleagues for their efforts in developing their contributions to the e-discussions into case studies: Alissar Chaker∗ (UNV Bonn), Bethany Donithorn (BDP), Christian Disler (Ukraine), Devanand Ramiah∗ (Sri Lanka), Fekadu Terefe (Ethiopia), Fayyaz Baqir (Pakistan), Fernando Masaya (Guatemala), Hans Buvollen∗ (Guatemala), Jamshed Kazi, (UNV Bonn), Maja Turniski (UNV Croatia), Michael Schoiswohl∗ (UNAMA), Ozonnia Ojielo (Ghana), Rania Tarazi (Jordan), and Vesna Ciprus (Serbia).

We are also grateful to colleagues who provided valuable comments, peer review and research assistance: Anna Boelens (CSO Division), Barry Driscoll (OGC), Beatriz Fernandez (CSO Division), Christine Musisi (Johannesburg Regional Centre), Geoff Prewitt (Bratislava Regional Centre), Gita Swamy (BCPR), Jennifer Breslin (BDP), Misaki Watanabe∗ (BCPR), Negar Mortazavi (CSO Division), Ramaswamy Sudarshan (Bangkok Regional Centre), Sarah Lister (OGG), Sergio Pivaral (Guatemala), and Terence Hay-Edie (BDP).

We thank Gillian Chalmers (BDP) for coordinating the production of this tool into a web-based format.

Writing consultant: Margaret Kinghorn

Bharati Sadasivam / CSO Division

Andrea Cuzyova∗∗ / MDG-net Facilitator

© Copyright UNDP March 2008

* Have since left the UN/UNDP
∗∗ Have since moved to other positions in UNDP
∗ Have since left the UN/UNDP
∗∗ Have since moved to other positions in UNDP
ACCOUNTABILITY: ISSUES AND APPROACHES

Based upon the MDG-net E-Discussion
January 2007

Prepared by: Andrea Cuzyova with Sylvie Babadjide and Devika Iyer

Accountability of civil society organizations has received increasing attention from many quarters—development practitioners, government officials, donor institutions, the business sector, and civil society itself. As they have gained in stature and presence, CSOs are under increasing scrutiny over issues of their own governance, transparency, and legitimacy. Questions have grown in volume and number from those who are the target of their actions: Who are they? Who elected them? Whom do they represent? To whom are they accountable? How do they demonstrate their credentials and legitimacy?

MDG-net hosted an e-discussion to address the complexity of these issues in both conceptual and practical terms. Some of the issues were discussed in depth and some merit more examination and analysis. The debate only partially dealt with the issues of prioritization of relations between CSOs and their stakeholders. In the future, this important aspect of strengthening CSO accountability might be revisited.

**PART I: CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDING** – This section explores the concept of accountability; i.e., what we mean by accountability; why accountability is important for CSOs and other development players, and for advancing the MDG agenda; to what constituencies are CSOs accountable and under what standards; what are the similarities and differences of accountability mechanisms in place among various stakeholders of the development process (e.g., governments, inter-governmental bodies); and who is responsible for accountability mechanisms.

Questions posed by the facilitators to the network included:

1. **Clarity** - What do you understand by the term “accountability” when applied to CSOs?

2. **Relevance** - Do you think the debate on accountability is important for CSOs? For other development players? Why?

3. **Comparability** - In what way are accountability mechanisms different (or should be different) for civil society organizations than for other development players?

4. **Constituency** - To what constituencies are CSOs now typically accountable? If not the right mix, how should that set of accountabilities change? What accountability standards should constituencies require from CSOs?

**PART II: PROGRAMMATIC ASPECTS AND IMPLICATIONS** – This section focuses on practical aspects of accountability; it considers cases when accountability of partner CSOs called for measures to be taken; examines the importance and visible impact of accountability for achievement of the MDGs; and looks at effective ways to support CSO accountability strengthening.
Questions posed by the moderators of the discussion included:

1. **Practice** – When has CSO accountability become important in your own work undertaking programmes, projects, campaigns, or other country initiatives? How have you addressed CSO accountability? What challenges have you experienced?

2. **Long-term impact** – Based on your experience, does accountability affect the overall contributions of CSOs to achieving MDGs (in advocating for, implementing and monitoring the goals)?

3. **Support** - What support should different partners provide to CSOs to help them strengthen their accountability?
   a. Multilateral organizations
   b. Governments
   c. Other donors (private sector, foundations)
   d. CSOs themselves

**Findings**
The e-discussion raised a number of issues and brought forward multiple solutions in regard to strengthening CSO accountability. The diversity of civil society can contribute forcefully to strengthening democratic governance as well as improving human development for all, particularly the most marginalized citizens. To be true to such a vision, UNDP needs to be cautious about setting up rules and regulations that attempt a ‘one size fits all’ approach. What can be done, however, is to ensure that accountability measures go hand in hand with building the right type of capacity required to respond to the demands.

Other questions raised in the e-discussion remained unanswered: e.g., if all bodies are to be held accountable, in what ways do the United Nations and other donors hold themselves accountable to CSOs? In some cases, the United Nations prefers to work with certain organizations. How do these preferences hinder its ability and other donors to forge genuine civil society partnerships?

**What is CSO Accountability?**
A 2007 paper *Civil Society Legitimacy and Accountability: Issues and Challenges* (Jagadananda, CIVICUS and Brown) looks at accountability as a responsibility to answer for particular performance expectations to specific stakeholders. CSO accountability is important for four reasons: a) maintaining and increasing public trust and support; b) enhancing CSO commitment to and legitimacy before their stakeholders; c) stimulating organizational learning and performance improvement; d) increasing potential for transformation through increased knowledge. In addition to the issues of constituencies, practices, knowledge and mechanisms, CSOs also need to be accountable to achieve intended results.

**Sources of Accountability**
CSOs often face a complex combination of stakeholders who have diverse expectations, whereas for other sectors primary stakeholders are well-established. Private sector firms are primarily accountable to owners and stockholders; public agencies in democratic regimes are accountable to voters and elected representatives. CSOs in contrast, are often accountable to many stakeholders and, therefore, are not primarily accountable to any. They may owe accountability to donors who provide resources, to regulators responsible for their legal
Accountability can be viewed as having four dimensions:

a) **Upward** to donors, governments, foundations and those providing a financial and legal base;

b) **Downward** to beneficiaries;

c) **Inward** to themselves for their organizational mission, values, and staff; and

d) **Horizontal** to peers.

**Accountability in Practice**

Those to whom CSOs are accountable are responsible in varying degrees to ensure accountability: CSOs themselves, the State, their stakeholders. Various actors play important roles in instituting, strengthening and enforcing CSO accountability mechanisms: CSOs as they are the practitioners of accountability, the State because its mandate is to safeguard the public interest and resources (*res publica*), donors who typically hold CSOs accountable to them and the public constituency that holds its representatives accountable.

**CSOs**

CSOs must take the initiative for putting in place self-accountability mechanisms that satisfy both internal and external scrutiny. The motivation should be a sense of civic duty and commitment, rather than a response to partnership requirements. At the same time, while a high value is placed on self-accountability mechanisms, in the absence of enforcement procedures, self-regulation initiatives can be token exercises.

**Examples of CSO self-accountability mechanisms:**

**InterAction: Self-Certification Plus**

*InterAction*, an umbrella organization of over 160 US-based international Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), has developed a **Self-Certification Plus** initiative. This is a trust-building effort geared to promoting the same levels of trust between PVOs and their beneficiaries as developed between PVOs and their donor agencies. If CSO members fall short in their compliance with any standard, InterAction requests that they prepare an action plan that specifies how they intend to comply with those standards within a period of one year. A review process is then planned to evaluate the results. The leading motivation behind this effort is to make uniform and rigorous the ways in which all InterAction members self-regulate their compliance with the PVO Standards. Ultimately, InterAction hopes to move its members constructively and deliberately toward greater levels of accountability and transparency.

**FEMNET: Code of Ethics and Conduct**

*The African Women’s Development and Communication Network (FEMNET)*, in Nairobi, Kenya, drafted a **Code of Ethics and Conduct for African Civil Society Organizations** in 2003. This code outlines the principles and ideals for CSOs in Africa to espouse, the standards of conduct CSOs are expected to adhere to, and enforcement on compliance mechanisms designed to ensure adherence to the provisions of the code.

For more examples of self-accountability mechanisms, see the Legitimacy, Transparency, and Accountability page of the CIVICUS website for a list of international agreements, charters, and
codes of conduct developed by national CSOs, and declarations on legitimacy, transparency and accountability adopted or recognized by national NGOs/CSOs worldwide.

CSO MEMBERS and PEERS
Member-based CSOs gain their legitimacy through the support of their members. An organization (e.g., community cooperative) might not be accountable to anyone but its members, as members would opt out if the organization does not serve them well. CSOs are also responsible to their board, to peer organizations when operating in a coalition or campaign, and to their mission. Many CSOs engage in elections for their top leaders and report internally to their boards. For CSOs that gain their legitimacy from the consent of their members and beneficiaries, it is important to define accountability mechanisms and hold their organizations accountable.

In 2006, the INGO Accountability Charter was launched as a result of deliberations by a number of prominent civil society leaders brought together through the International Advocacy Non-Governmental Organisations (IANGO). The charter outlines the signatories’ common commitment to excellence, transparency and accountability. The two main purposes of the charter are 1) to give an overall framework that explains the organizations and their work and 2) to keep up-to-date with evolving public perceptions and expectations of INGOs.

Global Accountability Project of One World Trust: Accountability Principles across Sectors:

The Global Accountability Project (GAP), set up in 2001 by the One World Trust, aims to generate wider commitment to the principles and values of accountability; increase the accountability of global organizations to those they affect; and strengthen the capacity of civil society to better engage in decision-making processes. The project developed a framework and an index for global accountability. Its 2006 Global Accountability Report and 2007 Global Accountability Report analysed the accountability of 30 of the world’s most powerful organisations and grouped them into four core mechanisms of accountability (transparency, participation, evaluation and learning, and complaint and response mechanisms) that allow an organization to manage accountability claims from different stakeholders. While more understanding is needed on the shape that the mechanisms take when applied to small CSOs, the core principles are applicable to small and large, powerful and less powerful organizations.

THE STATE
The State provides the enabling environment: a legal framework for the operation of CSOs and safeguarding public interests and resources. In doing so, the State creates requirements for accountability and has the means to regulate and/or impose accountability mechanisms, e.g., anti-corruption accountability mechanisms. The State should not, however, be concerned with internal organizational issues of CSOs, and should involve and consult CSOs and other stakeholders in designing accountability mechanisms.

Examples of different approaches to CSO legal regulatory frameworks: Belize and Jordan

Belize has established a model legislative framework for social partnerships with NGOs. This framework was the result of a collaborative project between the Caribbean Policy Development
Centre and one of its member organizations, the Association of National Development Agencies (ANDA), the primary umbrella organization for development agencies in Belize. (For more information contact ANDA at anda@btl.net.)

In Jordan, many attempts have been made to change the regulations governing NGOs. The present legislation, the Law of Voluntary Societies and Social Corporations No. 33 of 1966, is similar to NGO legislation in other Arab countries. It gives the upper hand to the government not only to organize and supervise the voluntary sector, but also to control its methods, aims and services. This gives no real autonomy to these voluntary organizations. (For more information on the content of the law, see the contribution of Abla Amawi, UNDP Jordan, to the PovNet/DGPN consolidated reply: CSO Regulatory Frameworks, 28 May 2004.)

DONORS

Donors that use CSOs as programme implementing partners have rules and regulations that require accountability. These include: financial and programme/project implementation reporting, auditing, publication of audit reports, annual general meetings to report to members, engagements with communities where these organizations are operating, and the use of independent monitoring and evaluation teams. For instance, the UNDP practice of NGO capacity assessment as a pre-condition for NGO project execution is intended to assist CSOs in identifying internal adjustments required to improve credibility and facilitate access to funding.

Donors, however, must be cautious when establishing accountability mechanisms, and be conscious of avoiding rules and regulations that attempt a ‘one size fits all’ approach. Elaborate systems of accountability imposed by donors bear many risks and might further ‘professionalize’ the relationship between CSOs and poor primary stakeholders. More technical accountability mechanisms may imply fewer relationships of solidarity and partnership between CSOs and the poor.

Example of downstream accountability: AIDWATCH in Sri Lanka

The UNDP country office in Sri Lanka has piloted a CSO capacity development project focusing on accountability and governance issues within CBOs. AIDWATCH, functioning within the STRONG PLACES project, aims to empower communities to ‘ask the right questions’ on the recovery and development activities being undertaken on their behalf by bringing them into dialogue with relevant stakeholders and providing them with the necessary technical know-how and mobilization skills. The primary objective of AIDWATCH is to engender an attitudinal change where donors and beneficiaries alike begin to regard aid as a right as opposed to an act of benevolence, and where recovery and development activities take place in an environment of increased accountability, transparency, participation and empowerment. Beneficiaries are brought into a forum where they are encouraged to discuss the project with UNDP field staff, ask questions, share grievances and make recommendations. UNDP shared details on budgets and contractors as part of its efforts at financial transparency. Where necessary, UNDP provided skills training on both the technical aspects of the project and on rights awareness, mobilization and empowerment.

Challenges of CSO Accountability

- **Limited capacity:** Many CSOs (particularly CBOs and organizations operating in remote areas) lack the ability to implement accountability measures. At times the lack of capacity means a lack of sound infrastructure, i.e., structures conducive to information access and sharing that would ultimately support accountability. This, in turn, is
incorrectly perceived by some donors as an attempt to hide wrongdoings and might lead to project termination.

- ‘Accountability measures and mechanisms’ perceived as an imposition: When externally imposed, accountability measures can be interpreted as an intrusion into CSO privacy. Donors and multi-lateral organizations must balance the need to advocate for transparency and accountability without being perceived as wielding a big stick or being unnecessarily overbearing. Accountability measures that improve CSO capacities are based on realistic knowledge of local needs and capacities. Therefore, accountability requirements might differ depending upon whether the organizations are international, national, provincial or community-based.

- Limited and overstretched resources: Many CSOs try to do too much with too few resources, losing focus and accountability. In some cases, the available resources become even further stretched by implementing additional accountability requirements.

- Over emphasis on ‘upward accountability’: CSOs are often most accountable to donors at the expense of accountability to peers and constituencies, and even their general membership. As a consequence, important decisions are made by a select few members.

- Preference of some donors for associating with certain types of CSOs: These tend to be urban, national and English-speaking, and may not always represent the marginal and dispossessed.

Support for Strengthening CSO Accountability

a) Role of CSOs

- CSOs themselves must do the most to strengthen their accountability through: peer review mechanisms, self-regulation, voluntary codes of conduct, and international benchmarks.
- Empower beneficiary communities to ‘ask the right questions’ about projects and their progress, as a means to encourage downward accountability and to foster wider civic engagement with development actors.
- Maintain democratic structures and operate under constitutions. Maintain ongoing dialogue in the CSO community on how to strengthen accountability.
- Implement transparent and inclusive decision-making (i.e. through social audits and public hearings), and engage in activities to monitor and evaluate progress in projects.
- Focus on capacity building of staff and volunteers to improve analysis, planning, monitoring and impact assessment.
- Recruit members with skills and experience in areas that will enhance accountability.
- Publish or make available to relevant stakeholders regular audits and annual reports.

b) Role of the State

- Provide an open and enabling environment for CSOs to operate and create accountability frameworks that do not impose control over their activities. (Autocratic governments tend to use accountability to restrain financing to CSOs and impose restrictive legislation.)
- Apply political will to create (an) accountability framework(s) relevant to all public and private sectors.
• Expand genuine opportunity for dialogue and consultation between the State and CSOs (which will impel them to strengthen their capacity and accountability to constituencies).
• Lobby private enterprises, multi-laterals and others for funding to strengthen CSO accountability.
• Engage in dialogue and advocacy about relationship between accountability and development.

c) Roles of UNDP and Other Donors
• Make ‘trusted policy dialogue’ a trademark when dealing with the CSO community. Position (UN)DP to provide guidance and advice that is: [ruthlessly] honest, [helpfully] critical, [unconditionally] supportive, and for the long term.
• Assist in capacity development in organizational and sectoral areas, including capacity development aimed at deepening the culture of transparency.
• Organize study tours for CSOs.
• Coordinate funding with the private sector companies and banks, which can provide CSOs with hands-on training on financial management.
• Ensure sustainability. Short-term funding granted to CSOs should be replaced by assistance aimed at achieving long-term goals.
• Promote international codes of conduct for ethical working methods and set benchmarks for transparency and accountability.

SELECT RESOURCES
ý Accountability is the Key to Governance of NGOs, Cohen, J., Institute of Social and Ethical Accountability, UK (AccountAbility), 2003.
ý By What Authority? The Legitimacy and Accountability of Non-governmental Organisations, Slim, H., 2002.
ý Civicus World Alliance for Citizen Participation, Organizational website.
ý Costs and benefits of NGO accountability, Jordan, L., Global Public Policy, 2005
ý Partnerships and Accountability: Current thinking and approaches among agencies supporting Civil Society Organizations, Blagescu, M.; Young, J., 2005.


The International Center for Not-for-Profit Law, (ICNL), organizational website.


The Role of NGO Self-Regulation in Increasing Stakeholder Accountability, Lloyd, R., One World Trust, 2005.

Voluntary Codes of Conduct for National CSOs, CIVICUS. Also contact Beniam Gebrezghi at CIVICUS.

**Important Network Discussions From the Archives**

Title of Initiative: Civic Participation in Constitution Making

Timeframe: October 2002-January 2004

Objectives: To build credibility of and solicit broad social input into the development of the new national constitution through a public consultation process.

Approach: The initial design of the constitution-making process in Afghanistan envisaged little public participation but was built on a top-down approach. Upon strong advice from international experts, however, the interim authority decided to incorporate a public consultation process into the development of the new Afghan Constitution. Held under the auspices of the Constitutional (Review) Commission, a body with 33 members representing the country’s diverse regional and ethnic composition and including seven women, the consultations were supported by its Secretariat (headed by a UNDP staff member).

UNDP was part of the international effort to support the process through a joint UNAMA-UNDP project. Initially perceived as “budget administrator and provider of funds”, UNDP incrementally increased its role to eventually providing substantive inputs to the draft constitution through country office expertise. With many UN and non-UN actors involved, coordination was key to ensuring that the “enabling environment” for the drafting and adoption of the constitution was created.

Given Afghanistan’s history and culture, a considerable number of constraints had to be addressed to effectively engage the public in the process, particularly:

- **Illiteracy** – If the majority of the public is illiterate, additional efforts are necessary to identify means other than written submissions for public input, such as consultation hearings. A consultation process based exclusively on questionnaires on complex issues of constitutional law is not likely to generate public buy-in nor concrete input;

- **Lack of understanding** – In a country where the level of education is comparatively low and where the multifaceted technicalities of democracy are little understood or implemented, one can simply not expect the concept of democracy and its constitutional implications to coincide with public expectations and understanding, particularly since the concept has not evolved from a grass-roots level but been introduced by external actors;

- **Lack of time** – The time frame for the development of the draft constitution was extremely short in comparison with well-established democracies in the world,
leaving little space (two-three months) to focus on public consultations;

- **Security** - The situation in Afghanistan has always been volatile and security considerations limited the ability to conduct widespread public consultations.

The process that was implemented consisted of ethnically balanced teams of three commissioners that visited all regions of Afghanistan over two months to convene public consultation meetings. These meetings were either open to the general public or targeted specific groups. The comments made and views voiced during these meetings were recorded by the Secretariat. The Commission (through the Secretariat) also distributed questionnaires that addressed a wide range of fundamental issues, such as the role of the king, the best system of governance, the role of Islam, etc.

The Secretariat compiled the views and information gathered through the regional meetings and the questionnaires and analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results were subsequently made available to the Commission in the form of a report. Given Afghanistan's multi-ethnic composition and history of conflict, the exercise confirmed divisions on fundamental constitutional issues that existed among the public, but also revealed areas of strong agreement.

The public consultation campaign was accompanied by civic education measures (i.e., on the constitution-drafting process and its adoption by the Constitutional Loya Jirga) and facilitated efforts to include minority groups (refugees, nomads, and the disabled community) and women. (The latter is particularly important in Afghanistan given its history of gender discrimination.)

**Results:** The Constitution Review Commission distributed a total of 484,450 questionnaires and gathered over 100,000 completed questionnaires from citizens. Further, its members attended about 555 public consultation meetings (in all 32 provinces of Afghanistan and among refugee groups in Iran and Pakistan) and provided public information on the process as well as contents of the constitution-making debate.

The Constitution of Afghanistan has several provisions (e.g., rights of the disabled, non-discrimination, and human rights in general) that can be traced directly to the efforts of civic working groups and participatory processes facilitated by the international community (for example, a UNDP/UNOPS supported disability programme provided significant input into the drafting process). Furthermore, the legal framework guarantees a specific number of seats to minority groups (refugees, nomads, disabled community) and women in the Constitutional Assembly (the Constitutional Loya Jirga).

**Analysis:** The basic dilemma in crafting a constitutional-process is in determining the extent to which public views can and need to be reflected / built in a new Constitution, particularly in a volatile post-conflict setting. Depending on the fabric of the State (ethnic composition) as well as its history (internal armed conflict etc.) it may be difficult to reconcile different political demands which in turn may lead to further polarization and, in the extreme, to an active disengagement of those groups who feel dissatisfied with the process as well as its outcome (hence diminishing overall acceptance/effectiveness of the Constitution). At the same time, a well-managed public consultation process may generate a minimum degree of buy-in, at least into the process, and thereby add public legitimacy to the outcome. In particular, it may contribute to the development of a culture
of political dialogue even if disagreement persists on core issues.

While it is true that recent thinking on constitution-making processes has demonstrated a shift away from an elite-driven imposition of constitutions (top-down approach), it is increasingly recognized that participatory approaches require significant preparation and thinking so as to avoid the hijacking of the process for political rather than state-building purposes. Different political groups may wish to exploit a popular divide over fundamental issues of how the State should be structured, what services should be provided, etc. Meaningful public information and civic education are key requirements for the sustainability of important state-building exercises such as the development of a new constitution. It requires sufficient time for a population previously exposed to conflict and the rule of the gun to develop a basic understanding of democracy and its processes aiming at accountability through public participation (elections).

While demonstrable positive results can be seen through the enhanced legitimacy and inclusion of minority groups, the process also created drawbacks in fueling public demand for disclosure. Meant as a mechanism to ensure public participation and inclusion, the consultation process came to be seen by some groups as a government-driven secret exercise or as a sham for backing the incumbent Government. Additionally, the various simultaneous political processes, such as voter registration for presidential and parliamentary elections, caused some confusion among the public.

Lessons Learned:

- **Constitution making as civic education** – Providing the public with the opportunity to express views on the future structure of the state proved an important exercise for enhancing the legitimacy of a constitutional process. It also served as an important civic education / public awareness component, informing the public about democratic principles and reaffirming their right to speech and freedom of expression.

- **Public information** – Information and civic education are crucial to facilitate a constitutional debate and bring life to a Constitution after its adoption.

- **Timing** – Too little time was dedicated to the process, resulting in public participation remaining superficial at best. It did not reach the remote areas of Afghanistan but primarily involved urban elites, whose views were common knowledge because of their active participation in political processes.

- **Media coverage** – By following the proceedings and watching the constitution evolve, the people could increasingly feel that important political decisions were taken through political discourse rather than military imposition.

- **Overlapping processes** – Several processes started at about the same time (i.e., presidential elections and voter registration) caused public confusion about the process and should be avoided in future.

- **UNDP expertise** – UNDP input often focuses on external consultancies. However, expertise should be extended to include core UNDP focal points available to provide technical assistance and share comparative experiences during the process, generating trust and acceptance by national counterparts.

Resources:

- Benomar, Jamal. *Constitution-Making and Peace Building: Lessons Learned From*


Support to the Implementation of Afghanistan’s New Constitution. UNDP Concept Note, undated internal draft.


UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.


The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance has also devoted considerable efforts to develop strategies and thinking with regard to civic participation in constitution and electoral processes.

Constitution Building Processes and Democratization: A Discussion of Twelve Case Studies, International IDEA, undated draft.


Title of Initiative: Strengthening Local Development and Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups through Volunteerism

Timeframe: 1 April 2007-30 March 2009

Objectives: To promote volunteerism as a way to enhance social inclusion and capacity development of groups at greatest risk of social exclusion so that they may improve the quality of their lives through access to social services and employment.

Approach: Economic growth is on the rise in Croatia, but the benefits of this aggregate growth do not always reach poor, war-affected communities, isolated regions and areas of special state concern (ASSC) namely in the counties of Sisak-Moslavina, Zadar and Lika-Senj. These areas are inhabited by Serb returnees and Croatian Bosnian refugees, many of them (69%) over the age of 60. As a result, they are plagued by several socio-economic problems: high unemployment, low education, damaged infrastructure, devastated business sectors, few or no activities for children and youth, limited access to social services and health care, low capacity of local self-government structures, and high social exclusion and marginalization. There is a wide gap between the needs of impoverished segments of the population and the capacity of authorities to offer timely and adequate response. In addition, social cohesion and self-help are equally damaged as the negative social consequences of the war – intolerance, passivity, distrust and apathy – still linger.

To address some of these issues, UNV/UNDP launched a project entitled, “Strengthening Local Development and Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups through Volunteerism.” The project aims to improve the quality of life and social services for groups facing social exclusion by posting UN (national) Volunteers to work in these areas. Through volunteerism and self-help programmes, communities will increase their ownership of and skills for development schemes to meet their needs. The most vulnerable groups targeted include unemployed youth, people 35-54 years of age with long-term unemployment, the sick, the elderly and disabled, children and youth, women, and the Roma. Project partners include several Government ministries, local authorities, the National Foundation for Civil Society Development; Volunteer Centre Zagreb; and the local Roma centre.

Specifically, the project pursues the following strategy:
1. Supporting decentralization of social services at the community level through a participatory process that identifies local priorities, develops community-based services to address those priorities, and trains local social workers to deliver the services;

2. Training community volunteers and supporting their activities aimed at the integration of Roma children, and caring for the elderly and disabled in the community;

3. Engaging local volunteers in monitoring the implementation of on-going infrastructure projects implemented by UNDP;

4. Advocating for volunteerism as an efficient approach for enhancing civic engagement by engaging the local media, fostering stakeholder dialogue, and supporting implementation of the National Law on Volunteerism.

The national UNV volunteers recruited by the project come from the target marginalized groups. They work in their communities to reach the most vulnerable with limited or no access to social services. Volunteers motivate and support others, and organize and deliver social services. However, they are not just social service providers. They facilitate the articulation of local needs, support the exchange of information and serve as a link between communities, service providers and local authorities. The volunteers in the field cooperate with the Red Cross, Serb Democratic Forum, Association of Disabled Persons, Association IKS, Suncokret Center for Community Development, Association UNA, and with local municipalities and institutions.

Examples of ways in which NUNV volunteers are active:

- Roma youth volunteering at a day care centre to maintain and facilitate regular contacts between the day care centre and the parents, and participate in day care activities to help children and teachers bridge language barriers;
- Disabled individuals working as in-class assistants at an NGO for children with disabilities;
- An unemployed youth working with an NGO that provides computer classes for children to promote education and empowerment;
- Individuals working with refugees and returnees to help them understand their rights, and how to get citizenship and other necessary documents;
- People bringing the sick and elderly in rural and remote areas to social services and health care;
- Volunteers providing a place for the elderly to spend time together during the day to socialize, watch television, read, have their blood pressure measured, etc.;
- Women organizing activities such as sewing groups where other women come together and work and spend time.

Through their activities the volunteers are assets to their post-war communities while they themselves gain skills and experience useful for future employment. In addition the project promotes volunteerism through volunteer fairs and roundtables.

Results: Since its inception in April 2007, the project has made encouraging progress which, if sustained over the remaining project duration, promises to result in significant contributions to local development and social inclusion. Thus far the project has succeeded in the following:
• Nine NUNV volunteers are working in areas of special state concern in Croatia.

• The volunteers have reached approximately 200 beneficiaries in the target groups; among them 29 children from a Roma settlement now attending day care where none had previously, and one child with cerebral palsy now attending regular school with the help of a NUNV volunteer.

• Two women’s sewing groups for unemployed women have been established in a community centre in an ethnically divided community. The women hope to eventually develop a product to sell and have expressed an interest in starting a small business.

• One volunteer fair and a roundtable have been held to promote community-based volunteerism. Participants included community members, local and international volunteers, governmental institutions, nongovernmental organizations, mayors, county prefects, local politicians, and cultural associations and organizations.

• Partnerships and cooperation have been established between volunteers and local NGOs and volunteer centres experienced in community mobilization.

• The NUNV volunteers are learning invaluable skills through their assignments and by attending workshops, roundtables, volunteer fairs, courses and educative seminars. They are also building greater self-esteem through the program. This may later make them more employable or capable of creating job opportunities for themselves.

Analysis: The project has found that volunteerism not only plays a key role in extending social services to socially excluded groups, but is also a means for building social capital and community self-help. In economically deprived and post-war communities, volunteerism is of essential importance to overcoming damaged social capitol caused by conflict and creating a society based on solidarity and respect. This sense of empowerment and self-help is a prerequisite for the communities to develop the skills to eventually advocate to the government for needed services.

Volunteers are active agents of positive change in this process. As they work in their communities to animate and motivate others, they demonstrate that one can do a lot for his/her community if there is goodwill and a desire to dedicate free time to others. Instilling and reinforcing an ethic of self-help and volunteerism within marginalized communities also promotes sustainability in ways that well-meaning external advisors and volunteers cannot.

Lessons Learned: Initial factors have been important in providing the project with a solid start:

• Understanding - The commitment, dedication, knowledge and ingenuity of the nine national UNV volunteers has been exemplary. Having themselves emerged from post-war and conflict situations, these volunteers demonstrated deep understanding and compassion for the challenges facing remote, impoverished communities and minority groups.

• Trust - The perseverance and selfless contribution of the volunteers to their communities, which are often divided and highly sceptical of external assistance, has earned them credibility, vitally, and the trust of local inhabitants and authorities.
• **Self-help** – Involving the socially marginalized as volunteers and not just providing social services to them through volunteers, becomes a mechanism of self-help, enhancing the dignity and optimism of the groups.

• **UNDP Leadership** - The leadership and strong support from the UNDP Country Office, the local administration, and NGO partners continues to be invaluable in enabling the project and its team to access field sites and function effectively.

**Resources:**
- “Strengthening Local Development and Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups through Volunteerism”, UNDP Croatia.
- “Quality of Life and Risk of Social Exclusion in the Republic of Croatia”, Research Report.
- “Volunteerism’s Contribution to Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction” Highlights of UNV Submission to a UNDP Sub-regional Community of Practice Workshop on Social Inclusion in the Western Balkans, Zagreb, 2007.
**Title of Initiative:** Pro-Poor Services in Ethiopia: A Pilot Citizen Report Card

**Timeframe:** 2004-2005

**Objectives:** To supplement conventional PRSP monitoring and evaluation frameworks by soliciting user perceptions of the quality and satisfaction of services provided through PRSP implementation.

**Approach:** The first citizen report card (CRC) survey in Ethiopia was initiated by the Poverty Action Network of Civil Society in Ethiopia (PANE), a local network of civil society organizations, as a pilot initiative for monitoring and evaluating the PRSP. The project was part of ongoing efforts by PANE to build a strong civil society component into the monitoring process of the national PRSP. The pilot initiative was financially and technically supported through a donor-pooled fund managed by UNDP. Public Affairs Foundation (PAF), Bangalore, India, provided technical assistance for the pilot project.

The study sought users’ perception of satisfaction with the quality and delivery of services. It also highlighted problems concerning the access and use of such services and sought suggestions on how to solve problems. Being a pilot, the project limited its sectoral and area focus to four basic services (health and sanitation, water, agriculture, and education) in four regional states and one municipality.

Experiences from different countries indicate that for the report card methodology to be feasible and effective, some enabling conditions should be in place. These include: support for a participatory process in planning and administration at senior levels in Government, capacity within the community to articulate collective problems and issues without fear of retribution, willingness of local service providers (local government) to discuss issues with communities and examine suggestions that are within their responsibilities, interest in higher levels of leadership to use information generated through CRCs for performance management planning, and capacity in local institutions to implement the field survey.

PANE received advice and assistance on the CRC methodology from the Public Affairs Foundation (PAF) in India. Prior to the design and implementation of the survey, PAF gave strategic presentations to familiarize PANE and other stakeholders with the CRC approach. In association with PAF and UNDP, PANE then assessed the feasibility of CRCs in Ethiopia with regard to the
above-mentioned enabling conditions. Inputs from this assessment were used to draw the road map for the CRC.

The resulting pilot study was conducted through the following four modular phases:

**Identification of thematic variables and survey instrument design:** To identify critical issues and themes, diagnostic focus group discussions were held in a rural location. The results of the discussions, in conjunction with a review of existing documentation (e.g., government policy documents and annual public service reports) formed the list of themes and variables used to design the survey instrument. These themes and variables were then converted into a questionnaire.

The analytical framework of the citizen report cards focused on access, use and satisfaction with services:

- **Access** – the proximity of the service facility to the user (as locations tend to be based on population density, but for users distance is of primary concern);
- **Use** – the extent to which a household actually utilises a public service;
- **Quality/reliability/satisfaction** – the features of a service that are not self-evident from a physical and technical assessment of the infrastructure involved.

Survey sample locations were chosen based on population, rural or urban locations, and agro-ecology. Two districts were selected from each region based on their remoteness from or proximity to regional centres. The number of samples from each district was determined based on population sizes.

**Training:** A comprehensive training workshop was conducted by the Public Affairs Foundation for the survey team leaders and supervisors. Trainers prepared detailed guidelines for the selection and training of the enumerators and prepared teams for the field work. Government and non-government personnel were both trained to enable them to understand the concept and significance of CRCs, as well as to improve the relations between them.

**Survey work:** The trainees then conducted the survey in the pilot areas. Government representatives, particularly staff from Planning Offices, were involved in the survey work as enumerators and supervisors. It was expected that this would build the confidence of sector officials, while also building the capacity of the planning experts to understand and use the methodology, and possibly adopt it in other localities. Civil society organisations actively working in the pilot regions managed the survey work in those regions. This approach was useful, as the organizations had both experience and good working relations with government officials, which minimized official suspicions concerning the survey’s intentions.

Survey teams used a two-stage approach for measuring satisfaction. Users were first asked whether they were satisfied or dissatisfied with a service or certain dimensions of it. Depending on the answer, interviewers probed further to ask whether the respondent was strongly (fully) satisfied or dissatisfied.
Analysis and recommendations: The survey findings were analyzed nationally and policy recommendations drawn from them. Survey data were triangulated through peer reviews and crosschecking with secondary data. This post-survey data verification and corroboration revealed some inconsistencies in data collected. For example, one region reported exceptionally high levels of access to services, compared with relatively more affluent regional states which, in fact, offered greater access. As a result of these discrepancies, the survey results from this region were excluded from the final report.

The results were also discussed with regional government representatives, which led to debates concerning the survey findings and existing quality of services. The results and recommendations were presented to donors, Government and civil society members. PAN also made submissions to the Government for inclusion in the second PRSP, entitled the Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to End Poverty in Ethiopia (PASDEP).

Results: The survey was successful in providing additional qualitative indicators for monitoring implementation of the PRSP to supplement indicators used by the Government monitoring and evaluation system of the PRSP. Such additional indicators have enabled the providers of services to get feedback from the users regarding the extent to which their services are utilized, user perception of the services and what the users would like to see improved.

This information reinforced messages from the Government’s welfare monitoring survey and participatory poverty assessment, conducted regularly to monitor the non-income dimensions of poverty and the achievement of the country’s PRSPs. These findings were incorporated in PASDEP and have informed the formulation of sector strategies.

Analysis: Based on successful application in India and replication in other Southern countries, the citizen report card is a simple but powerful tool to provide Government agencies with systematic feedback from the users of public services. Though exploratory in nature, this exercise not only built awareness and capacity among stakeholders, but also offered relevant agencies diagnostic pointers to improve the quality of their services. It also highlighted areas of discrepancy between policies and their implementation in the sectors surveyed. The feedback elicited by the CRCs on service quality from the users’ perspective enabled public agencies to identify strengths and weaknesses of their work and to pinpoint policies and strategies that are working best.

One major innovation of the CRCs is in quantifying subjective experiences, such as satisfaction, which reflect the users’ overall assessment of a service based on personal experience. The person implicitly brings individual expectations and standards to the assessment, which are influenced by his/her educational level and awareness of the role of government, or by the past experience of others in the community. Given the low levels of education, income and mobility of the respondents in this study, it is likely that their expectations from services are more modest in contrast to those of people in more developed countries. This personal judgement of user satisfaction is then corroborated with in-depth
sectoral/thematic studies so that a valid comparison is possible. The participatory poverty assessments and other surveys by Government and administrative reports are therefore useful for verifying and substantiating the findings of the CRC.

**Lessons Learned:**

- **Data quality** - Since the reliability of data is vital to the credibility of the survey results and recommendations, this part of the process cannot be overemphasized. It is important to always validate the results of CRC findings by comparing them to other data sources and exploring the reasons why scores are higher/lower or why the gap between sources is so wide.

- **Involvement of officials** - Because the methodology was very new to officials, it initially caused scepticism and resistance in some regions. This is to be expected when surveys such as a report card are undertaken for the first time, as officials may feel that the findings will unveil weaknesses which may lead to their removal from office. Therefore, it is worthwhile to invest time in helping officials understand the purpose of the study, which is not to accuse them but to help them make decisions that lead to improved efficiency for service delivery and enable them to become more effective.

- **Results** - The feedback and discussion of the CRC results were crucial aspects of the process. Particularly in decentralized sub-national contexts, it is important to produce region-specific reports for the local governments with primary responsibility for delivering these services. While national reports are important for providing an aggregate picture of where countries are in terms of averages, they may not be action-oriented. This problem was acknowledged during the launch of the CRC final report and PANE is planning to undertake the second CRC taking into consideration the lessons from the pilot CRC.

- **Facts bring credibility** - The work on the CRC gave PANE concrete and credible evidence to influence policy, legitimacy in bringing the voice of civil society to the policy arena, and helped to encourage Government-civil society interactions during the formulation of PASDEP. The Government has now acknowledged PANE as a representative of civil society when inputs are sought from this sector on process and content related to PASDEP. For example, when there is an Annual Progress Review, the Government requests PANE to comment on it from the civil society perspective.

**Resources:**

Title of Initiative:  *Community-Based Tourism as a Tool for Sustainable Development*

Timeframe:  1992 to present

Objectives:  To support activities of NGOs and community-based organizations (CBOs) through small grants in sustainable tourism which protect the global environment while generating sustainable livelihoods.

Approaches:  The GEF Small Grants Programme (SGP) is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and implemented by UNDP/UNOPS. At present, 95 countries participate in SGP, having ratified the conventions on biological diversity and climate change. Decentralized SGP decision-making on grant awards is directed by a voluntary National Steering Committee in each participating country.

Grants are awarded channelled to CBOs and NGOs. The maximum grant amount per project is US$50,000, but averages US$20,000. The SGP project portfolio comprises biodiversity (60%), climate change (20%), international waters (6%), and multi-focal issues (14%).

The following are examples of small grants that have significantly involved civil society:

**Dominican Republic** – *Los Calabazos and Las Guazaras Ecotourism* – This SGP Project, implemented by the CBO Nueva Esperanza Mothers’ Club, sought to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity by developing a tourist-related activity as an alternative source of income generation for the population. The project conducted workshops on gender equity, tourism and ecotourism, and ecology and environmental management to train 40 women from the communities to develop and manage the venture. Project funds also restored two beach resorts and built two paths and a restaurant, which is administered by the CBO. The household income of project participants has grown by approximately 15%, translating into better access to education and health services. In addition, 60% of women have taken up social and economic activities, enhancing their self-esteem and empowerment.

**Ecuador** – *Yunguilla Community-Based Ecotourism* – This project introduced ecotourism activities to create incentives for the conservation of the forest where
the community is located. It set up a training programme in conservation and management of natural resources, food preparation, nutrition, customer service, lodging, administration and accounting. In addition, existing dirt roads were repaired and nine new trails built to provide activities for tourists. Finally, complementary productive projects were established to generate additional income for the community to sustain the venture, including community gardens, dairy and crafts, etc. As a result, deforestation has significantly decreased, the community gardens have increased the purchasing power of the population, and the community is now engaged in new productive activities to generate more wealth.

**Guatemala – Maya K’iche Ecotourism** – This project established a rural ecological tourist centre and nature paths to generate income for this indigenous community, while protecting the environment. An organizational structure was established to allow the community association to operate the project sustainably, with tasks allocated to different work teams, and teambuilding workshops were held with full participation of men, women and young people, who were also assigned equal responsibilities. The project directly benefits 74 members, including 26 women, both from the jobs generated and the annual profit distribution. In addition, environmental benefits for the entire community and neighbouring populations arise from the conservation of the forest by the centre, and the promotion of a culture of respect for the environment.

**Equator Prize**

**Kenya – Il Ngwesi Group Ranch** – This project has had great success in reducing local poverty and conserving biodiversity through promotion of ecotourism and establishment of a community-owned trust responsible for local land management. The ranch itself is a collectively owned initiative of 499 local households that incorporates an exclusive ecotourism lodge and a locally-led committee responsible for land and resource management. Poverty at Il Ngwesi has been tackled through the redirection of tourism revenues back to the local community. By adopting a collaborative approach to resource management, Il Ngwesi has achieved remarkable success in promoting local livelihoods without compromising the integrity of the natural environment.

**Namibia – Torra Conservancy** – This successful community-based conservancy, covering 352,000 hectares of land in the northwest Kunene region, has established sustainable hunting and ecotourism activities that have earned significant profits for the entire community. The lodge is fully managed and staffed by conservancy residents and has injected 1.6 million Namibian dollars into the local economy. As members of the Management Committee, community members monitor wildlife and human activity and ensure that policies for land and wildlife management are locally informed and, ultimately, successful.

**Belize – TIDETours** – An NGO promoting ecotourism in the Toledo District, TIDETours works to provide residents with an alternative and sustainable means of livelihood, to help reduce poverty by introducing more profitable economic opportunities, and to generate funding for conservation. TIDETours provides training to residents to enable their participation in the ecotourism industry, such as micro-enterprise and tour guide training which has allowed a number of former fishermen to move into more sustainable and profitable work as tour guides.
TIDETours also serves as a tour operator, providing package tours of the district, contracting with the new tour guides and small-scale tourism businesses to provide services, ensuring that it works with as many as possible on a rotating basis.

**Results:** The GEF Small Grants Programme has supported over 9,000 small projects worldwide. Its community-based ecotourism and biodiversity projects have been shown to be successful in raising income levels and overall sustainable development within the community.

**Analysis:** **Key Challenges:** If not properly managed, tourism can have a negative impact upon a community’s social fabric and natural and cultural heritage, upon which it ultimately depends. However, if it is well planned and managed, it can be a force for their conservation. The following factors in particular should be taken into account.

- **Local community** – Community ownership of the initiative can raise incomes while also providing additional development benefits such as capacity development, strengthened local governance, environmental protection and increased value and knowledge of local cultural traditions. However, rapid tourism development can contribute to economic growth as a whole, but does not translate into increased well being for local communities. It is important to ensure that local community members have the necessary skills (e.g., computer literacy) and rights (e.g., land title) to benefit from the economic opportunities.

- **Environmental protection** – While tourism development may directly depend upon a healthy environment, natural resources are often perceived as “common goods” and are the first to suffer, particularly under conditions of weak enforcement. Effective enforcement mechanisms are essential to avoid the irreversible degradation of natural resources on which the livelihoods of indigenous populations and the poor often depend.

- **Gender** – Eco-tourism initiatives should take care to prevent some of the negative consequences of global tourism, such as sexual tourism, child abuse and the spread of HIV/AIDS, as well as negative impact upon indigenous women. The participation of women in the tourist sector should be facilitated in a way that will allow them to work, move, and perform in a safe environment free of harassment, abuse or violence. At the same time, women should be empowered to benefit from tourism: community-based tourism initiatives managed by local women’s groups and co-operatives can be a relatively easy way for women to enter the paid workforce and often generate more long-term motivation than external initiatives.

**Lessons Learned:** **Internal enabling conditions:** Some key factors provide the environment necessary for CBOs to thrive and ensure that community-based tourism contributes to income generation and poverty reduction. They are:

- **Local leadership** – This takes a variety of forms but in all cases played a vital role in the success of the projects reviewed. Successful leaders evolve for a variety of reasons, but all share the respect of the communities they work with.
Effective local leaders are able to mediate and resolve social conflicts between community members in an objective manner, and in addition, often possess the technical skills necessary to advance a project, including locating and securing outside support when needed.

- **Community participation and ownership** – In nearly all cases, community ownership of tourism ventures is essential to ensure that the community remains engaged and committed to the enterprise. However, in some successful cases entrepreneurs have invested in local companies which employ and train community members and managers. A hybrid form of “community-owned” and “community-managed” structures may be the best route for external entrepreneurs and technical assistance groups to gradually transfer assets and expertise to a community.

- **Gender empowerment** – Poverty alleviation depends to a large degree on the active participation and leadership of women; many successful tourism initiatives are led by women or have ensured that women are included in many/all aspects of the organization’s decision-making and/or are afforded equal access to benefits. Women’s empowerment has meant that they have access to an additional source of income and skills development, raising their self-esteem and participation in the activities of the community.

- **Transparency and accountability** – These are vital to the continued engagement and strength of community participation. To facilitate transparency effective channels of communication and information dissemination must be established. In addition, the distribution of profits should strengthen the political and administrative management within the community.

**External enabling conditions:** The channels CBOs use to interact with the outside world are shaped by their access to financial, technical assistance and business services. Given the difficulties in securing financing from private investors, CBOs access seed funding to initiate tourism ventures in a variety of ways, including self-financing, state funds and grants from institutions and trust funds such as GEF SGP. For technical services, many communities are turning to the private sector, particularly for business advice and for official certification and labelling of traditional or organic tourist merchandise. Finally, business services, such as training in financial management, computer literacy and marketing, can be obtained from universities, consulting firms and sometimes NGOs.

**III. Learning by doing and capacity building:** This includes self-learning, peer-to-peer learning, and learning from codified lessons. CBOs can learn a lot from one another by codifying their knowledge and sharing or exchanging it with other communities with successful tourism initiatives. In addition, to ensure the sustainability of the tourism initiative, and that tourism profits are fed back into the local community, it is essential to provide vocational training for local community members in tourism-related activities, such as building construction and restoration, hotel or guest-house management and staffing, transportation, communication and IT, recreation and entertainment, guided tours, retail and restaurants. Such activities must use local materials and skills to ensure the continued recruitment of local people.
Resources:

- GEF Small Grants Programme.
- Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) – a partnership between the International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT), the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).
- Sustainable Development of Tourism – UNEP.

Publications and Papers:

- The Reaffirmation of Thinking Globally and Acting Locally – Experiences from NGOs and CBOs implementing GEF projects, produced for the 3rd GEF Assembly in Cape Town. GEF, 2006.
- Pro-Poor Tourism Strategies: Making Tourism Work for the Poor, Pro-Poor Tourism Partnership (ICRT/IIED/ODI) 2001.
- Community Action to Conserve Biodiversity: Linking Biodiversity Conservation with Poverty Reduction, GEF SGP / Equator Initiative, 2006 – Case studies from Latin America and the Caribbean – Study by GEF SGP, together with the Equator Initiative, looks at projects in Latin America and the Caribbean and draws a number of valuable lessons learned from the success of their experiences.
CASE STUDY GHANA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s):</th>
<th>Ozonna Ojielo, UNDP Ghana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice(s):</td>
<td>CPRP, DG and DLGUD Networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated Reply:</td>
<td>Conflict Prevention &amp; Decentralized Planning (22 March 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country:</td>
<td>Ghana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region:</td>
<td>Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme:</td>
<td>Promoting Social Cohesion: Conflict prevention</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Title of Initiative: | National Architecture for Peace in Ghana |
| Objectives: | To strengthen national capacity at all levels to use alternatives to violence through the use of peace councils to manage conflicts. |

**Approach:**

**Background:** In 2002, a serious outbreak of violence in the Dagbon area of the Northern Region of Ghana resulted in the death of the King of the Dagombas and many of his followers. The underlying conflict had existed for more than half a century with intermittent outbursts of violence. Furthermore, all over the country community-level violent conflicts were on the rise. The Government requested the support of the United Nations in creating conditions for dialogue and confidence building among the parties to the conflict, and in preventing escalation of the conflict to the rest of the country during the period before the 2004 general elections.

The Peace and Governance Project was established in September 2004 to create capacity among the actors in the Dagon conflict about alternatives to violence, to strengthen the capacity of state and other institutions to respond pro-actively to violent conflict, and to work towards non-violent elections in December 2004. Based on the lessons of the first year of implementation, the project was expanded to develop national capacity in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

UNDP adopted a participatory approach in developing the programme. Nation-wide consultations were held with central and regional government officials, security agencies, civil society organisations and other key stakeholders on the scope and content of the project. The project components derived from the ideas and perspectives of the stakeholders, who have since become part of its implementation.

There was general agreement at the programme development stage that the major challenge was capacity development. Enhanced skills in negotiation, communication and mediation would help find amicable resolutions to conflict. Trust and confidence-building activities between the parties would be used to overcome historical tensions.

**Programme focus:** The resulting initiative brings into the dialogue process groups excluded due to socio-cultural and other factors (e.g., women, youth, and butchers and blacksmiths who have been active combatants). For many, resorting to conflict was a way of protest against exclusion from economic and social spheres. The
programme enabled the voices of these actors to be heard and strengthened their investment in peace.

The programme uses peace councils and peace promotion officers to detect early signs of conflict and transform the energies into positive efforts that allow the dispute to follow acceptable mechanisms; thus protecting relationships and lines of communication throughout the course of the conflict.

Peace Councils – Regional and district governments have responsibility for establishing the peace councils. Members are nominated by stakeholder groups within the region/district, and councils select their own officers. This process deepens stakeholder ownership of the councils, increases their legitimacy (since the nominated members have credibility within their own stakeholder groups), and strengthens public acceptance of the councils and their work.

The central Government adopted the district and regional peace council model to also manage community-level conflicts. These safe spaces for interaction between the parties helped create opportunities for community dialogue. Public awareness campaigns for the peace councils focus on people’s responsibility for building peace in their communities. While councils are composed mostly of community groups and NGOs and a representative of the local police commander, anyone who wants to be involved is encouraged to participate.

The peace councils meet regularly with groups within the region/district, as well as with groups/communities in conflict. Often issues centre on the use of community resources, such as water boreholes, grazing lands, ownership of community lands, access to markets, perceived alienation from development allocation, etc. Where the potential for conflict exists, the peace council organizes an assessment visit to better understand the issues and identify the specific parties/stakeholders involved. Then it convenes dialogue sessions to help the parties craft an acceptable resolution or it makes recommendations to the district or regional government for an appropriate response to the potential conflict. Peace councils also sponsor peace building and reconciliation programmes through radio and local media, or organize sports events, such as football matches.

Peace Promotion Officers – Peace Promotion Officers (PPOs) have been recruited, trained and deployed to each region. They are employed full time by the Ministry of Interior but are available to advise the regional government, as well as districts, communities and CSOs. Their title signifies that the officers should be conflict sensitive and work to prevent the occurrence of violence. They assist parties in anticipating and transforming potential conflicts in a pro-active rather than reactive manner.

Results: By creating a critical mass of people working for peace in the communities, the architecture for peace has built capacity for institutionalising a culture of debate and tolerance in Ghana. Specifically:

- Seven out of ten regional governments have established functional peace advisory councils with an increasing number of potential conflicts being referred for resolution;
• A national peace council, with a functioning office and a full complement of staff, has been established to deal with national level or inter-group conflicts;
• PPOs are now working in each region;
• More than 300 people in different parts of the country and in institutions have been trained in conflict transformation skills.

Before the project, Government spending for maintaining peace in areas where violent conflict has broken out was enormous. In the Northern region, the Government has spent an average of $100,000 per month since March 2002. By contrast, the central Government allocated $200,000 for the architecture for peace in the 2007 budget, an amount far less than the expenditure on peacekeeping previously.

The National Peace Council organised capacity-development programmes for the major political parties in the country in preparation for the 2008 general elections. This minimised the potential for violence during their candidate selection processes for elective positions. The NPC is now an important voice for moderation and reason on issues that have led to violence or breaches of the peace in the recent past. Recently, all the secretaries of the four leading political parties called for the National Peace Council to be transformed into a permanent commission for peace and reconciliation in the country.

Analysis: Before the architecture for peace was established, the national, regional and district security councils’ response to conflict was reactive and based on a “law and order” approach. The focus was on responding to criminal behaviour, such as destruction of property, arson and killings, with no understanding of the structural causes behind the conflicts.

Yet conflict prevention was already an ingrained part of Ghanaian society. Every community has groups of elders and community association that come together when there are problems to assist in finding a solution. This is anchored on the tradition of palaver management, or creating spaces for community conversations on issues and disputes within the community. These conversations last as long as necessary for a solution to be found. The project formalized these spaces so that anticipating and managing conflicts in any region, district or community could be done proactively.

Whatever the name of the group, the critical factor is its composition. The people or groups who would normally gather to manage a ‘palaver’ in the community need to come together within the peace council to offer similar services. The membership of peace councils therefore includes chiefs, youth and women representatives, and elders.

Lessons Learned: • Traditional approaches – There are valuable approaches rooted in traditional knowledge and experience that can be used to promote peace. Models and paradigms that have worked elsewhere should not be automatically exported to other situations. While the names and titles of this system may be generic, the process is based on palaver management, a concept familiar to most West Africans as a way in which people have managed their lives for centuries.
• **Build ownership** – Start with a process that roots the intervention in local experiences to assure ownership. Participatory nominations of peace council members help to manage expectations and instil local stakeholder ownership. Peace council members are in regular contact with their constituents and are familiar with the challenges and difficulties involved in reaching amicable solutions.

• **Sustainability** – Sustainability is rooted in national ownership. National ownership is not simply the participation of national institutions in programme implementation. It is intrinsic to the conception, design, implementation and documentation of the programme and its experiences.

• **Faith communities** – Faith communities played an important role in this context. Involving them in support of formal consultation and intervention processes deepened their role in conflict prevention.

• **Role of the UN** – In consultations with key stakeholder groups, it was important to clarify that the UN was not taking responsibility away from the Government, but supporting it and stakeholders in resolving the conflict. The UN’s role was secondary; the parties needed to engage one another and with the Government in the search for solutions.

**Resources:**

- Assessment of the Peace and Governance Programme. BCPR, undated.
Title of Initiative: Civil Society Participation through Programa Alianza con la Sociedad Civil (PASOC)


Objectives: General objective: To promote civil society contributions in building a human rights-based participatory democracy and bringing about a process of change for peace building in Guatemala.

Immediate objectives:
1) To build partnerships in the reconciliation process based on recommendations made by the Commission for Historical Clarification;
2) To provide equitable access to justice;
3) Promote transparency in public office;
4) Strengthen the political impact of civil society organizations; and
5) Programme coordination.

Approach: Civil society contributions are crucial to participatory democracy. UNDP Guatemala has worked extensively with civil society organizations (CSOs) in the areas of reconciliation, human rights, justice and transparency since 2000. PASOC is the continuation of UNDP efforts to recognize and widen that cooperation.

Following the 1996 Peace Accords, UNDP in Guatemala and the United Nations Verification Mission (MINUGUA) initiated modest support to CSOs that had contributed to strengthening the justice sector. From 2000 to 2003, UNDP directly executed a programme focusing on national reconciliation that directly supported projects implemented by 28 organizations, and organized workshops to facilitate a conceptual discussion on reconciliation and strengthening civil society. PASOC is the result of the positive experiences from that project (PROFED-OSC).

The main components of the programme are:
1. Support to projects formulated by civil society organizations;
2. Support to activities to strengthen civil society (advocacy, alliances, social audit); and
3. Exchange with other countries.

The thematic areas of PASOC are national reconciliation, access to justice, and transparency. The first call for proposals yielded 137 proposals for examination by a
selection committee with members from UN agencies, donors and representatives of civil society. As a result, 27 contracts were signed with partners. Of these, ten focus on access to justice, eight on national reconciliation, and nine on transparency. The second call in April 2005 yielded 102 proposals. In addition to providing project support, PASOC organized workshops dedicated to judicial pluralism, social audit and political analysis within the first 18 months of implementation.

The following are examples of successful projects, designed and implemented by partners:

1. Justice for indigenous peoples – In the rural and predominantly indigenous municipality of El Estor, Asociación Estoreña para el Desarrollo Integral (AEPDI) took the initiative to create a Municipal Council on Justice and Security. This council facilitated communication between District Courts, the National Civilian Police, the Human Rights Ombudsman, the Ministry of Interior, the municipal authority, community leaders and civil society representatives. The council has succeeded in including Mayan speaking (and female) police officers to improve communication and trust, design preventive measures against lynching and review justice and security as an integral activity. UNDP funded AEPDI and participated in several council meetings, which has contributed to its legitimacy.

2. Human rights – Three human rights organizations in Guatemala have come together to create the Unit for Monitoring and Advisory on Security Issues (IMASP). IMASP has worked in the capital and in various provinces. UNDP helped IMASP to establish a human rights-based training programme at the Police Academy for police officers and also train CSOs to monitor police performance. The project suffered some setback with the arrival of a new Minister of Interior in 2006.

Results: It is difficult to measure the extent to which PASOC has contributed to building a human rights-based and participatory democracy and the process of change towards peace. But there is no doubt that PASOC facilitated the work of CSOs and their participation in democracy and peace building. In the Central American region, PASOC is the only programme still supported by Sweden through UNDP and the only one implemented by Denmark through UNDP. Norway considers PASOC a model for its cooperation in post-conflict countries.

The project achieved some important results:

Result 1: Initiatives by civil society have been strengthened.

National reconciliation
- Support was provided to the National Programme on Reparations to re-activate it and help implementation. This support has prevented violent reactions from community members who have traditionally felt excluded.
- An awareness-raising process was initiated on issues of racism and discrimination in schools.
- Contributed to historical knowledge at the local level and inclusion of victims in local processes.
- With support of PASOC and other programmes, civil society representatives
have been able to follow up and implement recommendations of the Comisión de Esclarecimiento Histórico (CEH) – a kind of “truth commission” – including arranging meetings between disappeared children and their families.

- There has been a spirit of reconciliation among CSOs themselves, which indicated a more tolerant environment and respect for diversity of perspectives.

**Access to justice**

- The Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources designated the NGO, CALAS, as advisor in natural resources management at the community level due to its work with PASOC.
- The NGO, Defensa Legal Indigena, submitted information to the UN Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples and worked on strategic litigation for collective rights.
- More than 200 justice officials in five departments were trained on indigenous issues and the application of the ILO 169 Convention.
- Four indigenous law compilations were produced and 3061 cases were processed and solved by the Indigenous Attorney’s office Waxjaquib according with indigenous law.

**Transparency**

- The Public Ministry agreed to restructure the Office of Anti-Corruption with the participation of international experts brought in by the NGO, Accion Ciudadana.
- The management of the military budget has been made public and it is now managed under guidelines set up by the Peace Agreements.
- The Government and CSOs have reached basic agreements on the concept of social audits.
- Various communities have acquired the knowledge to create local development councils and community members have participated in development councils at municipal, department and national levels.
- Excluded population groups such as the garifuna have been able to gain higher levels of participation in their municipalities.
- In monitoring the military budget, CSOs have created important alliances and work methods involving the Congress of the Republic, investigative journalists and transparency instruments established by the State.
- The inclusion of the Chamber of Commerce as representative of private sector interests in the programme caused an additional dimension and facilitated new approaches with state institutions like the State Comptroller.

**Analysis:** PASOC Phase 1 was a very innovative and dynamic programme. It is a good example of how UNDP can establish partnerships with CSOs and create trust, particularly in post-conflict countries. CSOs in Guatemala have evolved from being confrontational to being constructive and willing to engage within a legal and policy framework. Civil society representatives today not only claim rights and space but also insist on their rights as citizens in a democratic context. The Government and CSOs have recognized each other as interlocutors and PASOC has facilitated this process through partnerships and funding.

In the area of national reconciliation, the main result was the implementation of recommendations made by the CEH, which emphasize participation of children and
youth as beneficiaries and actors. In the area of access to justice the emphasis was placed on the acknowledgement, application and systematization of the system of justice of indigenous communities. In transparency, the project exceeded expectations in terms of achievements. It was able to distinguish between transparency and social auditing.

But PASOC was not able to ensure continuity around the issue of reconciliation which, during the project period, was focused in the aspect of reparations. The project could also have done more on communications, training and international exchanges.

PASOC was able to perceive the fatigue of CSOs in participating in capacity-development exercises. Strengthening civil society can be seen as the ability to develop partnerships, exchanges, advocacy strategies and social auditing. PASOC chose not to establish a relationship of imposition and intervention with its partners but sought to strengthen inherent processes created by national dynamics.

Lessons learned about UNDP and civil society relations

• A clear assessment of how relevant civil society organizations perceive UNDP is necessary at the start of programmes similar to this one.
• It is very important that UNDP explore the extent to which CSOs themselves have important initiatives or ideas that can be supported and strengthened, rather than inviting them to participate in pre-conceived project proposals.
• Although governments constitute the principal partners of UNDP, there are clear corporate policies on establishing partnerships with civil society which do not contradict the mandate of UNDP, which need to be better explained to government counterparts. One lesson learned is to avoid partnering with adversarial CSOs.
• UNDP needs to include civil society perspectives in its political analysis. The inclusion of civil society as a UNDP partner in the Guatemala UNDAF has been an important step in promoting interactions between the State and civil society and inclusive dialogues.
• Direct execution modality (DEX) proved to be very adequate in working with civil society organizations and dealing with sensitive issues.
• It was important to dedicate ample time and effort to cultivate and strengthen partnerships with CSOs and not limit the relationship to administrative and formal tasks. The confidence generated between civil society and UNDP is to a large extent a result of this follow-up.
• Partners have appreciated the flexibility and room for civil society initiatives to prosper, promoting creativity and the stimulation of organizational development rather than insisting on initiatives generated by UNDP, the donors or the programme.
• There is a risk that NGOs (with international support) usurp or pretend to represent the functions of community leaders, an aspect that UNDP needs to take into consideration in future collaboration in the area of indigenous justice.

Lessons learned on project selection

• Issuing open calls for proposals ensures wide participation by civil society and makes clear that UNDP is not imposing its own agenda, or that of the State.
• Interpreting the selection criteria more as guidelines than rules allowed for greater
flexibility in the consideration of proposals.

- Establishing a selection committee enriched the discussions in the selection process, but sometimes made reaching consensus difficult.
- The new, small and rural organizations demonstrated they could manage projects as well as the more well-known organizations in the capital. These organizations often proved to be more responsible and successful.

**Lessons learned on advocacy**

- Promoting advocacy by CSOs requires a coherent strategy; the lack of it was a weakness of the project. Positive results in many cases were due to luck rather than good planning.
- When dealing with local issues, preference should be given to partnerships with local organizations that have developed excellent capacity to analyze the local situation and development processes. But they lack the political capacity to participate beyond the local context.
- The advocacy capacity of CSOs was improved by strengthening their own initiatives and by facilitating access to State institutions – and not as a generous gesture from the United Nations. Citizenship awareness of the right to obtain information and the knowledge of how to relate to state institutions is more sustainable than international assistance.

**Lessons learned from the cooperation**

- PASOC civil society partners have expressed a high level of confidence and expectations and consider support to civil society organizations through UNDP as strategic, given its permanent presence in the country and direct communication channels with the government.
- The programme has helped to improve donor coordination on these issues and illustrated the advantages of multi-donor programmes.

**Lessons learned for the new phase of PASOC**

- Including the Government in the decision-making process in civil society projects supported by UNDP makes the Government also accountable to some degree for the failure or success of the programme. Having Government representatives in the selection committee also improves their understanding of our mandate and engagement with civil society, since they become part of the process: all projects in the second phase have been approved by consensus, without necessitating a vote. PASOC II has made it a requirement that every civil society project has to be presented in alliance and coordination with one or more State institutions, to strengthen the links between both sectors (State institutions include not only the central government, but also legislative and judicial powers, the Ombudsman Office, etc.).
- While public policy remains the turf of the State, in many cases, the expertise lies with civil society organizations and the PASOC approach has been to encourage alliances between both sectors to complement each other to produce improved public policy in the three thematic areas (racism and discrimination; transparency; and access to justice for indigenous population). The effort throughout was to develop a “space” for civil society and Government to work together, although this calls for certain level of political maturity that not all CSOs have.
- With six years of experience with CSOs within an environment changing in favour of participatory democracy, UNDP has access to and knowledge of CSOs that promote constructive relationships with state institutions.
• Many CSOs can now generate proposals that contribute to participatory monitoring of government policies.
• A number of CSOs are willing to engage in dialogue with the Government, while many new organizations with promising capacities are emerging outside the capital, with young and indigenous leadership.
• There is interest on the part of the donor community to continue channeling support to civil society through UNDP in Guatemala. UNDP elsewhere should be aware that the experience of PASOC is now a reference and internationally recognized as a good practice.

Resources:  • Programa Alianza con la Sociedad Civil - PASOC
## CASE STUDY INDIA

**Author(s):** Bharati Sadasivam, CSO  
*Division/Partnerships Bureau*

**Practice(s):** DGPN and CPR-Net

**Consolidated Reply:**  
*CSO participation in post-disaster decision making (24-Jan-05)*

**Country:** India

**Region:** Asia

**Theme:** Providing Services: Disaster Response

### Title of Initiative:
Partnership with a strong local civil society network in responding to the earthquake in the western Indian state of Gujarat

### Timeframe:
2001

### Objectives:
To bridge the gap between earthquake relief and reconstruction phases by encouraging community participation in recovery and empowering women in the rebuilding process.

### Approach:
Following the earthquake, the situation in Gujarat was characterized by overwhelming aid, rapid internationalization and haphazard initial responses. As the relief phase gave way to reconstruction and recovery, the UNDP response centered on a strategic, multilayered partnership with Kutch Nav Nirman Abhiyan, a district-wide civil society network, to spearhead innovative approaches aimed at promoting community self-reliance, safeguarding against future risk, strengthening institutional capacity and empowering the most vulnerable groups. The choice of Abhiyan was geared towards maximum strategic impact, as this was a network with strong roots in the worst-affected district of Kutch, and a proven track record which earned it the trust of the community as well as the confidence of donors.

Abhiyan, a 29-member network, supports the work of member organizations in 300 villages in shelter reconstruction, dam repairs, livelihoods and community-driven rehabilitation. As a coordinating umbrella organization, it has sponsored and set up earthquake rehabilitation support centres (also known as setus), which are village-level information and coordination units. In both these roles, Abhiyan has directed its collective efforts toward facilitating the implementation of people-controlled, equitable rehabilitation policies and creating transparent mechanisms for judicious use of resources.

In entering into partnership with Abhiyan, UNDP was guided by several considerations. First was the status of Abhiyan as a network with a proven track record and expertise in disaster relief and rehabilitation. More importantly, the foundations for this mutual stakeholder relationship had been laid earlier. The country office has supported the Kutch Mahila Vikas Sanghathan (KMVS), a member organization of Abhiyan, in programmes under the Government of India/UNDP Community-based Pro-poor Initiative launched in 1997. The initiative aimed at social mobilization and developing the capacity of organizations, with a special focus on women and Dalits, and creating family and community-based assets. It aims to
empower women through education, leadership building, legal literacy, strengthened livelihood systems and ensured access to information. It also supports autonomous and self-managed producer groups as part of a craftswomen’s union to increase production capacity and market share through a common service facility and the development of a common brand identity. All these approaches and skills were incorporated into Abhiyan programmes, creating a holistic community recovery effort, going beyond reconstruction of physical infrastructure.

With Abhiyan playing a lead role, UNDP took on the coordinating function of convening regular meetings of all key local actors (local representatives of INGOs, municipal / other local government officials, a broad range of NGOs with distinct and complementary skills and capacities, and representing all key constituencies, United Nations officials). These meetings proved crucial in ensuring a systematic response based on demand from the affected areas, fostering cooperation, especially among civil society actors, transparency, and accountability.

**Results:** For UNDP, Abhiyan became the springboard from which it launched its concept of transition from relief to sustainable recovery – to formulate strategies and approaches together that would move from short-term relief to long-term rehabilitation, securing lives and livelihoods to weather future disasters. The partnership helped UNDP to transmit its limited but high-value material and human resources in each of its focus areas: shelter design and construction, information dissemination and management, disaster preparedness and sustainable livelihoods, and local governance structures. In the area of shelter, for example, UNDP-supported demonstration houses in 25 villages were replicated across the 300 villages covered by the Abhiyan network, in turn influencing the design and implementation of projects by other CSOs, government agencies and the private sector. By placing the technical expertise of a wide range of UNV volunteers at the disposal of Abhiyan members, UNDP helped to develop the capacity of local CSOs. UNDP leverage with government agencies at the district and state levels was also an asset to Abhiyan members.

**Analysis:** Innovative and wide-ranging partnerships with a number of CSOs have been pivotal to the UNDP programme in Gujarat. The partnership between Abhiyan and UNDP has transcended conventional donor-CSO ties to become a synergistic relationship on many levels. Indeed the quantum of funding is the least important factor in the partnership for Abhiyan whose earthquake budget exceeded that of UNDP. What Abhiyan valued instead is the deployment of UNDP funds in small but key demonstrative projects that could have a multiplier effect across the state. UNDP did not restrict itself to a funding role, but was generous with nonfinancial resources. In the shelter sector, a unique aspect of the partnership between Abhiyan and UNDP was the confidence of UNDP in the network’s concepts and programmes. From the perspective of Abhiyan, it was to the credit of UNDP that it extended the kind of support that enabled the network to function at optimal levels. The partnership overcame potential sources of friction to evolve into one of mutual trust and respect. The familiarity and confidence that characterized the Abhiyan-UNDP partnership have proven critical to effective functioning in a disaster scenario.

**Lessons Learned:** Four key factors in the success of the Gujarat transition-recovery programme in transforming crisis into opportunities for development are: selection of appropriate partners; systemic integration of capacity-building elements; incorporation of disaster-
mitigation and vulnerability-reduction initiatives into all activities; careful selection of staff (through the NUNV programme); and propagation of the setu concept for outreach and dissemination of information.

Lessons learned include:

- **Raise awareness** – The encouraging results of UNDP intervention in Gujarat underline the need to raise awareness of the potential of transition recovery to increase government commitment to support it. With transition between relief and recovery flagged as the most vulnerable timeline in a post-disaster situation, activities implemented during this phase will have an impact on long-term recovery processes.

- **Target resources** – The United Nations system does not yet have a mechanism to mobilize resources for transition recovery. Several ad-hoc efforts have produced expectedly uneven results. Resources mobilized for crisis situations need to be readily available for transition recovery, along with emergency assistance for long-term reconstruction.

- **Build strategic partnerships** – Successful transition recovery processes require effective partnerships and development of coordination mechanisms. A synergistic alliance with a trusted community-based civil society organization is critical. CSO partnerships need to be backed nationally and globally with better interfaces with existing interagency mechanisms to coordinate the emergency phase and with multilateral financial institutions, which support long-term reconstruction.

- **Synchronize methodologies** – The United Nations system must develop a set of methodologies, procedures and mechanisms to assess transition recovery needs and formulate transition recovery strategies and programmes. It has so far developed procedures for assessment, coordination and information management only in the emergency phase.

- **Build capacity** – While crisis and post-conflict recovery have been defined as core areas of UNDP work, country offices and headquarters units have yet to develop the capacities, programming mechanisms and procedures to facilitate transition-recovery processes. UNDP country offices need to go beyond reliance on short-term, external assistance and build the cadre of human resources needed to meet the multitude of demands of a crisis.

- **Address the gender dimension** – Effectively addressing gender concerns requires perspectives as well as skills. There has to be a functional orientation, through the collection of gender-disaggregated data and gender training as gradual steps toward overcoming resistance and internalizing a gender perspective in development. United Nations agencies have a responsibility for this through their work.

**Resources:**

- *From Relief to Recovery: The Gujarat Experience* (UNDP 2001), analyzing strategic CSO partnerships and key factors in making the transition from relief to recovery.
Title of Initiative: Towards Better Integration of Persons with Disabilities through ICT and Networking

Timeframe: July 2006-July 2008

Objectives: To integrate persons with disabilities (PWDs) within society through: 1) training and skills building in information and communications technology; 2) societal sensitization on the rights of PWDs; and 3) improving coordination and networking among governmental and non-governmental organizations working on disability issues.

Approach: Persons with disabilities in Jordan are vulnerable to marginalization. They have limited access to education and job opportunities and rarely participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives. Stigma and prejudice keeps them excluded within their own communities. Disabled women are at a double disadvantage as they have to deal with additional barriers to participation. Despite an enabling legal framework within Jordanian law, knowledge of those laws and weak law enforcement mechanisms undermine their effectiveness. Furthermore, until recently there was no clear national strategy on PWDs and institutional coordination was weak between and among the Government and NGOs working on PWD issues.

A UNDP project, Integration of Persons with Disabilities through ICT and Networking, now in its second phase, seeks to address this situation. The project’s main partners are the Al Hussein Society for the Habilitation/Rehabilitation of the Physically Challenged (AHS) and AVSI (Voluntary Association for International Services), an Italian NGO. In the first phase, the project equipped seven IT rooms for people with physical disabilities (four of which were hosted within NGOs working for the disabled), trained personnel managing the IT rooms, organized IT training courses for adults and published and distributed the first national magazine on disability. In addition, the project was able to network with local partners working on disability issues and with the UNDP-supported Knowledge Stations project.

The second phase of the project was developed in consultation with governmental and non-governmental organizations working with disability. The second phase includes components to ensure the sustainability of IT rooms and the training, to work on national awareness on rights of disabled people and to provide customized support to employment. The project strategy uses ICT as a tool to achieve the desired objectives, develop capacity of partner NGOs, and tap into their knowledge, experience and outreach to implement project activities.
Discussion at a project definition workshop revealed that there was little coordination between these organizations and that they did not know about one another’s work. They recommended that UNDP continue to convene meetings, as it did during the formation of a project technical committee. The committee’s aim is to be a technical resource for project activities and provide the NGOs with a platform to network and share experiences. The committee’s tasks included identification of beneficiaries and resources based on each organization’s experience, contributions to the national newsletter on disability, as well as developing joint positions on specific issues, thereby contributing to the objectives of the project.

**IT training component:** Training activities are ongoing in the centres, as they are part of the host NGO activities. These include training of trainers of partner Government institutions and NGOs on the use of assistive devices and on developing appropriate IT programs for PWDs. An in-house income-generating plan was formulated to sustain the specialized IT centre at the main implementing NGO. This strategy of hosting (rather than establishing stand-alone centres) in NGOs working for the disabled, creates potential for sustainability. The project covers maintenance costs but the trainers are NGO staff. The project surveyed a number of vocational training and business training centres to assess their accessibility to PWDs. Identification of Government and private institutions and companies willing to employ PWDs is underway as is identification of PWDs for training.

**Awareness and networking components:** The technical committee has begun the process of developing position papers on specific issues to define their recommendations for interventions linked to the National Strategy for Disabled People. A member from the Higher Council for Disabled People has joined the technical committee. The project provided training for the technical committee members and a draft action plan for awareness was developed. A partner NGO received funding further developed the action plan on disabled people’s work rights, and shaped it as a national awareness campaign.

**Results:**

**Training**
- During the last quarter of the year, 174 disabled students received IT training.
- AHS conducted two training of trainers on assistive devices and developing IT software. Italian experts organized an advanced training. The number of trainees was 16 (50% women) from the Government and from NGOs working on disability.
- Eleven staff members (six men and five women) from organizations working on disability were trained in the Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Survey, with hands-on training in one village.

**Societal sensitization**
- Three workshops on media campaigns and advocacy for the rights of PWDs were conducted for 24 staff (13 men and 11 women) from the organizations, following which they developed the work rights awareness campaign.
- A fourth issue of the national newsletter on disability, ERADA, was published and distributed, fully funded by private sector advertisements and donations. The newsletter received positive feedback as a source of information.

**Improving coordination and networking**
- Organizations in the technical committee have implemented joint activities, such
as the national awareness campaign. They have collaborated on activities, with varying degrees of commitment among partners. Joint position papers are now being prepared for the national strategy.

**Analysis:** Providing persons with disabilities with IT training helps to remove barriers of access due to their disability. The results can be both tangible, such as gaining access to employment, and intangible, such as building self-esteem and providing a tool for creative expression, self-development as well as entertainment.

The training of partner staff develops local capacity to continue support to the disabled beyond the project’s duration. Trainees have responded positively on the content of the training, and have begun to put what they learnt into practice, such as working collaboratively, and in teams, resolving IT problems and including and empowering PWDs in their learning programmes.

The issue of social stigma and changing public perceptions requires long-term systemic social change. Such perceptions will start to change only through concerted efforts of working with a wide range of actors at all levels of society. Linking the project technical committee to the Higher Council for the Disabled provides PWDs with an opportunity to have one voice, coordinate actions and bring about lasting change.

While progress is being made, challenges to Government-NGO cooperation remain. The tendency to work independently without sharing information or resources undermines collaboration efforts.

**Lessons Learned:**

- **Ownership** - Inclusion of organizations working on disability at the formulation stage of the project increases ownership. It also facilitates complementarity and reduces duplication of efforts. This was the case with the awareness action plan which strengthened technical committee members’ sense of partnership. However, ownership and commitment should not be expected to be consistent among the partners; in fact it varies depending on the nature and capacity of the organization and the level of representation in the committee.

- **Competition vs cooperation** - The issue of competition between organizations, especially NGOs, needs to be taken into account. Each organization should feel that they are visible and that their work is being acknowledged. The fact that there was no competition over funds in this particular project helped in this sense. Experience shows that those who are committed to the issue would be most committed to coordinate.

- **Technical Committee open membership** - The technical committee’s openness for membership and reaching out to many organizations became a very useful resource. Despite the challenges, UNDP should continue to bring partners together, initiate dialogue, create platforms for communication and have strong consistent advocacy messages. UNDP can best play this role by being inclusive and neutral, and by developing long-lasting partnership with CSOs. Supporting a few committed organizations to work together is expected to bring others in and create a larger impact.

- **Develop partner agreements** - Different agreement models (MOUs, LOAs, etc) can be signed to ensure that funding and capacity building support offered by
UNDP directly supports partner collaboration, information sharing and exchange of experience.

- **Sustainability** - There is a risk that this networking will not continue after the project ends, and this needs to be taken into consideration. Replication is expected in coordination and dialogue of national partners. The individual relationships established between the practitioners in the different institutions also hold promise.

**Resources:**
- Towards Better Integration of People with Disabilities through ICT and Networking: UNDP project document
- Mr. Simon Sweiss, Project Manager AVSI (Voluntary Association for International Services)
- AVSI website
- ERADA, national newsletter on disability
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of Initiative:</strong></th>
<th>Upgradation and rehabilitation of Katchi Abadis (squatter settlements) in Islamabad with the assistance of Local Initiative Facility for Urban Environment (LIFE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Timeframe:</strong></td>
<td>1999 to date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Objectives:</strong></td>
<td>To promote local dialogue and partnerships between CBOs, NGOs, local authorities, the private sector and other actors to address environmental problems of the urban poor and influence policies for participatory local governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approach:</strong></td>
<td>LIFE, a global UNDP programme, was launched at the Earth Summit in 1992 as a response to the environmental problems of the urban poor. Since its inception, LIFE has demonstrated how to engage sub-national, local and community-level stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations (CBOs), and local authorities by using urban environmental problems — water and sanitation, solid and liquid waste management, air and water pollution, occupation of hazard-prone zones, environmental health and education and urban planning — as an entry point. Using an &quot;upstreaming-downstreaming-upstreaming&quot; approach, LIFE provided small grants to initiate community-based projects and promote policy dialogues. The LIFE approach to local level planning and implementation in Pakistan placed a strong emphasis on community-government collaboration. It helped to strengthen local governance through improvements in sanitation and solid waste management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Information system as a tool for community participation:</strong></td>
<td>LIFE employs the Geographic Information System (GIS) as a tool to collect baseline data, mobilize community members, promote dialogue between Government and the community and develop Government capacity for planning, implementation, monitoring and resource mobilization. GIS is a database system with specific capabilities for spatially-referenced data, as well as a way for working with and analysing data. The expanded use of this system is used to identify specific MDG needs at the local level. The project used GIS in squatter settlements in Islamabad to develop the capacity of Government departments in dealing with the demands of residents for services.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Steering committees:</strong></td>
<td>Other important features of the programme include multi-stakeholder National Steering Committees (NSCs) and a National Coordinator (NCs) who are integrally involved in the communities that LIFE seeks to serve. In Islamabad, for example, the Steering Committee included the Director General of Katchi Abadis (squatter settlements), the National Coordinator of LIFE/UNDP, the Director of the Katchi Abadi Cell of Capital Development Authority (CDA) and...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
community representatives. This committee reviewed progress and provided guidelines for dispute resolution.

The following example demonstrates how LIFE engages settlement dwellers:

- **Updating maps** - Maps were prepared by a local NGO, PIEDAR, and the CDA. All maps of squatter settlements were digitized and existing settlement positions were marked. Houses constructed before a certain date were allocated numbers and all others identified as irregular. A socio-economic survey gathered information about the head of the household, number of families living there, size of each family, their family income, NIC numbers, date of arrival in the settlement, place of origin before arrival and number of rooms within each enclosure.

- **Community consultation** – Settlement dwellers were involved in up-grading services through local resident committees that were consulted in all matters relating to their dwellings. Based on physical and socio-economic surveys, draft lists of dwellers eligible to stay in the colony were compiled and prominently displayed in each colony. The dwellers gave feedback and the local committees finalized the lists. The final list of dwellers eligible to stay in the colony was again displayed in the colony.

- **Infrastructure improvements** - The CDA Maintenance Directorate then made plans to upgrade water and sewer lines. As a result, streets were widened to a minimum width of eight feet and a clearance corridor of 10 feet wide was prepared for maintenance of the sewage trunk line. The dwellers willingly and actively participated in this development work even if they had to readjust their built-up area or to surrender open areas without compensation. After the adjustment of the dwelling units caused by the upgrades, the area of each dwelling was updated.

- **Granting ownership and institutionalizing services** – The Steering Committee then recommended rates for determining the cost of plots located in the settlement which were finalized by CDA. Dwellers applied to the CDA for ownership property rights for their plot. Costing and designing sewer and water supply systems and street pavement was completed. Funds for these facilities have been approved with a cost-recovery plan to finance them through the dwellers’ service charges.

**Results:** 1. LIFE has directly benefited the urban poor living in slums and informal settlements by: improving living conditions; regularizing and up-grading squatter settlements; improving access and infrastructure for water, sanitation and waste management; and addressing issues of land tenure and resettlement. The pilot project in Islamabad benefited 7,000 households in 11 squatter settlements. The project approach was mainstreamed in the UNDP National Urban Poverty Alleviation Programme (2003-2008) to improve the livelihoods of the urban poor in seven districts in three provinces with the help of Planning and Development, Local Government and Rural Development departments in these provinces. The scope of the project is flexible and other cities / districts can be added upon the availability of funds.
2. A National Shelter Policy drawing upon the lessons learned from LIFE experience was announced by the President of Pakistan in 2001.

3. LIFE also created a demand for community-led solutions for service delivery among urban administrators and elected representatives, and demonstrated cost-effective approaches to improve sanitation and solid waste management. CDA and provincial governments in Punjab, Sindh and North West Frontier Provinces have designed programmes based on LIFE methodology to continue upgradation and rehabilitation of squatter settlements with their own funding.

Analysis: The LIFE methodology and tools have demonstrated ways in which large-scale results can be influenced and achieved in a cost-effective manner, not just in the areas of urban environment (e.g., water and sanitation, solid waste management, human settlements and urban greening), but also in areas of human development (e.g., social capital, capacity development, women’s empowerment, income generation, and public health). This is accomplished primarily by strengthening participatory local governance.

While LIFE has achieved much success, it faces some critical strategic challenges stemming from the need to transition to a more sustainable and institutionalized modality. It simultaneously faces critical global development challenges such as: (i) urbanization, which poses an immense and growing crisis in some of LIFE focus areas such as slums; (ii) the need for reality-tested knowledge in decentralization and local governance; and (iii) the imperative of the MDGs, which must be localized to be achieved.

LIFE has the potential to assist with MDG achievement through its ability to localize efforts and contribute directly to Goal 1 on poverty and Goal 7 on environmental sustainability. It specifically addresses Targets 10 (sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation) and 11 (improving the lives of slum dwellers). It is able to contribute indirectly to Goal 3 on gender equality and women’s empowerment and Goal 4 on child mortality.

Lessons Learned:

1. **Local development as an entry point for community empowerment** – Local communities must be at the centre of processes for achieving sustainable environmental improvements for the urban poor. Poor communities are closest to the problems of urban deprivation and degradation; not only are they potential beneficiaries of external assistance from donors or governments, but also, their proximity to the problems and their understanding of the local context make them creative resources, active participants, discerning investors and willing initiators in the process of change.

2. **Link to local governance** – For community-based solutions to achieve sustainable and large-scale impact, they must be linked to local governance processes. The effectiveness of these efforts depends upon multi-sectoral partnerships. No single actor – civil society, government (local or national), private sector or the international development community – holds all the answers. It is in the partnerships formed among them that sustainable solutions can be found.

3. **Strengthen capacity** – The best investments in assisting the poor often include
strengthening the capacity of local government to undertake participatory processes; the capacity of communities to organize and form inclusive associations; and the capacity of all sectors to engage as partners rather than as adversaries. These capacity investments go well beyond the problems originally targeted.

4. **Mobilize resources** – Small-scale projects that successfully demonstrate the effectiveness of community-based efforts can help reprioritize resource allocation, mobilize untapped resources, both financial and in-kind, of the community and of local government, and attract the attention and services of NGOs and the private sector.

5. **Knowledge transfer** – Development programmes such as LIFE have an important role to play in facilitating the transfer of knowledge (particularly in locally-accessible languages), replicating small-scale innovations, enhancing capacity, and influencing policy. Effective mechanisms for achieving knowledge transfer include learning-by-doing and peer-to-peer learning.

6. **Localizing MDGs** – Programmes such as LIFE also help to increase information and accountability, two major pillars of good governance. While the MDGs are national goals accepted by governments, it is recognized that they must be localized to be achieved. The on-the-ground credibility, social capital and extensive local networks of LIFE must be used as assets to inform local people and local governments about these commitments so that they can hold their national authorities (and donor partners) accountable for making the policy decisions, resource allocations and fiscal arrangements needed to achieve the goals.

**Resources:**
Title of Initiative: Civil Society Participation in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for Serbia

Timeframe: December 2002-September 2003

Objectives: To facilitate policy dialogue with civil society during the formulation of the PRSP and include CSOs in poverty-related policy making processes.

Approach: The Government of Serbia requested UNDP to facilitate inclusion of civil society perspectives in the PRSP with a view to ensure genuine participation, under a project of approximately $130,000.¹

Using mediation skills: To build a relationship of trust between the Government and civil society, UNDP adopted multiple approaches. Rather than offering blueprints, UNDP presented alternatives for civil society partners to choose from. It also relied on local expertise, and used mediation skills to ease bottlenecks and keep the channels of communication open between civil society and the Government.

Setting up an advisory committee: The principal way in which UNDP supported civil society participation in the PRSP consultation process was through a Civil Society Advisory Committee (CSAC), comprised of civil society organizations from all regions of Serbia. The committee provided comments on the two PRSP drafts, and served (as much as the situation allowed) as an awareness-rising channel, sharing the information on PRSP, bringing in grass-roots organizations and excluded groups. This process was particularly successful in relation to refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP). Representatives of refugee/IDP groups had the opportunity to actively contribute to PRSP content during a series of round-tables.

In two rounds, the CSAC gathered comments from approximately 250 CSOs, including NGOs, CBOs, and associations of people with disabilities, professionals, farmers, and trade unions. Local community leaders were also invited to all meetings.

Awareness-raising activities: These aimed at raising visibility of the PRSP consultation process and inclusion of people at the local level:

- Round-tables organized by the Government PRSP Management Unit - CSAC representatives participated and lobbied local actors to take part in

¹ Serbia and Montenegro have separate PRS formulation processes.
discussions;

- **Round-tables organized by CSAC members** – Members ensured that vulnerable groups (i.e. single parents, refugees/IDPs, rural population in Southern Serbia etc.) were informed about the consultation process;

- **Information campaign** – The two major umbrella NGOs (Centre for the Development of Non-profit Sector and Civic Initiatives), with updated databases of local NGOs/CSOs, distributed information on the PRSP through their e-mail networks and organisations were invited to participate by sending comments to the committee. (However, this means of communication proved to be less effective in ensuring civil society participation. There were many reasons for this lack of wide response, ranging from lack of access to the Internet to lack of awareness of the importance of PRS consultation process. The exception was women's groups, which readily provided their comments on e-mail.)

- **Partner collaboration** – Catholic Relief Services, an international CSO, coordinated its work with UNDP and supported a civil society network, "Serbia without Poverty." This network actively participated in the PRSP consultation process through the CSAC, organised street actions to interview people on poverty-related issues and distributed leaflets with PRSP information.

- **Media** – UNDP and the CSAC hired a well-known film director to produce a documentary titled, *With a Human Face*, focusing on various aspects of poverty in Serbia. The documentary was screened at a number of film festivals in Serbia and abroad, and also on the national TV network. Parts of the film were used to produce TV clips for an ongoing promotional campaign to raise awareness on issues related to the PRS and MDGs in 2005 (following the Millennium Summit).

- **UN Poverty Day** – The event was used to organize a number of events and promote PRSP-related activities. For the first time, the United Nations Resident Coordinator gave a speech in the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia, emphasising the importance of alliances and partnerships for poverty alleviation. Also for the first time, civil society (through the parliamentary Poverty Alleviation Committee) was invited to take part in the event;

**Fostering culture of dialogue:** An equal partnership between UNDP and civil society, without presuming superior knowledge and emphasizing the relevance of all perspectives, with daily formal and informal contacts with partners, underpinned the whole process.

**Access to user-friendly information:** To simplify PRSP language and issues, UNDP offered civil society partners access to information and useful policy advice in a timely and user-friendly manner, while developing capacity in negotiating, mediation, and facilitation.

**Results:** Inputs from the CSAC led to youth issues being addressed in the PRSP. Civil society representatives also provided substantive analysis of refugee and IDP situations. The committee’s inputs also resulted in more emphasis given in the PRSP to environmental issues, corruption, public administration, judiciary reform, a human rights-based approach, including gender sensitive analysis, as well as poverty solutions specific to various vulnerable groups.
The PRS implementation is ongoing. The change of Government in March 2004 caused a delay in PRSP implementation as the new Government needed time before taking over the process. At the beginning of 2005, the PRS Coordination Team of the new Government organized a conference which gathered all stakeholders (international development partners, civil society organizations, parliamentarians, and local authorities) to reaffirm the Government's commitment to implement activities envisaged within PRSP. To date, two progress reports on the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy in Serbia have been published, the second in August 2007. **The PRS Coordination Team** (located in the Deputy Prime Minister’s cabinet) organized a conference in mid-November 2007 to highlight the challenges that remain in poverty reduction (such as rural-urban gap, trade deficit and lack of progress on key issues such as inclusive education). It also emphasised the importance of recognising linkages between the PRS and the social inclusion agenda of the European Union.

**Analysis:** The Government of Serbia recognized the PRSP as an opportunity to create a participatory pro-poor development strategy, making it transparent by consulting advisory committees. Despite a history of tense relations between the public and non-governmental sectors, civil society welcomed the PRSP as an opportunity to engage the Government in policy dialogue. At the same time, the significance of the PRSP for national development was a cohesive factor for civil society policy action.

There were a number of obstacles to the PRSP consultation process, including tight deadlines, the complexity of issues, and inexperience in policy dialogue of both the Government and CSOs. More specifically, Government experts often used exclusionary jargon, and had difficulties incorporating civil society contributions. In turn, civil society had difficulty articulating field experience into policy recommendations, or overcoming its mistrust of Government and its fears of merely legitimising the process.

The assassination of the Prime Minister in March 2003 resulted in general political instability that threatened to derail the consultation process and timely finalisation of PRSP. It was, however, finalised almost according to plan.

**Lessons Learned:**

- **Role of the consultative committee:** While an institutional framework for the consultation process is key for the inclusion of civil society, a consultative committee may not readily recognize its role as interlocutor and representative. To ensure a broad representation of civil society, and the poor themselves in the PRSP consultation, institutionalized structures should be clear on the role of civil society committees as voices of civil society and the poor.

- **Civil society research:** While research is needed to strengthen civil society policy recommendations, there is little time to undertake it once the PRS process begins due to tight deadlines and the need to conduct consultations at the grassroots level. Participatory research therefore needs to take place before the start of PRSP consultations.

- **Minorities:** Barring some representation in the CSAC, ethnic minorities were not included in the consultation process. Beyond document translation, active inclusion of minorities is needed. More precisely, the composition of
advisory committees should be at least proportional to the ethnic structure of the local communities.

- **Language**: PRSP jargon can be frustrating to many stakeholders, while obstructing public awareness and media coverage. Summaries of the papers and discussions should be in accessible language.

- **Membership**: Negotiations within the CSAC were at times difficult and time-consuming, due to the uneven capacity of civil society partners to engage in policy dialogue. Selecting committee members should therefore be based on precise criteria:
  - The type and function of their efforts (services and lobbying/advocacy) in one of the following sectors: education, health, social protection, environment, urban planning, farming, etc.;
  - Coverage of vulnerable groups including the elderly, youth, the disabled, refugees, IDPs, Roma, women, etc.;
  - Comprehensive regional distribution;
  - Referenced by NGO associations.

- **Trade unions**: The specific interests and agendas of trade unions may render advisory committees dysfunctional. Depending on local contexts, it may be advisable to organize separate committees of trade unions and other CSOs.

- **Meta-skills**: Discussions related to policy issues are often hampered by communication problems. Building capacity in ‘soft skills’ such as negotiation, facilitation, mediation, or communication is therefore crucial in reaching results.

- **Capacity development**: The learning curve for PRSP stakeholders can be steep but the process enables civil society to develop various policy formulation skills. The value of this capacity development should be captured and used beyond the PRS process itself. Acquired soft skills know-how can be used in the other policy-making involvement, enabling people to take part in the process in a more productive way.

- **Legal framework**: An inadequate legal framework for civil society (as is the case in Serbia) may not necessarily prevent CSO involvement in the PRSP consultation and drafting process. But problems related to civil society participation are likely to arise during the PRSP implementation phase. Development partners should, therefore, pressure governments to adopt legal frameworks conducive for civil society participation in all aspects of public life.

**References**
- PRSP in Serbia
- First progress report on the implementation of the PRSP in Serbia
- Second progress report on the implementation of the PRSP in Serbia
- Government of Serbia’s PRSP website
## CASE STUDY SRI LANKA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s):</th>
<th>Devanand Ramiah, UNDP/Sri Lanka</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice(s):</td>
<td>DGPN-CPRP-Net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidated Reply:</td>
<td>Civil Society in Post-Conflict Peace Building (1 March 2004)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country:</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region:</td>
<td>Asia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sector:</td>
<td>Service Provision: Disaster Response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Title of Initiative:
Transition Programme

### Timeframe:
January 2002 to present

### Objectives:
To work with impoverished and vulnerable communities affected by conflict and/or disaster to help them to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

### Approach:
Economic recovery is a major priority for UNDP in post-crisis development efforts. Set up in 2002 following the ceasefire agreement in Sri Lanka, the Transition Programme (TP) was created as the delivery mechanism for UNDP economic recovery projects in the conflict- and tsunami-affected areas. Through its network of field offices the programme is an umbrella to support projects in micro-enterprise development (MED), agricultural and fisheries support, livelihoods, micro credit and community housing.

The TP has a history of close engagement with civil society in the development and implementation of this disaster-response project. UNDP engaged civil society organisations (CSOs) and civic leaders at every stage because of their valuable insights and respect within their communities. However, civil society actors in Sri Lanka face challenges in carrying out activities in highly volatile environments where they experience insecurity and suspicion. Their performance and sustainability are constrained by poor funding, lack of technical expertise, and institutional capacity gaps. Smaller, weaker or emerging CSOs are particularly weighed down by these challenges and lack the strength to fairly negotiate with larger CSOs, the State and donor agencies.

Therefore, the projects not only work closely with CSOs to implement activities but also have the mandates for strengthening them by mainstreaming capacity development into other recovery projects.

**Micro enterprise development (MED):** MED projects are pivotal to economic recovery, given that small enterprises are often the economic mainstay for people living at the poverty belt. Large numbers of conflict- and tsunami-affected persons are engaged in this sector, which also employs a significant number of women. Support is provided through revolving loan funds for micro-credit facilities in affected and marginalized communities in partnership with local cooperatives and community-based organisations (CBOs).

UNDP supported the formation of new community-based credit societies and offered institutional support to existing ones to make them more effective and
sustainable. Examples of training activities include:

- Market modality, linkage and strategy training for micro-entrepreneurs;
- Information dissemination, data gathering, entry and analysis, and fair and equitable loan disbursement practice training for micro-credit institutions; and
- Business plan development, repayment management and basic business skills training for micro-credit beneficiaries.

**Fisheries, agriculture and livestock recovery:** Activities under the project focus on improving income generation in the fisheries, agriculture and livestock sectors through technology transfer and marketing support. Following the tsunami, the TP expanded its portfolio to include the restoration of damaged markets, fish auction centres and community halls, and the provision of new machinery.

The project also offers training and capacity building to institutions and CSOs that support these sectors to help them better serve the needs of communities. Examples include:

- Equipment provision to partners;
- Bookkeeping, financial management, business planning, equitable disbursement practices and effective portfolio management training to cooperative societies.

**Community-based infrastructure and housing:** Projects undertaken in this sector are based on the belief that the economic recovery of conflict- and tsunami-affected areas is possible only if local stakeholders are active, effective and resilient. Activities include construction and reconstruction of new and damaged houses and community infrastructure. UNDP partners with CSOs to identify beneficiaries and to facilitate their full participation in the reconstruction process. Communities are involved in all stages, from planning to design and building. Wherever possible, community labour is used.

Projects also aim to enhance the skills of local authorities and CBOs in planning, coordination and management of recovery and development initiatives. Programs in conflict-affected areas address conflict prevention and peace building through community-based dialogue mechanisms and engagement with community civil society actors.

**Results:**

- In bringing more CSOs into institutionalized development processes, UNDP has been able to impress upon other stakeholders (donors, government representatives) the necessity of consulting local actors.
- CSOs working in isolation have been able to link up with other CSOs. This has enabled them to carry out joint programmes and make collective representations to other stakeholders. Mechanisms such as coordination meetings helped them share information and avoid duplication of work.
- Support provided to fisheries and multi-purpose cooperative societies has strengthened local agencies, encouraging ownership of economic recovery in these districts. The building and/or restoration of community halls and auction centres have given communities much-needed spaces for interaction and
continued mobilization.

**Analysis:** Through the community-based approach, UNDP has been able to tap into local expertise and experience and ensure the sustainability of its interventions as a result. Furthermore, it ensures that projects address real needs identified by the communities. The approach also facilitates skills development and generates short-term employment opportunities for community members. It additionally enhances equity principles since it does not single out beneficiaries belonging to a particular group, such as ‘very poor’, ‘ex-child soldier’ or ‘IDP’.

However, while the community-based approach adds value to projects, it also requires considerable investment in time. These issues must be considered in at the outset of a development intervention. Realistic time-frames and exit strategies need to be drawn, and resources must be identified for ensuring the continuation of the intervention beyond the project cycle.

In Sri Lanka, UNDP has constantly sought ways to develop, promote and nurture its engagement with civil society in a way that benefits both. This has yielded rich results. Two important strides have been made that are particularly reflected in the recovery projects. The first is a concerted effort to strengthen the institutional capacities of its CSO partners. The second is the move away from mere sub-contractual relationships to genuine partnerships founded on mutual respect and parity of status.

Experience demonstrates that institutionally strengthened CSOs can better deliver on project outcomes. For CSOs to be fully effective, their capacities must be strengthened even when this is not a direct project objective. Furthermore, UNDP also fortifies a civil society tier with potential for supporting communities beyond UNDP interventions.

**Lessons Learned:**

- **Involve civic leaders** – In making a concerted effort to involve civic leaders in project steering committees, UNDP paves the way for broad civil society engagement and infuses the process with fresh expertise. Given their credibility and acceptance with communities, civic leaders should be engaged in project implementation.

- **Set realistic targets for CBO and community participation** – Although it is important to involve the community to the maximum and/or to fully exploit the involvement of CBOs in a project, it is also important to acknowledge that they have other commitments and responsibilities that need to be taken into account.

- **Project requirements must be sensitive to partners’ capabilities** – Working with CSOs requires sensitivity to constraints they may face in meeting regulations and deadlines. Projects must be executed through less bureaucratic procedures to encourage a broader spectrum of intermediaries. When working with smaller, emerging or weaker CSOs, keep grant award process simple and flexible. This allows UNDP to support organizations that would otherwise not obtain assistance, thereby encouraging a broader range of civil society partners. Also, giving CSOs flexibility to adapt projects gives them a greater sense of ownership which keeps them committed and
motivated.

- **Balance capacity constraints with accountability demands** – A simplified grant-making process increase accessibility to CSOs with relatively poor institutional capacities but comes at a cost. Attempts to keep grant-making simple and flexible could result in accounting and reporting lapses, which in turn hamper the ability of UNDP to monitor the work of CSOs and project interventions.

- **Improving project monitoring and evaluation** - Localised and participatory monitoring and evaluation provides the best picture of the project and allows UNDP to directly address mismanagement and corruption. It also gives CSOs and beneficiaries the assurance that they have not been abandoned by UNDP.

CASE STUDY UKRAINE

Title of Initiative: Crimea Integration and Development Programme (CIDP)

Timeframe: CIDP Phase V, 2008-2010

Objectives: The main goal of CIDP is to strengthen the structures and processes in Crimean society to develop and implement long-term solutions to peace and stability in Crimea and promote integrated regional development.

Towards this, the programme focuses on the following areas:

- Democratic governance: Strengthen citizen engagement in political and socio-economic development activities, increase Government capacity to deliver public goods and services, and provide coherent and satisfying alternatives for social change through enhanced State-citizen relations
- Economic development: Promote the development of a market-driven agricultural cooperative sector and small- and medium-enterprise development
- Human Security Council: Strengthen this as a platform for high-level inter-ethnic consensus building and evidence-based policy-making based on an enhanced human security monitoring system
- Education: Increase tolerance and social cohesion through the education system

Approach: Regional development needs to be conceptualized as an integrated vision of spaces, social actors, agents, markets and public intervention policies. As such it has the potential to further promote the core values of this programme, i.e., equality, diversity, solidarity, social justice, and social inclusion, and to address major structural risk factors to stability in Crimea. It pays attention to the quality and distribution of economic growth.

Regional development is an integral activity aimed at ensuring the efficient use of internal territorial potential, creating a favorable environment for external support, promoting harmonious and sustainable development, increasing the competitiveness of the regions and reducing imbalances in development levels.

CIDP will therefore continue integrating existing programme elements,
institutionalizing / up-scaling the mechanisms that have been piloted and developed into policy frameworks and practices in Crimea and supporting additional elements of sustainable regional development that have not yet been addressed.

CIDP will reinforce its integrated approach to regional development with an emphasis on promoting cooperation and dialogue across programmes and by prioritizing regional development interventions that directly address key risk factors to stability in Crimea.

Cutting across all CIDP interventions is the promotion of cooperation and dialogue between i.) different ethnic groups (contact theory) and ii) between the State and citizens (promoting citizen participation and transparency in decision-making processes) by encouraging positive collaborative experiences that lead to trust between these groups.

Towards this, CIDP has been creating platforms for dialogue and cooperation at

- **Village level:** Through community organizations, parent-teacher organizations, agricultural cooperatives and business associations, i.e., in different sectors in which people live and work;
- **District level:** Through District Forums for Integration and Development comprised of representatives from community organizations, district Governments and district councils;
- **Regional level:** Through the Crimea Human Security Council under the Speaker of the ARC Parliament and comprised of top Government officials, Members of the ARC Parliament, and CSO representatives, including the Crimean Tatar Mejlis.

CIDP throughout its interventions thus strengthens governance systems and develops the capacity of the actors – two key impediments to further progress in resolving the latent conflict. These mechanisms will also contribute to the implementation of the Law on Local Self-Governance and provide entry points for the promotion of transparency, accountability and improved policy-making.

At the same time, the interventions under the different programme components will directly address key risk factors to stability in Crimea, in particular:

- **Socio-economic disparities** by strengthening strategic planning at the republican and district levels, improving access to basic public services in rural areas, in particular water supply, and by promoting local economic development.
- **Minority language rights** by supporting the improvement of rural school infrastructure and assisting the ARC Ministry of Education to develop policies and programmes for bi/tri-lingual education and tolerance education.
- **Tensions related to the land allocation process** by following up on the recommendations of the assessment of land ownership and land property rights commissioned by the Crimean Human Security Council and by increasing land use productivity in rural areas by improving access to water, which is a key production factor in the rural areas, supporting the formation of agricultural service cooperatives and by strengthening people’s livelihoods in rural areas, to reduce economic pressures for migration and land squatting.
## Results of previous phase:

Among the main results of the fourth phase (2005-2007) are the following:

- **Community development:** The establishment of 203 new community organizations involving 29,000 people, supported in the framework of 209 new projects, resulted in improved public services for 64,191 beneficiaries. CIDP investment of about $2.7m was matched with about $2.2m from local authorities and the ARC Government. Community development activities were expanded to all rural districts of Crimea.

The responsibility for implementation of local development projects was increasingly shifted to local authorities and District Associations of Community Organizations while gradually phasing out CIDP field staff in the districts.

As a result of the strengthened role of the District Forums for Integration and Development as a platform for project selection and the alignment of CIDP planning cycles with those of the local authorities, local Government contributions significantly increased. On average, community development projects are now funded equally by community organizations, local authorities and CIDP.

- **Strategic Planning and Public Expenditure Management:** Building on participatory planning exercises at the community level, CIDP has been assisting the ARC Ministry of Economy in strengthening the strategic planning system at the regional and district levels.

A strategic planning manual was developed, adopted by the ARC Ministry of Economy and piloted in two districts. This was supported by a training programme and a functional analysis of the two district strategic planning units.

CIDP also started to assist the ARC Government in developing its regional development strategy (to last until 2017).

- **Decentralized Public Service Delivery in the Rural Water Supply Sector:** Building on the piloting of alternative public service delivery mechanisms at the community level, CIDP supported the ARC Ministry of Housing and Public Services in assessing the regulatory and institutional framework to develop recommendations for up-scaling these alternative public service delivery mechanisms. It also developed the capacity of ministry staff and rural water entrepreneurs and explored alternative options for financing rural water supply infrastructure.

- **Agricultural Cooperative Development and Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises:** Based on an agricultural diversification study undertaken by the programme, CIDP supported the establishment of 24 agricultural cooperatives. They are mainly focused on milk, fruit and vegetables, land cultivation services, rabbit and sheep breeding and agro-processing. The cooperatives are being supported with agricultural extension services.

The programme also assisted the ARC Ministry of Agriculture in adjusting its functions in light of Ukraine’s accession to the WTO. Among other things, a study tour to Estonia was organized for officials from the Ministry.
CIDP-supported Business Promotion Centres and One-Stop-Shops in the districts are now self-sustainable.

- *Increasing Tolerance through the Education System:* Support to rural schools was expanded to nine districts. Projects of 19 new school parents’ committees with 2565 members were supported by CIDP.

In cooperation with the ARC Ministry of Education, CIDP has been supporting the application of a Whole School Approach to education, the incorporation of tolerance education into the school curricula and the development and implementation of policies and manuals for bi-/tri-lingual education.

- *Human Security Council:* The Crimean Human Security Council was re-established under the Speaker of the ARC Verhovna Rada as a platform for dialogue among different ethnic groups.

The human security monitoring system was reviewed and enhanced. On a quarterly basis, two types of reports are being produced for the Human Security Council, i.e., quarterly monitoring reports and occasional papers on topics determined by council members, such as land ownership and land property rights, public services and inter-faith relations.

As a follow up to one of the reports, CIDP helped the Republican Land Committee to prepare for implementation of the World Bank Rural Land Titling and Cadastre Development Project.

**Analysis:**

CIDP was established in the mid-1990s in response to the complex post-independence challenges faced by Ukraine in relation to Crimea. Added to the adverse national impacts of the social and economic collapse following the break-up of the Soviet Union, and the subsequent challenges of transition towards a democratic society and a market economy, a number of specific issues and events in Crimea made the situation there potentially more volatile than elsewhere in Ukraine.

For centuries, the Crimean peninsula has been home to a wide range of ethnic groups. However, in 1944 the Soviet Government forcibly deported hundreds of thousands of Crimean Tatars, Bulgarians, Greeks, Armenians and other ethnic groups to the Urals, Siberia, and Soviet Central Asia for alleged collaboration with Nazi Germany. The mass return of more than 260,000 formerly deported people (FDP) created tensions that quickly escalated to a point where widespread violent conflict seemed likely, with potentially destabilizing effects for the young Ukrainian state. Timely and concerted efforts by the Government of Ukraine and the international community have contributed to stabilizing the situation in Crimea during the nineties.

Despite the largely peaceful return and resettlement of the FDP and an international agreement over the status of Crimea, recent trends indicate an increase in inter-ethnic tensions – e.g., recent violent clashes near a market in the Bakhchisaray district, apparently involving about 800 people of different ethnic backgrounds.
Public opinion surveys suggest that the number of people who describe relations between people of different ethnic backgrounds living in Crimea as “bad or very bad” has increased fourfold (from 21% to 77%) between December 2002 and September 2005. Such national polls may not necessarily reflect the situation in rural communities targeted by CIDP. But these worrying trends prompted CIDP to take an integrated approach to regional development that goes beyond the community level to address root causes of economic and social problems at the policy level.

Major structural risk factors to stability in Crimea, such as land allocation, minority language rights and unequal socio-economic development, prevail. The situation is further complicated by the absence of a clear and common policy of the various actors involved in these issues, which is exacerbated by frequent changes of Government and the fact that some parts of the administration report to the ARC Government and others to the Ukrainian Government in Kyiv.

Lessons Learned:

Participatory approach: In all its actions, CIDP has been applying a bottom-up and participatory approach that maximizes participation of villagers and communities in local planning and decision-making processes in a way that is inclusive of all ethnic groups, transparent and responsive to people’s real needs. By facilitating collaboration between people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds to improve their living conditions and by bringing local communities, social service providers and their authorities closer together, CIDP promotes the participation of disenfranchised FDP communities as full citizens of society. By creating “win-win” situations in multi-ethnic communities, CIDP contributes to a durable integration of all Crimean people into a society that respects differences, emphasizes common goals, and helps them to realize their potential.

Social cohesion: With over 400 community organizations and projects benefiting more than 110,000 people, the programme has created a critical mass of successful examples of its social mobilization approach. In particular, it has resulted in a shift in mindset, with people now more willing to take the initiative to improve their own situation and displaying greater self-confidence. The inclusive and non-discriminatory character of community organizations and their capacity to identify and address common needs has enhanced social cohesion which in turn has helped to reduce the risk of conflict. Local authorities recognizing the effectiveness of community-based development are making higher allocations in their annual budgets to support these initiatives, as well as actively encouraging other settlements to form community organizations. At the same time, people realize that local authorities are willing and able to respond to their needs. Ultimately, this has helped to re-establish the social contract between the State and its citizens.

Resources:

- CIDP website
- Experiences from the Field: UNDP-CSO Partnerships for Conflict Prevention. UNDP/BRSP and BCPR (2005)
- The Crimea Integration and Development Programme, 2002-2005: A strategic evaluation commissioned by CIDA
RESOURCES

**UNDP Policies**


**UNDP Practice Notes**

- UNDP 2004. *Anti-Corruption Practice Note.*

**UNDP Toolkits and working guidelines**

- UNDP. *Post-Disaster Recovery Guidelines.*
**UNDP Resources on MDGs and PRSPs**

- UNDP. *Civil Society Perspectives on the Millennium Development Goals*. By Carol Barton / WICEJ.
- UNDP. *PRSPs and Pro-Poor Policies*.
- Good Practices on the MDGs: Advancing Country-Level Action. UNDP website.
- MDG Campaigning and Advocacy. UNDG website.

**UNDP Resources on Democratic Governance and Human Rights**

- UNDP 2006. *General Governance Indicators Literature*.
- UNDP 2006. *Indicators for Human Rights Based Approaches to Development in UNDP Programming*.
- UNDP. *Source for Democratic Governance Indicators*.
- UNDP / Oslo Governance Centre 2007. *Online training for UNDP staff on Democratic Governance*.
- UNDP / Oslo Governance Centre. *Governance Indicators Project*. Oslo Governance Centre website dedicated to performance monitoring of democratic governance reforms.
**UNDP Resources on CSO partnerships and Capacity Development**

- UNDP Kyrgyzstan 2005e. *Concept and implementation of Social Mobilization: UNV Orientation Training.*
- UNDP/BRSP. *CSO Capacity Assessment Tool.*
- UNDP/Partnerships Bureau. *Toolkits, partnership policies, and guidelines related to partnerships between UN Country Offices and NGOs.*
- Capacity for Development: *New Solutions to Old Problems.* Earthscan/ UNDP

**World Bank and Other UN Agency Resources**

- UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs (UN/DESA) website. *Conflict prevention, peace-building and development. UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs*
- World Bank 2002. *Website on Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).*
World Bank website on Citizen Report Card and Community Score Card.

External Documents

**USAID, 2006.** *The NGO Sustainability Index for Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia.*

**Women's Feature Service (India), 1999.** *Measuring the Immeasurable: Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation of Networks.* By Marilee Karl et al., editors. (note AB: link to summary, not actual PDF. Book can be ordered from website).


### Websites and Resource Organizations

- **Capacity.org.** Portal with policies, toolkits, and practice reports. Hosted by ECDPM, SNV, and UNDP.
- **Choike - A Portal on Southern Civil Societies.**
- **Citizens' Participation Toolkit.**
- **CIVICUS World Alliance for Citizens Participation.**
- **Civil Society Building Net.** Website with news and resources on the role of civil society organisations in development. Hosted by Institute of Social Studies (ISS) and Hivos.
- **Community Development Resources Association (CDRA).** A South African centre for Developmental Practice.
- **CONGO.** The Conference of NGOs in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations.
- **D-groups - Development through Dialogue.** Online groups and communities on development.
- **Disaster Watch.** Disaster Watch is an initiative by the Huariou Commission and GROOTS International to support grassroots women to build community resilience.
- **ELDIS.** Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation site. Portal with many resources and toolkits on participation and other development-related topics.
- **Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict (GPPAC).** Website dedicated to the role of Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict.
- **ICT for development observatory.** SDNP/UNDP-hosted portal with regular news updates and many useful links.
- **International Alert.** Website of an independent peace building organization that works to lay the foundations for lasting peace and security in communities affected by violent conflict.
- **International NGO Training and Research Centre (INTRAC, UK).** Website with resources on Aid Architecture, Strengthening Civil Society, Participatory Development and Organisational Capacity Building.
- **Local Governance Barometer: A Tool for Strengthening MDGs’ Foundation.** Impact Alliance.
- **LogoLink - Learning Initiative on Citizen Participation and Local Governance.** Resource, Citizen Engagement and Democratic Governance: A Topic Guide. Hosted by IDS - University of Sussex (UK)
- **Nonprofit Enterprise and Self-sustainability Team (NESsT).**
- **OneWorld Net.** Website with daily news from a civil society perspective. With specific regional sub-sites.
- **Overseas Development Institute (ODI).** British think tank on international development and humanitarian issues.
- **PACT - Capacity Building Worldwide.**
- **Personnel Services Overseas (PSO, the Netherlands).** Knowledge Centre on Capacity Building.
Resource Centres for Participatory Learning and Action (RCPLA Network).

SaferWorld. SaferWorld is an independent non-governmental organization that works to prevent armed violence and create safer communities.

Save the Children, London, UK.

Search for Common Ground. The website is designed to help individuals and organizations obtain information and resources about conflict transformation.

Solution eXchange - Wider Choices Smarter Development. Moderated mail group supported by UNCT India.

Toolkit Citizen Participation. The website offers information on tools which promote citizen participation in local governance, a forum for discussions and articles.


Important Network Discussions from the Archives

- E-Discussion - CPRP-Net: *Virtual Round Table on Social Exclusion*, June 2007.
- Consolidated Reply - PRN, DGULD and DGPN: *The Role of UNDP at the Community Level? 11 April 2005.*
- REVISED Consolidated Reply - DGPN: *Public Service Reform – Coaching and Mentoring for Capacity Building*, April 1, 2004
- Consolidated Reply - DGPN: *Training CSOs in Advocacy*, July 13, 2000
- E-discussion - CPRP-Net: *Conflict Prevention and UNDP: Experiences, Challenges and Ways Forward Final Summary and resources.*
WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

- Civil Society Organization Division, UNDP Partnerships Bureau.
- Governance Indicators Project, Oslo Governance Centre.
- HuriLINK Webportal for linking Human Rights and MDGs, UNDP.
- National Civil Society Advisory Committees to UNCT - This workspace has been set up to facilitate learning and exchange among UNCT civil society focal points and other country-level staff on setting up advisory committees. It includes:
  - Guidelines
  - Country Focal Points
  - Questions and Comments from UNCTs
  - News and Updates
  - Contact Information
- Virtual portal and resource centre on NGO platforms:
  - News story on portal launch
  - Asia page
  - Africa page
  - LAC page
  - Europe page