2013:1 **Joint Evaluation**

Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue

Synthesis Report

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Joint Evaluation

SUPPORT TO CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT IN POLICY DIALOGUE

Synthesis Report

Joint Evaluation of

Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue

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COWI

November 2012

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The following annex to the Country Report can be downloaded from www.evaluation.dk and is also available on the attached CD-ROM.

The attached CD-ROM contains:
The Synthesis Report (in English), the Bangladesh Country Report (in English), the Mozambique Country Report (in both English and Portuguese) as well as additional annexes related to the country reports but not included in the printed versions.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAA	Accra Agenda for Action
ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
ALRD	Association of Land Reform and Development
BRAC	Building Resources Across Communities
BFM	Budget Monitoring Forum (Mozambique)
CAMPE	Campaign for Popular Education (Bangladesh)
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCM	Christian Council of Mozambique
CEDOVIP	Coalition for Domestic Violence Prevention (Uganda)
CHT	Chittagong Hill Tracts
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CS	Civil Society
CSBAG	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (Uganda)
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CVA	Citizen's Voice and Accountability
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
Danida	Danish International Development Assistance
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DO	Development Observatory (Mozambique)
DP	Development Partner
EU	European Union
Frelimo	Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique
HQ	Headquarters
IFI	International Financing Institution
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
LGA	Local Government Association (Bangladesh)
LGER	Local Government Elected Representative
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MJF	Manusher Jonno Foundation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRM	National Resistance Movement (Uganda)
OPM	Office of the Prime Minister (Uganda)
PO	Poverty Observatory
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
ToC	Theory of Change
ToR	Terms of Reference
UFWG	Uganda Forestry Working Group
ULRC	Uganda Land Reform Commission
UN	United Nations
UNAC	União Nacional dos Camponeses (Mozambique)
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAW	Violence Against Women
VfM	Value for Money
WLSA	Woman and Law in Southern Africa

Executive Summary

Background and purpose

This evaluation, the 'Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue' was initiated by the Donor Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness. Specifically it was commissioned by three Development Partners (DPs), ADC/Austria, Danida/Denmark and Sida/Sweden, which form the Management Group. A larger group of bilateral DPs support the evaluation through their participation as the international Reference Group. The evaluation took place between June 2011 and September 2012.

The Evaluation Team was drawn from the consulting firm ITAD Ltd in the UK (lead firm), together with experts from COWI (Denmark) and experts from each of the three countries selected for the fieldwork, Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda.

The purpose of this evaluation is *lesson learning*, to help DPs gain a better understanding of how best to support Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in the area of policy dialogue. The findings will also have direct relevance to the CSOs in the three countries and the wider CSO community, as well as the Governments and local authorities interacting with Civil Society (CS) representatives. The evaluation focuses on:

1. How CSOs engage in policy dialogue and the relevance and effectiveness of their policy work;

2. the enabling environment, that is the enablers and barriers to CSO engagement; and

3. how different DP support strategies may influence CSOs' ability to engage in policy dialogue, and how best the DPs might support CSO policy dialogue in the future.

However, this evaluation is not a conventional one, but lies somewhere between a classical evaluation and a study, providing an opportunity to learn lessons from DP support strategies on CSOs engagement in policy dialogue and to generate new knowledge from the analysis of the range of 'policy process' case studies in the three selected countries, on CSO effectiveness, whether or not supported by the DPs.

For the purpose of this evaluation **policy dialogue** is as defined in the Accra Agenda for Action as "*open and inclusive dialogue on development policies..*", which goes on to suggest that Governments and local authorities should engage with CSOs "*in preparing, implementing and monitoring national development policies and plans. They will also engage with CSOs…*" This explicitly intends that **policy dialogue** includes all these elements at different stages of the policy cycle including **policy formulation, policy implementation** and **policy monitoring**.

Scope and methodology

The evaluation design, guided by the Terms of Reference (ToR) was refined by the team during the course of the evaluation. A Conceptual Framework document was drawn up to set out and clarify the key study concepts, and to guide the further development of the evaluation fieldwork methodology and selection of 'policy process' case studies. As part of this process the three country teams developed ex-ante 'theories of change' of CSO involvement in policy dialogue, with the aim that this might better focus the enquiry, help identify key questions and assist in assessing outcomes.

The evaluation design provided for three interlinked phases, (1) Inception and Scoping Study, (2) Main Fieldwork Stage and the preparation of three Country Reports and (3) a Synthesis Report with each of the first phases informing the content, scope and shape of subsequent activities. Within the frame of the overall ToR, the work evolved as lessons were learnt at each stage with opportunities for consultation with stakeholders and informal and formal interaction with the DP Management Group and Reference Group.

This Synthesis Report thus represents the final reporting stage and draws on the findings of the earlier reports, together with a wider body of information in the public sphere, including publications from the Open Forum process on CSO Development Effectiveness.

Selection of policy process case studies
The nine case studies (policy processes) were selected based on criteria covering a range of CSOs and actions, types of funding modalities and levels of effectiveness:

- *Bangladesh* Primary education, local government; minority land rights (in the Chittagong Hill Tracts) and food security.

- *Mozambique* District planning and budget monitoring, and legislation on domestic violence.

- *Uganda* Governance and accountability, focused on anti-corruption; gender responsive legislation, and; sustainable forest management and governance.

Within the three phases the approach and methodological tools comprised a document review, consultations with CS, DP and Government representatives through interviews, focus groups, workshops, online surveys and observation of engagement processes in selected field study areas with local government staff, community stakeholders and CSOs working at grass roots level.

A major event, the global workshop was organised in Kampala in May 2012 for stakeholders from all three case study countries and DPs, to exchange experience and lessons learned and to provide an input into the synthesis work of the evaluation. Three presentation workshops organised by the DP Management Group in Copenhagen, Stockholm and Vienna in September 2012 provided a further opportunity for review and refinement of lessons, conclusions and recommendations.

Main findings

The enabling environment for CSO policy engagement
A fundamental question for the evaluation was to identify and analyse the enablers and barriers to CSO engagement in policy dialogue so that lessons can be learned on how CSOs and DPs can adapt to current conditions and influence the enabling environment. Opportunities and problems associated with *claimed* and *invited spaces* in which CSOs operate are highlighted.

All three countries had provisions within the constitution or in law for freedom of association and expression and facilities for registration of NGOs/CSOs. However, a country's political leaders (rather than its policies *per se*) shape the realities of the enabling environment, so the situation facing CSOs may in practice be very different from the legal provisions. However, *invited space* has been offered for CSO engagement to varying degrees, and where Governments have a shared interest in the policy (e.g. improving primary education) *invited spaces* are more likely to be provided. Where *invited spaces* are limited, CSOs resort to, or actively use *claimed spaces* such as demonstrations or use of the media.

Registration of CSOs was seen as a particular issue, not just because of the bureaucratic and burdensome requirements, but more because of the often implied threat that if CSOs were perceived as being critical of Government they would not be re-registered. Indeed some CSOs choose not to register to maintain their independence, although this had implications for their ability to receive funding. That said, there is evidence that in Bangladesh and Uganda, the Governments' view was shifting from being largely hostile to one where CSOs' contribution to service delivery and policy development was being recognised. The availability of CSO funds is also a relevant factor in the enabling environment. Funding comes mainly from DPs, from CSOs' own resources, with little evidence of funding from Government. DPs are under pressure to demonstrate value for money, which is often difficult in the case of policy engagement. It was concluded DPs do provide a range of measures to improve the enabling environment, including promoting the establishment of *invited spaces*. However, enhancing the enabling environment remains a high priority for donor support and DP strategies need to seriously tackle the regulatory environment and support CSOs to *claim space* in order to enhance the supply-side aspects of policy engagement.

CSO strategies for policy engagement
Relevance of CSOs engagement: The evaluation of relevance (defined as a CSO's responsiveness to the needs of its constituency and its accountability), found some CSOs working effectively on key national matters, but without a constituency, to examples of more grass roots organisations clearly in touch with their members. Opinions are mixed as to whether CSOs do need a genuine constituency to be effective and whether in some sectors (e.g. climate change) it was not specifically needed. The evaluation found that short-term action (usually in *claimed spaces*) does not seem to necessarily benefit from being constituency-based, while for long-term engagements where CSOs participate in *invited spaces* and involve themselves in sustained monitoring of implementation of policy change, they do benefit from having a clearly-identified constituency.

Analysis of CSO strategies: CSOs have adopted a wide variety of policy engagement methods, although their advocacy activities are rarely articulated in detailed strategic plans and are often responsive and *ad hoc*. Different approaches run sequentially and in parallel which make it difficult to compare approaches in and between different

organisations. However, the evaluation found that advocacy and campaigning backed-up by evidence-based research is a well-established feature of CSO strategy.

CSOs when staffed with experienced, professionally-qualified experts are capable of producing research material of high quality which is then used effectively in a range of advocacy processes. DPs are, of course, well aware of the potential for enhancing the effectiveness of these approaches. The majority of the research documents used to support advocacy processes, campaigns or to monitor the outcomes of policies or programmes were funded with DP money.

In Uganda, CSOs regularly monitor implementation of government policies. Elsewhere it is less well developed, although in these cases, the evaluation provided early evidence of CSO-facilitated watchdog groups and other community-based groups taking on this role. But CSOs need to develop this further.

Use of claimed spaces by CSOs: This is crucial where Government is unwilling to engage formally and where CSOs purposely intend to create public interest in their cause. The use of *claimed spaces* may be part of a deliberate strategy, or may be resorted to where there is no other way. CSOs retain control in these spaces and avoid pitfalls of manipulation or co-option which are features of *invited spaces*. Lobbying is an important but underrated strategy, which often goes unrecorded. Activism, such as public demonstrations is a visible and familiar form of policy engagement. Importantly spontaneous demonstrations will of course include CS, but may not include CSOs, with social media playing an important role in mobilising instant responses. From the DP perspective, because of the risk and unstructured nature of *claimed space* work, it is less easy for DPs to support.

Networks and coalitions: CSOs have established networks and coalitions in a number of sectors, often benefitting from DP support, which were found to play an effective role in many of the policy process case studies. However, considerable time and effort is required to make these alliances work sustainably over the long term, and less formal networking arrangements may sometimes be more effective.

Effectiveness and outcomes: The policy process case studies were purposely selected to analyse effectiveness across diverse policy engagement situations, in terms of different levels of outcomes; process, intermediate, policy change and long-term goals. The case studies provided examples of **process outcomes**, where CSOs (as in the education sector in Bangladesh) had built up such a level of mutual trust that they worked together with Government as 'partners'. Three of the case studies resulted in **policy change outcomes** (new legislation). Compliance monitoring was evident but less well developed.

CSO's contribution to change: There are difficulties in measuring policy influence directly, although this evaluation has attempted to assess CSO contribution to outcomes for the nine case studies. However, there is an urgent need DPs to refine their methods and to develop a robust monitoring framework to measure outcomes.

An increasingly important role for Community-Based Organisations: Importantly CSOs are facilitating the empowerment of citizens and community-based organisations to play a key role in policy engagement, typically lobbying or demonstrating at local level or acting as policy watchdogs. This shift in approach in CS strategy is seen as vital in ensuring **long-term outcomes**. For example, the halting of the destruction of the Mabira Forest

in Uganda is attributed, inter alia, to the organised mass protests of CS and community-based groups. This has now evolved into a sustainable network of local community groups determined to achieve forestry management reform.

Policy dialogue and influence may run over many decades: In both Mozambique and Uganda CSOs (and other actors) have been working to introduce and in turn ensure proper implementation of improved gender-related legislation. In Mozambique the process has taken some 15 years and in Uganda some 50 years! In Bangladesh pressure for a new education policy has been exerted for more than two decades. There are clear lessons here for revisions to the time horizons and accommodation of unpredictability in DP support strategies.

Development partners support to CSOs
The assessment covered DP support strategies, channels of support, relevance of support, how well they met the challenges of the operating context and their contribution to planned outcomes. The evaluation, which aimed to review the policy themes holistically, rather than by intervention of the six participating DPs, did not seek to make a direct link between DP support and the assessment of CSO effectiveness. It is recognised that as DPs have adopted their own approaches to support, some of the statements will apply only to some DPs while others will be have more general application.

All the commissioning DPs endorse the principle of active participation of CS in development and support the Accra Agenda on Action for Aid Effectiveness (2008) pledge of support.

With regard to the four key accountabilities of: (1) social, (2) transparency and financial, (3) legal accountability and the rule of law, and (4) political accountability, the evaluation found that DP strategies address all the above to a greater or lesser extent. Despite this common understanding, DP strategies differ according to their own country context, support given by the countries, domestic political climate and priorities.

The country case studies point to a need for a better understanding of CSO needs and despite the language of harmonisation there remains gaps in mutual understanding. While the imperatives of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness have led to the common assumption that CSOs should themselves adapt to the harmonisation process, the evaluation has identified cases where their independence and own sphere of influence may be compromised as a result.

DPs have made some very positive and encouraging changes to their strategies. These include adopting a more pluralistic approach to CSOs, by increasing recognition and support beyond the traditional CSOs to include, for example, activist groups, faith-based groups and professional associations; genuine efforts to introduce and test out different funding modalities, and; recognition of the need to work on both sides of the CS-State engagement processes.

Conclusions and lessons learned

The lessons are intended to provide a basis for reflection and consideration by both CSOs and DPs. For CSOs in drawing up their strategies for engagement in policy dialogue and in the way they interact with DPs. A further aim is to enable CSOs and

other actors to consider what they can do differently to improve beneficial outcomes from the policy engagement. For DPs, the lessons provide an opportunity to reflect on how best to develop support strategies for CS engagement in policy dialogue in the future.

Lessons on CSO engagement:
The evaluation highlights the need for CS engagement beyond representational politics to influence both the formulation of policy and the way it is implemented. CSOs have the advantage over elected representatives of having long-term perspectives, beyond five-year terms of office, as well as a more nuanced understanding of diverse CS opinion. CSOs may represent a wide range of constituencies and provide a conduit for influencing policies. As a group, they may better appreciate the needs of the population as a whole, as well as the needs of minorities. The way CSOs operate and the potential that exists for influencing policy varies greatly from context to context (between countries and within countries) so that this variation and diversity should be borne in mind in interpreting the lessons presented here.

The features of the enabling environment are insufficiently recognised: In both successful and less successful case studies it is clear there was insufficient careful analysis of the power relations, the operating environment and potential for alliances in the way CSOs mounted their campaigns and attempted engagement. The case studies have shown that very different approaches are needed depending on whether the issues are a shared public good or evoke polarised positions, or appear to threaten Government positions.

Policy dialogue themes best championed by CSOs themselves: Issues identified and championed by CSOs themselves have led to committed and sustained action and a higher chance of success than those initiated externally. The Primary education case study in Bangladesh and the two domestic violence cases from Uganda and Mozambique show how indigenous movements grew from initial exposure to international meetings and then took many years to build alliances and support for change in policy. In contrast the 'participation by command' approach of the Poverty Observatories in Mozambique has been disappointing.

Determining if a policy issue is really a priority matter for the common good is difficult: There were concerns regarding the dominance of DP themes in policy dialogue which may not necessarily reflect the CS priority needs. Equally, there is also a problem with CSOs assuming they have a 'right' over determining priority needs. Thus, not all themes pursued by CSOs are necessarily priorities. This may be in part a consequence of 'chasing resources' but it is also a result of the lack of connectedness to the policy dialogue priorities of people living in poverty. It was noted that elites, often based in capital cities with social connections and command of the language of policy dialogue occupy *invited spaces* but do not necessarily represent the issues of ordinary people.

CSOs lack human resource capacity undermining their credibility and effectiveness: While there were exceptions and differences between countries, the evaluation found examples where CSOs lacked the human resource capacity, skills and experience to successfully engage in policy dialogue, particularly outside of the capital or regional centres. DPs meanwhile have high expectations of the ability of CSOs to take policy

processes forward without necessarily recognising the need to include capacity building and concomitant equipment provision (in particular communication technology) as an integral part of the support provided.

Financial resources need to be fit for purpose: Advocacy and other related policy dialogue processes do not generally require high levels of financial resources. However, some activities such as conducting research, monitoring (particularly where it requires extensive data collection) and forging strategic alliances, can be costly. Often these costs are wrongly categorised as 'administrative' when they are legitimate policy-related activity costs. This has important implications for enhancing DP funding modalities of policy engagement.

Coalitions and networks are not a panacea, but they can increase effectiveness: The formation of CSO networks can strengthen the effectiveness of an organisation, giving them greater confidence than when working on their own, as well as providing more work opportunities and revenue. Further, they provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and for increasing the influence of the CSO as both status and visibility are enhanced. Networks on the other hand need managing. There are real costs involved and a danger that too many resources are tied to developing systems of coordination and organisation and less to action and influence. Networks often suffer from in-fighting and leadership fatigue which make them ineffective over time. Thus, the conclusion of the evaluation is that the supporting the *process of networking* is more important than the establishment and operation of networks.

Empowering those directly affected by a policy: A number of the case studies pointed to the importance of empowering groups directly affected by a policy to assume their own agency for influencing policy change. CAMPE, a CSO platform in Bangladesh recognises that to ensure compliance to the new education policy, teachers unions, parent teachers associations and school management committees need to be empowered to hold Government to account. In Uganda, CSOs at the national level are re-focusing their efforts towards empowerment of local CBOs coupled with engagement with local government and political bodies to address sustainable forest management issues. Put simply a change in policy at national level does not imply it will be implemented. Uganda is a case in point were otherwise 'model' policies are simply ignored by those in positions of power when it suits them. Empowerment of local communities is a key factor in addressing this challenge.

Legal provisions for participation do not necessarily work: Progressive laws on participation which mandate citizen participation in local decision-making have been enacted in Bangladesh, but this will not happen unless people feel able to claim the space and are helped to do this productively. The mandated space for engagement in Mozambique district planning and budgeting processes has not been successful as it has been subject to manipulation and was never properly resourced.

Collaboration with the media is of growing importance: The media including the national press, but particularly electronic media, with a growing audience appetite for radio or TV 'talk shows' provides a ready-made 'advocacy opportunity' which CSOs are now exploiting, and which can be expected to play an increasingly significant role in the future.

Governments use CSOs to achieve legitimacy: A joint CSO-Government relationship, while genuine and appropriate in many situations, is deeply flawed in others if CSOs become co-opted onto roles simply to satisfy the perception of dialogue and consultation. DPs could help build mechanisms for institutionalising and regularising frameworks, particularly for engagement on 'sensitive' issues such as corruption.

Providing evidence-based research is a key 'entry point' strategy: There is a dearth of independent research and evidence on which to base sound advocacy strategies. Sometimes such research is sought by government agencies and politicians who do not themselves have the resources to conduct evaluations, or do not want them dismissed as politically biased. There is potential for significant value added through the strengthening of CSO capacity to systematically generate such information in order to raise their profile and build cases for policy change.

CSOs need a high level of professionalism and more transparency: CSOs need to achieve a high level of professionalism both individually, and in terms of the governance standards of their organisations. CSOs often seek to take the 'moral high ground' when it comes to fighting corruption or in holding Government accountable. But they do not necessarily have their own houses in order (as, for example, highlighted in the Bangladesh Transparency International report on NGO governance). The NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism introduced in Uganda in 2006, is a self-regulatory process which is seen as a step in the right direction.

International partnerships can improve effectiveness: The formation of international partnerships can improve effectiveness of engagement and in some cases may be essential (e.g. the Chittagong Hill Tract land rights issues in Bangladesh). Partnerships provide increased opportunities for funding from DPs, the possibility of building the internal capacity through training and exposure to other ideas and ways of managing CSO activity. Linkage with international champions of the CS community such as BetterAid and Open Forum would ensure that national CSOs are better informed about their relationship with DPs and their obligations to constituencies. CSOs should seek a role where they can first exchange with DPs on a level platform, where joint decisions can be made on funding, documentation requirements, and accountability for costs and deliverables. This implies the need for an improved framework for engagement.

Lessons on development partner support:
The lessons learned on current support provided to CSOs to engage in policy dialogue have been subject to review and consultation with key stakeholders. It is important to recognise that progress in tackling these issues is uneven among DPs, with some lessons currently being addressed, with others still representing important gaps.

DPs recognise CSOs' wider role, but funding instruments not yet fully appropriate: Most DPs now acknowledge that CSOs represent the diversity of public expression and contribute to effective democratic governance, recognising that alignment of development aid meant alignment with the priorities of the citizens (not just aid recipient Governments). Despite the increasing importance attached to the provision of support to CSOs, DP policies and funding modalities can limit CSO effectiveness. The pressures to scale-up disbursements, reduce transaction costs and produce short-term development results have affected the financing available for CSOs. Despite clear efforts to respond to the needs of advocacy-type CSOs, it is concluded that the range of DP funding instruments available is not yet fully appropriate.

Changing nature of CS engagement from formal groups to spontaneous action: A recent challenge is posed by CS action worldwide changing from organisation-based to non-formal and spontaneous, with evidence that people increasingly want to engage '*on their own terms*' rather than through conventional CSOs such as women's groups, faith-based groups or Trade Unions. Advances in global communication have demonstrated the power of spontaneous mass demonstrations (e.g. convened through mobile phones or social network sites) and the immediacy of response confirms the efficacy of these approaches. This has huge implications for aid funding to encourage CS engagement, suggesting a necessary shift towards greater attention to supporting the enabling environment for engagement, rather than a focus on support of individual CSOs, alongside greater support to CSO programming that facilities citizen and community empowerment activism.

Understanding the political economy is crucial in determining support strategies: Effective DP support in terms of determining strategies for engagement and expectations of achievement depends on a better understanding of the context in which CS engages in policy dialogue. Further, the pace of contextual change is accelerating particularly as a result of globalisation. These factors preclude simplistic transfer of best practices from one context to another (even within countries). Another significant lesson is that constellations of CSOs which are not necessarily 'like-minded' may successfully encourage wide public demand for policy change, particularly where there is limited political will or vested interests resisting change. This may require DP strategies to embrace an understanding of potential (and possibly unconventional) strategic alliances and power relations.

Enhancing the enabling environment is of critical importance: An overriding conclusion is that enhancing the enabling environments and safeguarding positive changes from future erosion is of critical importance.

CSO freedoms are often under threat: As a broad generalisation CSO freedoms are under threat when their organisations are perceived as critical of Governments.

CSO regulatory bodies 'not fit for purpose': The regulatory bodies (and frameworks) functioned to limit CSO activities rather than to support them and were under resourced and ill-equipped.

The importance of appropriate legal measures for CS rights: Promotion of legal measures which will ensure the necessary freedoms for CS engagement and the formalisation of space for engagement are critical elements of the enabling environment. DPs have provided support in this regard, including enhancing oversight bodies, but they may be too cautious in challenging diminishing freedoms and the lack of political to support CS engagement.

Support for public education and active citizenship needs to be better targeted: The dissemination of information about participatory democracy through CS, Government and private sector channels are important contributions to CS engagement in policy dialogue which DPs already support. However, there is a need to critically evaluate efforts towards participatory democracy so that information and education programmes are better targeted.

Donor driven agendas may be at variance with CSO priorities: A common concern of CSOs is the dominance of DP agenda in the support provided. This influence is seen as a threat to CS independence and their own initiatives and runs counter to the concept of vibrant CS being a public good or '*end in itself*'. There is overlap in DP support around a small range of themes with other key issues marginalised or ignored. There is a greater need for dialogue between DPs and CSOs in setting agendas, together with an emphasis on supporting the enabling environment as well as on the provision of flexible funding.

Responsiveness of support to processes:
Support tends to be channelled to formally registered CSOs: Most DP support is channelled to CSOs themselves as organisations responsible for implementing programmes rather than for supporting processes of change. This is partly because funding regulations require recipients to be registered with Government regulatory bodies. CSO stakeholders felt the need for additional support mechanisms which provide resources for informal and temporary coalitions and networks of small, local issue-based groups CSOs, as well as small responsive grants for unpredictable tipping point moments which occur during policy influencing processes.

A long-term commitment and perspective is needed: Policy dialogue outcomes generally take time and the short-term nature of most forms of DP funding is an impediment to building the capacity as well as the social and political capital needed by CSOs to effectively engage in long-term policy dialogue. DP support to advocacy CSOs, which have earned public credibility and trust needs to be secured and should not be subject to the uncertainties of project funding or changing DP priorities.

Focusing on 'results' may lead to less funds for CSO policy dialogue: The evaluation has confirmed the perception that the current demand for results ends up in valuing service delivery over processes of change (which take longer and are more difficult to measure). It also leads to a normative interpretation of results. The measurements methods generally used for CS engagement in policy dialogue are more suited to logic-driven, service delivery-type programmes. There is a need therefore to measure '*value added*' rather than value for money or cost-effectiveness criteria for processes which are subject to such political and contextual unpredictability outside the control of CSOs.

Different DP conditions are burdensome for CSOs: Many DPs continue to require CSOs to adopt their own conditions with regard to proposals, monitoring and evaluation and reporting. Even in joint-funded arrangements, CSOs are still often required to report separately which leads to high transaction costs. Furthermore CSOs complain that demands are made of small, informal organisations which are inappropriate and detract time away from their core action.

Evidence building is under-resourced: The need to link resource provision directly with MDG outcomes is widely perceived by CS representatives to have dampened DP support for research and evidence building. CSOs shared their concern about the paucity of resources for independent research as well as for building the capacity of staff to undertake effective 21st century lobbying and advocacy work. DPs have a role to play in demanding high standards of research and supporting an environment where contrasting findings can be debated in public.

DPs need to support confrontational as well as collaborative dialogue: CS action cannot be expected to achieve results simply through collaborative actions with Governments. CSOs have often accused DPs of being too soft on recipient Governments and not speaking out on behalf of CS. Similarly DPs have criticised CSOs for not being outspoken enough in *invited spaces*. It is appreciated that DPs operate at the invitation of the host Governments, but DPs should put more effort into examining ways in which they can support controversial issues indirectly rather than side-step them completely.

A reduced connectedness by DPs to grass roots reality: Both CSOs and DPs note that the way aid is managed currently puts huge demands on individual DP officers and it is clear that DP officers are less likely to visit projects and ordinary people than in the past. DP staff need to understand the dynamics of the wider CS in order to advocate on their behalf for appropriate measures such as *invited spaces* and freedom of expression and the current working modalities limit this exposure.

DP accountability is poor in host countries: There is greater perceived accountability of DPs to their own (northern) Governments and taxpayers than to the host country. As a result, much of the information gathered from the CSOs on DP policy and strategy in the country case studies was based largely on perception and speculation. Although much has been triangulated by discussions with DPs and documentary review, there remains the issue that information about DP policies and practice regarding CSO support is not publicly available and/or accessible in sufficient detail in-country. It was concluded that CSOs had a right to demand greater accountability and to be given more opportunities to engage in policy dialogue matters directly with DPs.

The importance of DP non-financial assistance: The evaluation found that DPs have successfully provided a number of non-financial means of supporting CSOs.

- When a particular theme is highlighted by international conventions and endorsed by international agencies as well as the recipient Governments.

- The diplomatic relationships which DPs retain with recipient Governments are important avenues to ensure political priorities remain focused especially during political transition.

- Through brokering international CS exchange (between international and national CSOs) on capacity building, knowledge sharing and collaborative action.

- DPs can play a key role in the promotion of the role of CSOs to the public of the host country.

It was concluded that DPs should be more aware of the positive impact of non-financial support they provide and ensure it is clearly portrayed as an important contributory element of the overall support.

Recommendations

It is implicit in these recommendations that changes and enhancements to the support processes will evolve through stakeholder consultation and dialogue. The recommendations are divided into those targeted at both DPs and CSOs (national and international);

at national Governments and DPs; those aimed at DPs; then CSOs. Overall, three common elements stand out:

- the need to better understand and accommodate the complex dynamics of policy dialogue processes;
- the need to better understand and support the enabling environment for CS engagement in policy dialogue; and
- the need for better financial and evaluation instruments for supporting and assessing CS engagement in policy dialogue.

Recommendations for DPs and CSOs

Prioritise and communicate themes and issues for policy dialogue

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, DP Country Offices, policy makers, CSO umbrella organisations and networks
CSOs to make more effort to promote local and contextual needs to DPs: And DPs to become more responsive to these rather than allowing global priorities dominate, to achieve a more balanced support for areas of policy dialogue in line with local priorities.

CSOs need to be proactive in identifying and communicating the important issues: For example, important governance, development, poverty and environmental issues should be championed by CSOs, and communicated more effectively (and more innovatively) to DPs.

DPs to support emerging CSOs with new ideas: In addition to support provided to CSOs with a track record, support should be provided to those promoting alternative ideas, playing watchdog roles and raising critical voices.

More appropriate expectations of CS engagement in policy dialogue and improved monitoring and evaluation

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices, and CSO umbrella organisations and networks
In relation to the measurement of process and outcome indicators of DP support, it is recommended that DPs (working with CSOs) develop monitoring assessments that:

- Identify and use outcome and results indicators which measure a vibrant CS and the CSO contribution to this (to satisfy the claim that a strong CS is an '*end in itself*').
- Develop good-quality process tracking tools which CSOs can use to demonstrate their direct contributions to policy dialogue which are both public and behind the scenes.
- Draw up and disseminate standards of good practice for measuring changes including standards for quantifiable perception studies as well as for qualitative evaluations.

- Develop good documentation (knowledge management) within CSOs and DPs using web/cloud-based storage systems.

It is recommended that evidence of change is reported and publicised in ways which are appropriate to this type of investment, e.g. where there is public trust in the core competence of any particular CSO, it may be sufficient for it to provide annual audited reports and short narratives of its activities and contributions.

DPs should balance their predominant accountability to their own parliaments and public with accountability to those of the country they support. Information about their funding decisions and how they assess achievement should be made publicly accessible. DPs should explain and justify their support particularly in the sensitive area of policy dialogue.

Likewise, CSOs need to balance their predominant accountability to the DPs with improved accountability to their own constituency (if they have one) and the public at large.

Recommendations for both DPs and national Governments

DPs and national Governments to be more proactive in influencing the enabling environment for policy dialogue

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices, and relevant government departments providing coordinating or regulatory framework for CSOs
DPs, in dialogue with national Governments to encourage enhancements of the enabling environment more generally including the CSO **regulatory environment**, and the adoption of general **democratic principles** systematically across all sectors, specifically to include:

- *Invited spaces:* directly promote the establishment of *invited spaces* for CS and CSO engagement as a matter of principle in all sectors. These include consultation spaces within development programmes (e.g. planning, annual reviews), in statutory oversight bodies, parliamentary standing committees, commissions (e.g. for human rights, information etc.) and local-level planning and budget review meetings.

- *Continuous monitoring:* Ensure continuous monitoring of the actors and processes of engagement within these spaces with built in opportunities for adjustments.

- *Actions to enhance freedom of speech and access to information:* Through legislative change and compliance with legislation.

- *Provide support to regulatory bodies:* provision of direct support to government CSO regulatory bodies so that they transform into institutions which promote and encourage rather than control and restrict third-sector participation.

- *Make resources available for contemporary platforms for engagement:* e.g. training and exposure to contemporary platforms including: e-governance, productive use of social network and other internet-based forms of CS-State interface.

Recommendations for DPs

Carry out regular contextual and political economy analyses at country level to provide the basis for a systems approach for action

Targeted at: Joint DP forums, policy makers
A country level contextual and political economy analysis should be undertaken at least every five years by **independent research organisations** and are jointly commissioned. The analyses would aim to identify the range of CS action including emerging CS actors and provide a basis for more nuanced **systems** approach for action by CSOs, and support by DPs.

Identify new funding instruments and modalities

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, finance departments, DP Country Offices
DPs should undertake a more radical re-think of funding approaches, engaging CSOs and INGOs in this process. The recommended political economy study will inform this process, but the needs are likely to include small funds, unrestricted funds, flexible and agile response funds, funds for processes and funds which support the *right to initiative*.[1] It is recommended that new funding modalities focus on three types of need:

1. *Long-term support:* DPs funding arrangements which take on a longer-term perspective in order to achieve sustained behaviour change outcomes. Core funding to trusted CSOs should be continued (and expanded where appropriate) for long-term advocacy support.

2. *Specific targeted support:* Funding modalities which are designed to support well-orchestrated action around a single legislative objective e.g. Domestic Violence Act in Mozambique, Right to Information Act in Bangladesh (policy change outcomes).

3. *Opportunistic right moments:* Funding which can be mobilised quickly to respond to seizing 'right moments' to raise issues in the public domain or influence decision makers and these are rarely predictable.

Support for (1) and (2) may be provided through 'project type' funding and is likely to be a mix of support to *invited* and *claimed spaces*. It is recommended that DPs agree to accept that these funding arrangements even though they may incur higher costs.

1 I.e. the right for CSOs to identify their agenda and modus operandi independently of DP policy, priorities and strategy.

Provide funds for public access resources, events and processes

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, finance departments, DP Country Offices
Resources for All: It is recommended that the new funding modalities also address the issue of support to organisations, movements and spontaneous activism which cannot (or prefer not to) be registered but which contributes importantly to policy dialogue to enable (1) off-setting the closure of many small fund windows; (2) provision of resources for local agenda, 'risky' actors and issues; and (3) support to a wider range of CS action including small episodic actions which increasingly prevail.

Specifically it is recommended that DPs examine the potential for the *Resources for All* (or public access to resources approach which are primarily web-based). Such information might include advice about organising action, lobbying, or running campaigns. It side-steps the issue of meeting funding eligibility criteria and has the potential for providing a more '*level playing field*' for a diverse range of CS actors.

Enhanced support to independent media and independent journalism

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices
It is recommended that DPs provide an enhanced level of support to the media, building on DPs recognition of their key role in policy dialogue and the use CS can make of this channel of communication. This would augment the support some DPs have provided in journalism training, commissioning media coverage of issues, supporting TV chat shows and debate.

Fundamental is the regulatory framework within for the media. The cases show that this is often under threat of increasing state controls. DP support, both in terms of finance and voice, to protect the independence of the media is critical.

Invest in CSO capacity building

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices
DP support should devote more resources to empower CSO *capacity to engage in policy dialogue*, with a change made to budget directives, so that capacity-building allocations are not linked to a formulaic percentage of total investment (CS programmes being often relatively resource light). The recommendation here includes the need for a major shift in the approach, which would address the importance of up-grading these skills and capacities by investing in capacity building and equipping for *21st century advocacy* (e.g. state-of-the-art computers, internet, mobile telephone and other technological innovations which facilitate information gathering and real-time monitoring of policy dialogue and practice).

Advice could be channelled through a 'Resources for All' window, but also by encouraging interaction between CSOs in developed and developing countries, (e.g. placements of young professionals, exchange visits, mentor arrangements etc.). It is also recommended that volunteers and interns from DP countries under various existing schemes, including corporate social responsibility initiatives, bring their technological expertise to CSO as well as broker effective technical assistance linkages between CSOs in the DP's country, and CSOs in partner countries.

Invest in building capacity among DP staff, particularly in Country Offices

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices
Improved DP staff with CS engagement experience: It is recommended that DP staff, in particular those in country offices improve their knowledge management in CS engagement processes through appropriately-designed immersions and in-country orientations.

Reduce Staff turnover: Turnover of staff should be reduced, and where new staff are engaged, sufficient time should be provided for hand-over among colleagues.

DP staff, CSO and INGOs to be better connected to the grass roots: And to people living in poverty particularly as the pace of change is accelerating.

Recommendations for CSOs

(A) Operational recommendations

Targeted at: CSO/NGO forums, individual CSOs
CSOs to continue and expand their programmes to educate citizens
It is recommended that CSOs continue and expand their support programmes of educating citizens. This should focus on the need to promote in the young a sense of community responsibility and an awareness of the role CS can play in society, and in this context in particular how it can influence policy.

CSOs to make more use of social media
It is recommended that CSOs actively plan on how best to make most effective use of this technology which is fast penetrating even remote and poor regions and communities. The role of DP support in this instance is seen as one of facilitating strategic thinking among CSOs and their constituents by provide funding for research, workshops and strategy development with follow-up funding of pilot projects resulting from this process.

Improve evidence gathering and research
It is recommended that CSOs seek support to develop skills to commission, use, and critique research studies, and build the evidence case to support informed engagement in policy dialogue. Additionally this support will enhance the credibility and respect granted to CSOs and in turn improve their effectiveness in influencing change.

(B) Organisational and governance recommendations

Targeted at: CSO/NGO forums, CSO/NGO networks (national and international)
Empower CS at grass roots level to take action themselves
It is recommended that CSOs facilitate the process of empowering CS organisations at grass roots level and groups most directly affected by government policy (or perhaps lack of it). This implies supporting the empowerment of the local representatives of the constituents, and follows a radical shift in the strategic thinking of some CSOs. Thus, this approach draws on local motivation and commitment to change and builds capacity to ensure local compliance when new laws and policies are made.

Develop effective strategic alliances
CSOs should develop strategic alliances to harness the range of skills needed for effective policy dialogue and create a critical mass for change. The range of possible alliances includes research bodies, lawyers, media as well as diversity of CSOs including unconventional partners.

In parallel, much can be achieved for national CSOs from greater connection with international CSOs such as Open Forum and BetterAid Forum. Keeping up-to-date with the provisions they have negotiated for DP-CSO relationships will allow for closer monitoring of these at ground level (where translation into practice often lags or becomes distorted).

CSOs to build public confidence in their policy engagement work
Adopt Quality Assurance Standards: CSOs should promote the wider use of codes of practice and Quality Assurance standards as ways to build public confidence in their organisations. The CSO community needs to ensure that its public image is maintained and that the highest levels of transparency and accountability are upheld not only as individual organisations but collectively.

It is also recommended that CSOs:

- Demonstrate the importance of public consultation *themselves*;
- continuously remind Governments to listen to the diverse demands of citizens;
- publicly stand up against abuses of freedoms of speech and association;
- find ways to include political parties (as distinct from Governments) as integral parts of CS in policy dialogue processes; and
- promote the integrity and relevance of the CSO community by encouraging transparency, insisting on public disclosure of financial accounts, adherence to codes of conduct and other means to build public trust in these institutions.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the synthesis report

The 'Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue' was initiated by the Donor Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness as part of a wider process of seeking to strengthen the cooperation and knowledge sharing among Development Partners (DPs) in the area of civil society (CS) support. Specifically it has been commissioned by three DPs (ADC/Austria, Danida/Denmark and Sida/Sweden) which form the Management Group on behalf of a larger group of bilateral DPs, who support the evaluation through their participation in an international Reference Group.[2] This evaluation commenced in May 2011 and was concluded with a final Synthesis Report and three Country Reports in October 2012. Its importance relates not so much to the publication of this report *per se*, but to the extent to which the findings inform and influence DPs, CSOs and indeed country Government strategies in enhancing effectiveness of CSO engagement in policy dialogue. The DPs at headquarters (HQs) and at country level have already begun a process to take this forward.

This evaluation has gone through a number of stages, with this document, the Synthesis Report on the evaluation of DP support to civil society (CS) engagement in policy dialogue being the final reporting stage. It draws on the findings of country studies carried out in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda which examined nine 'policy process' case studies. The Synthesis Report also draws on a wider body of information in the public sphere, including publications from the Open Forum process on CSO Development Effectiveness[3] which provide additional contemporary views and perspectives.

1.2 Background and context

"Millions of civil society organisations (CSOs) worldwide contribute in unique and essential ways to development as innovative agents of change and social transformation." [4]

While the involvement of CS in policy dialogue has a long history particularly in relation to social movements, this role is being increasingly encouraged by DPs. A strong CS actively engaging with the state is now widely regarded as an end in itself and a public good leading to better democratic practice and outcomes. This position was furthered by the endorsement of the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) in 2008 by Heads of multi- and bilateral development institutions and Development Ministers with the intention '*to accelerate and deepen the implementation of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005)*'.[5] It heralds an important milestone for recognition of the role of CS and CSOs

2 The international Reference Group comprises the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland, Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), and the six Embassies in the three countries, as well as Open Forum and BetterAid.

3 The Open Forum for CSO effectiveness is a global, fully participatory space run by and for CSOs worldwide to improve on their impact on development work and to advocate for more favourable Government policies and practices for CSOs.

4 Introduction; The Siem Reap CSO consensus on the international framework for development effectiveness; Open Forum for Development Effectiveness, June 2011.

5 http://siteresources.worldbank.org/ACCRAEXT/Resources/4700790-1217425866038/AAA-4-SEPTEMBER-FINAL-16h00.pdf.

in aid effectiveness. In relation to the promotion of participatory policy dialogue, it pledges that '*Donors will support efforts to increase the capacity of all development actors –parliaments, central and local governments, civil society organisations (CSOs), research institutes, media and the private sector – to take an active role in dialogue on development policy and on the role of aid in contributing to countries' development objectives*' (Section 13.b). The Agenda also promises to deepen engagement with CSOs as '*independent actors in their own right, whose efforts complement those of Governments and the private sector*' (Section 20).

Box 1.1 CSOs and Poverty Reducing Growth

"At the level of national development performance .... evidence shows that the synergy between a strong state and a strong society is one of the keys to sustained, poverty reducing growth, because networks of intermediary associations act as a counterweight to vested interests, promote institutional accountability among states and markets, channel information to decision-makers on what is happening at the 'sharp end' and negotiate the social contracts between Governments and citizens that development requires.."[6]

While various authors[7] have addressed the effectiveness of CSOs as change agents in policy processes, there continues to be a demand for field level information on the results of CSO work, their contribution to change and on policy outcomes. There is also little known about how political will, critical to positive change, is generated and sustained. The central aim of this independent evaluation therefore is to share knowledge on the current state and the potential for future support of CS engagement in policy dialogue. The DPs sponsoring this evaluation are already committed supporters of CSO as actors in the development process (see Chapter 6; Development partners' support to CSOs).

1.3 Purpose of the evaluation

The overall purpose of this evaluation is *lesson learning*, to help DPs to gain a better understanding of how best to support CSOs in the area of policy dialogue. This involves a focus on:

1. How CSOs engage in policy dialogue and the relevance and effectiveness of their policy work,

2. the enabling environment, that is on the enablers and barriers to CSO engagement; and

3. how different DP support strategies may influence CSOs' ability to engage in policy dialogue[8] and how DPs might best support CSO policy dialogue in the future.

6 Michael Edwards, Civil Society, page 13, 2004.
7 For example: Does foreign aid really work; Roger C. Riddell, Oxford University Press, 2007.
8 Tender document: 8 Appendix A: Scope of Services (Terms of Reference), pp. 40-66.

The evaluation '*seeks to increase the conceptual understanding of civil society and Government interaction in different contexts and circumstances*' (Terms of Reference (ToR) 2.2.) as well as evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different DPs strategies in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

However, this study is not a conventional 'evaluation' but an opportunity to learn lessons from DP support strategies on CSOs engagement in policy dialogue and to generate new knowledge from the analysis of the range of 'policy process' case studies in the three selected countries. Thus, as suggested by the ToR the first purpose resembles more of an evaluation (Chapter 6), and the second, is seen as more of a study aiming to increase the conceptual understanding of CS and Government interaction in different contexts and circumstances and not necessarily related to DP support (Chapters 3 to 5).

The abbreviated ToR for the evaluation is given as Annex A. While the ToR remains the reference point for the work, this evaluation has followed a process approach with full and extensive consultation with the Management Group, Reference Group and other stakeholders at key stages throughout the evaluation. The various supporting documents and reports prepared, e.g. the Inception Report, the three Scoping Study Reports (one for each country) and the sub-ToR drawn up for each country report, ahead of the detailed fieldwork stage, coupled with detailed comments and further guidance from the DP Management Group provide a record of the refinements and changes in emphasis that have been introduced during the course of the evaluation. The intended users were identified in the ToR primarily as the CSO departments of the participating DPs (embassy staff, programme officers and advisors working directly with CSO support) at headquarter and country level, with secondary users being CSOs and Governments in the three countries covered by the evaluation, as well as the wider development community. It has become increasingly apparent that the findings, in particular the findings of the Country Studies will have direct relevance to CSOs in the three countries concerned, as well as their Governments, and that in terms of the use and application of the findings, the DP geographic/country programme officers and policy advisors are also potential users. The International NGO (INGO) community platforms have indicated that they can play an important role in the wider distribution and dissemination of the lessons learnt and the recommendations made.

1.4 Terms and definitions

In order to provide a level of consistency across the various reports written in three countries, the key terms and definitions central to this evaluation have been defined drawing both on the evaluation ToR and on the team's evolving understanding of the terms based on the experience and findings of the evaluation:

Civil Society: Although a vibrant CS is regarded as an essential feature in the democratic life of countries across the globe,[9] its definition still remains contested and variously defined. It is usually regarded as the third sector distinct from Government and business.[10] As such it comprises a range of individual and associational activity which may be formal or informal, transient or long term, collaborative or confrontational.

9 The Siem Reap CSO Consensus on International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness, June 2011.

10 What is Civil Society? civilsoc.org.

Civil Society Organisations are defined as:

All non-market and non-state organisations outside of the family in which people organise themselves to pursue shared interests in the public domain. They include a wide range of organisations that include membership-based CSOs, cause-based CSOs and service oriented CSOs. Examples include community-based organisations and village organisations, environmental groups, women's rights groups, farmers associations, faith-based organisations, labour unions, cooperatives, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes and the not-for-profit media'. [11]

Non-Government Organisation (NGO): There is no generally accepted definition for an NGO and the term is not used consistently. As the term civil society organisation has become more utilised in development circles there is a growing tendency to define CS broadly (see definition above) to include the whole range of formal and informal, transient, temporary and long term organisations and associations operating in the space between family, state and market and to refer to development NGOs as a subset of this. NGOs are legally constituted organisations which are registered and regulated under the relevant Government laws and controls. They may be national or international in scope and in the development sector context have come to mean those which employ staff to implement projects and programmes under a non-profit aegis. Throughout this evaluation we have used the term NGO in this way (i.e. development NGO) when required to distinguish these from the other kinds of CSO. While in some countries Professional Associations, Trade Unions, social movements, pressure and lobbying groups, youth clubs etc. may have to register as NGOs in order to acquire legal status, they often do not regard themselves as such and prefer to be classified as CSOs.

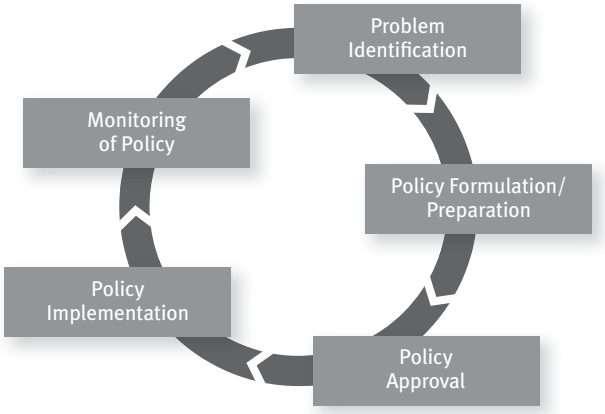
Policy dialogue is defined in the AAA (Section 13) as '*open and inclusive dialogue on development policies*'. The Agenda further states that '*Developing country Governments will work more closely with parliaments and local authorities in* ***preparing, implementing*** *and* ***monitoring*** *national development policies and plans. They will also engage with CSOs.*' *(13.a)* and thereby making explicit that policy dialogue includes all these elements.

Development Partners: The term 'Development Partner' has been used throughout this report (abbreviated to DP), to mean the donor agencies involved in this joint evaluation as well as other aid agency donors when specifically referred to. On the other hand, while recognising that INGOs do themselves perform the role of donors and do often refer to their organisations as 'development partners', for the purpose of this report, the term DP does not include INGOs. It is noted, the report does also use the terms 'donors' in some instances to refer to the development agencies in general, without specific reference to the DPs which are the focus of this evaluation.

Policy Cycle: The following diagram clarifies the cyclical nature of this process and for the purpose of this study with **CS engagement** understood to occur at each of the five key stages (see Figure 1.1).

11 Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, Findings Recommendations and Good Practice, 2009, 'BetterAid' series on aid effectiveness, OECD.

Figure 1.1 Policy Cycle: showing possible entry points for engagement



In the context of this evaluation, policy dialogue is understood as a way of influencing policy processes. In order to conceptualise this process, the evaluation made use of the Policy Cycle Tool as given in Figure 1.1 to analyse for the different policy processes the importance and effectiveness of policy dialogue engagement at the different policy cycle stages. This is further explained in Annex B where the full text of the Conceptual Framework is given.[12]

Invited or claimed spaces for policy dialogue: CS engagement may take place in invited or *claimed spaces.*[13] Spaces are areas where interaction/engagement and where information exchange and negotiation can occur. They are spaces of contestation as well as collaboration.[14] *Invited space* includes provided space (sometimes referred to as **closed** space if it is strictly controlled) such as official parliamentary consultations as well as more open *invited space* such as public consultations. *Invited space* is often described as controlled '*from above*'. Claimed space, on the other hand, refers to space which CS creates for itself (or '*from below*'), for example through lobbying, campaigning, education, public interest litigation among others. All three spaces for CS engagement can operate anywhere in the policy cycle but are all expected to result in influencing Government. The intention, when supported by DPs, is for resultant policies to be inclusive and equitable and for Governments to become more accountable and transparent to their citizens (i.e. for the common good).[15]

CSO effectiveness emphasises the effectiveness of CSOs as development actors.[16] In terms of policy dialogue it refers to the effectiveness of the processes adopted and outcomes achieved by CSOs in raising the voice of citizens to influence Government action and to hold Government to account. The evaluation also recognises that beyond the organised action of CSOs, a range of informal actions, which may be individual

12 Evaluation of CS engagement in policy dialogue – conceptual framework to guide case study approach and analysis (paper prepared during scoping study phase).

13 Gaventa, J, 2005 *Reflections of the Uses of the Power Cube approach for analysing the spaces, places and dynamics of CS participation and engagement*'. CFP Evaluation Series no 4.

14 Cornwall, A and V. S.P Coelho Spaces for change? *The Politics of Participation in New Democratic Arenas*, 2007.

15 Of course not all CSOs work for the common good, and the recommendations section addresses the issue of maintenance of standards of CSOs and Quality Assurance.

16 See OECD 2010, Civil society effectiveness.

or perhaps spontaneous,[17] must be factored into consideration in terms of the of the overall impact of CS on policy dialogue. It is well known that social media has transformed the ability of CS actors to communicate and to rapidly mobilise civil action.

DPs support for CS engagement in policy dialogue, as detailed in the ToR for this evaluation, refers here to the **channel** of support (direct, through intermediaries, through budget and sector support) and **type** of support (core funding, contractual, project support (both targeted and untargeted) as well as non-financial support such as influencing space for policy dialogue). The focus is on the support provided by DPs to the Partner Countries (i.e. with special, but not exclusive, reference in this case to Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda).

17 CIVICUS notes that action and engagement can take place '*within a neighbourhood or faith based community, online using social media or as a part of spontaneous protest, but is not directly associated with, or behalf of, a formal organisation*' Broadening civic space through voluntary action: Lessons from 2011, CIVICUS.

2 Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The overall methodology and approach has been guided by the ToR, with the detailed development of the methodology being informed by a 'Conceptual Framework' document (see Annex B) devised by the team during the inception/scoping study phase. This framework identified the key concepts which in turn were used to design the case study field work methodology, including the selection of policy process case studies in each of the three countries. It also described the range of tools to be used by the team during the data collection and information and analysis stages, and the potential sources of information (document types and key respondents/stakeholders to be contacted).

The Conceptual Framework in particular challenged the teams to develop an ex-ante 'theory of change' (ToC) of CSO involvement in policy dialogue, with the aim that the teams might better focus the enquiry, identify appropriate indicators (and key questions) and measure outcomes applying the ToC. See Section 2.5 for a view on role of the ToC as a tool for understanding the relationship between the development of a strategy for influencing policy and intended outcomes.

The methodology for the evaluation, with the main focus being **the effectiveness of CSOs in policy dialogue and the outcomes achieved,** was organised around a study of the following key themes:

- **Enabling environment:**[18] What are the enablers and barriers to CSO engagement (at country level) – and how could they be addressed?

- **CSO effectiveness:** What are the ways in which CSO engagement in (country) policy dialogue is most effective – and what does this mean for how this can be facilitated in the future?[19]

- **What outcomes can be identified from engagement in policy dialogue** – and what have been the factors contributing to them?

- **DP policies and strategies:** How can DPs most effectively support and facilitate (directly and indirectly) increased CS engagement at country level?

These key themes are further elaborated as specific evaluation questions as set out in the Evaluation Framework (see Annex C for further details).

2.2 Methodological overview

The evaluation design provided for three interlinked phases, with each of the first two phases informing the content, scope and shape of subsequent activities. Within the frame of the overall ToR, the work evolved as lessons were learnt at each stage with opportuni-

18 The term 'enabling environment refers to both positive (enabling) and negative (hindering) factors.

19 The term "CSO effectiveness" emphasises the effectiveness of CSOs as development actors (see OECD 2010, Civil Society Effectiveness).

ties at each stage for consultation with stakeholders and informal and formal interaction with the DP Management Group.

The objectives, timing and outputs of the Inception period (Phase 1), which included a separate Scoping Study in each of the three countries including recommendations for the selection of the 'policy process' case studies; the detailed field work stage in the three Countries evaluating the selected 'policy process' case studies (Phase 2), and the Synthesis of Results (Phase 3) including a presentation to the DP Management Group, are given in the Table 1 in Annex C:

Selection of Case Study countries
Selecting appropriate case study countries was always going to be a difficult task. However, based on criteria of (i) the scope of CSO support from the commissioning DPs, (ii) different enabling environments and cultural contexts, and (iii) location of previous CSO evaluations, Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda were selected as case study countries (see Annex A, Section 3.2).

Selection of policy process case studies
Phase 2 case studies (policy processes) were selected through consultative processes in country (with final approval being given by the DP Management Group) with the following criteria in mind:

- **Range of CSOs** involved (to understand the diversity of CSOs and to ensure at least some of those policy processes finally selected would include 'less usual' CSOs such as Trade Unions, faith-based groups, professional associations and diaspora groups).

- **Range of CS action** (to review the diversity of action from formal to informal (invited and claimed) so that this range could be captured in at least some of the case studies).

- The **level** at which CS action takes place (to ensure that at least some of the case studies included local, national and international experience and which involved action outside the capital).

- **Types of funding modalities** (to be able to choose at least some case studies which would allow review of the benefits and constraints of different modes of funding).

- Inclusion of CSOs currently funded by the DP reference group.

- The **relevance** of the policy process (to people living in poverty and to the particular country context) i.e. policy processes which are of key importance to development and where CSOs have played a role.

- **Effectiveness** of the policy process (outcomes achieved bearing in mind that much could also be learned from mixed or poor achievements).

- Availability of **documentation** on the policy process.

Further information on the case study selection process is given in the three Scoping Studies[20] for each country. It is important to note that the cases were selected to help identify lessons learned regarding CS effectiveness in policy dialogue within the policy themes as a whole rather than to examine the specific support of the commissioning DPs. The lessons learned therefore cut across all forms of support and cannot be attributed to specific DP action. While the broader findings, lessons learnt and the conclusions drawn do relate to the situation prevailing in the country generally on some aspects there is inevitably an element of country specificity. For example, on the question of the relevance of the policy process, all nine policy processes were identified by participants in the selection workshops as being relevant to people living in poverty.[21] However, the concept and importance of relevance in the support process is not universally shared as explained in detail in Chapter 5 on CSO strategy. It is also important to note that in the sections on CSO effectiveness and on policy outcomes, the findings cannot be simply extrapolated to the effectiveness of CSOs or to the achievement of policy outcomes more generally. For example, in Bangladesh, one of the policy processes (on Food Security) while potentially highly relevant to poverty alleviation, has been largely side-lined by the CSO community with little or no policy dialogue taking place. It was selected primarily to explore the factors underlying this situation. Thus each of the case studies exhibits different aspects of relevance, effectiveness and policy outcomes. The findings we believe are highly relevant to the understanding of the processes involved and to learning lessons on how best to support CSOs in the future, which provide a more holistic understanding of the collective and diverse roles played (see Box 2.1), with the findings on effectiveness and outcomes being interpreted with the knowledge of the selection bias in mind.

Box 2.1 Assessing Policy Processes provides a more holistic understanding of CSO engagement

Unlike the earlier Development Assistance Committee (DAC) commissioned Evaluation of Citizens Voice and Accountability (2008), which focused on particular interventions, this study looked at policy processes which provided a more holistic understanding of the collective and diverse roles played by different actors within a particular process. The selection of policy processes for the case studies involved a careful consultative procedure in each of the three countries based on the relevance of the policy process for the country and development partners as well as diversity of CS action involved in order to provide the best possible basis for learning lessons as detailed.

List of selected policy process case studies

Bangladesh

1. **Primary education** with particular focus on the Education Policy 2010 and the development and implementation of the Primary Education Sector-wide Approach (Primary Education Development Programme III, (PEDP III, 2011-16).

20 The Scoping Studies for Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda can be requested from Danida's Evaluation Department by writing to eval@um.dk.

21 The relevance question in this instance is concerned as to whether the development activities (or in this case the policy processes being followed by the CSO/s) are directed towards areas accorded high priority by the affected parties. See Danida Evaluation Guidelines, Chapter 4, page 49, November 2006.

2. **Local government** with a focus on the policy and practice of public participation and the role of NGOs and CSOs including Local Government Associations (comprising representatives of the LGs).

3. **Minority rights,** with a particular focus on Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) appropriation of land issues.

4. **Food security** (a mini case study) in relation to CSO engagement on a range of food security issues.

Mozambique

5. **District planning and budget monitoring,** with focus on role of CSOs at central and local level in the process.

6. **Legislation on domestic violence** which assesses the role of CSOs in influencing policy spanning over two decades.

Uganda

7. **Governance and accountability,** focused on Anti-Corruption, with Education and Health as the key entry points.

8. **Gender responsive legislation** within the Justice Law and Order Sector.

9. **Forest management and governance,** with a focus on the Mabira Forest case study.

2.3 Methodological approach and tools used

The methodology and approach for this evaluation is described in the ToR and comprises a mapping process focusing on the country context for the three selected countries, conceptualisation of policy dialogue and information gathering on the key evaluation questions in preparation for the second phase of detailed case study analysis. While this evaluation has been described as a mix of a classical evaluation and a study (ToR, Section 2.2), the approach used has nevertheless drawn on the OECD/DAC guidelines for evaluating development assistance as well as Danida's Evaluation Guidelines including the section on evaluations of modes of assistance. The main elements of the approach in both the initial scoping phase and the main case study phase included:

Document review (including context analysis, international CS documents etc.): A wide range of documents were provided by the DP Management Group at the outset of the evaluation, during the scoping studies in country and in particularly during the detailed analysis of the policy process case studies, CSOs provided all the necessary documents needed to support and augment the information obtained through interviews and workshops. Government websites in Uganda and Bangladesh were also a rich source of information proving for example policy statements and government planning documents. Open Forum and BetterAid provided documentation at the latter stages of the evaluation which helped in gaining a global perspective of the issues. CS blogs, websites and news media also provided an important source of information on engagement.

Consultations with CS, DP and government representatives: These took place through interviews, workshops, online surveys and direct observation of informal and formal engagement processes. Initially CSO mapping was undertaken in each of the three countries and stakeholders to identify the actors involved in the selected policy processes, and a list of stakeholders drawn up, contacted and interviewed either individually or in small focus groups, both during the scoping study and main case study phases.

Using interview topic guidelines these consultations provided the primary source of information. Interviews were held both in the capitals, as well as in selected field areas with field staff, community stakeholders and CSOs working at community level. In Bangladesh **appreciative enquiry** principles were used in interviews and focus group discussions in order to better establish achievements and success in the different policy processes. This helped participants recognise that change had happened even in some cases where external factors seemed to be insurmountable hindrances and where there were high levels of frustration at the lack of progress. In Uganda the interviewees (typically senior members of advocacy or research organisations) being experts in their field were well aware of the challenges they faced, so that an appreciative enquiry approach was not thought necessary. In Mozambique where problems with logistics and some team changes occurred, it was not a practical option in the time available.

Overall, CSO key informants who accounted for the majority of interviews were particularly open and responsive. In Uganda and Bangladesh, government representatives in technical departments (both at central and local level) were also very forthcoming, while at the same time often critical of their own government policies and programmes. Government interviewees in Mozambique on the other hand, were more reserved (reflecting the caution of those whose livelihoods depend on their employment with the Government).

A small number of politicians were interviewed, and their observations on both the political process and CSO engagement provided a unique perspective on CSOs' role in policy processes. In Bangladesh it was possible to run a number of focus group sessions on different topics. In Uganda and Mozambique, while focus group meetings were held (e.g. with the media representatives in Uganda), CSO respondents could not commit the time to engage both in interviews and focus groups.

Evaluation tools: During the various stages of the evaluation, the teams made use of a number of tools to facilitate the data gathering and analysis processes. These included Gaventa's power cube, which was successfully applied in Bangladesh with key informants, while in Uganda and Mozambique it was primarily used in team discussions; the policy dialogue cycle and the ToC, which are further described in the Conceptual Framework paper given as Annex C and in Section 2.6 below with specific reference to the Synthesis Report.

The Conceptual Framework which was elaborated as a guide to the main case study phase played an important role in ensuring a level of consistency across the three country evaluations. It was used by each of the country teams during their preparation for the country study, both to ensure all team members were fully cognisant of the key study concepts and their principles as well as to provide a guide to preparing the detailed interview programme. At the same time, it was not a blueprint, for while the detailed processes and steps set out in the framework provided a good starting point at the planning stage, the steps were modified in each country according to the experience and local knowledge of the team leader.

Workshops: All three country studies organised workshops as a key feature of the process. In Bangladesh two data-gathering workshops were held at an early stage, one with media representatives and another at local level with community leaders and local government officials. Towards the end of the assignment, two 'reflection and findings' workshops took place, the first with CSO representatives from the different policy theme areas, and the second with commissioning donor representatives.

In Uganda the original intention was to hold a validation workshop at the end of the field phase to test and debate the findings of the team using CSO representatives not involved in the evaluation in a form of a CSO peer review. However, because of the practical problems of identifying 'independent' CSO representatives it was not seen as useful. Instead the workshop provided an opportunity for CSO, DP and government representatives to jointly review the preliminary findings. In Mozambique two verification workshops to validate preliminary findings were conducted. All the in-country workshops were characterised by lively and committed engagement by participants.

Global workshop to review findings across three countries: With the country studies completed and the draft country reports circulated, the evaluation team organised a global workshop in Kampala in May 2012 with the two-fold aim of:

- Key stakeholders and resource persons **exchanging experience and lessons learned** based on presentation and discussion of the three country case study reports; and

- **providing input to the synthesis stage of the evaluation** based on emerging findings and recommendations, as an input to international discussions on future support to CSOs in policy dialogue work.

Run over two days it provided the first opportunity for an inclusive participation of DP Management Group, the evaluation team leaders, CSO and government representatives of all three participating countries as well as representatives of the wider reference group from Open Forum and BetterAid. It was regarded as an essential stage in the evaluation process, providing a platform for disseminating the purpose and aims of the evaluation to a wide audience, giving further legitimacy to the country findings through the engagement of representative of the key parties, as well as preparing the ground for the synthesis reporting stage.[22]

Review of development partner strategies and financing mechanisms: A review of DP support was conducted in each of the three countries covered by the evaluation based on interviews with DP representatives at the embassies concerned, Head Office meetings, an online web survey and a document review.

Deliverables and joint review reporting mechanisms
The evaluation contract required the team to provide a number of specific reports:

- Inception Report (one for the study as a whole).

- Scoping Study Reports (one for each country).

22 The proceedings, main findings and copies of slide presentations are given in: Proceedings of Kampala workshop 230512, ITAD 2012.

- Country Reports (one for each country) focusing on the findings from the 'policy process' case studies to be published as separate documents in addition to the Synthesis Report.

- Synthesis Report, drawing on the findings of the three country reports, the global workshop as well as a wider body of information on CSO engagement in the public sphere.

Presentation of overall findings in September 2012
The three members of the DP Management Group organised a round of consultative meetings/presentations at HQ level in Copenhagen, Vienna and Stockholm with the main objective of disseminating the emerging findings of the evaluation at a stage when discussion among stakeholders could still be incorporated into the final report. At the meetings, the evaluation team leader and the three country team leaders presented, discussed and responded to comments and views. In particular the workshops provided an opportunity for the INGO community, HQ staff, academics and representatives of the private sector to add to the shaping and content of the final version of the Synthesis Report.

2.4 Evaluation and attribution

Establishing attribution is one of the most challenging elements of any study on policy influencing. Policy and practice change is a result of highly complex interacting forces and actors (as illustrated by the ToC) with different constellations of actors engaging and disengaging, working and interacting over long periods of time, or perhaps exploiting moments of opportunity while undertaking a wide variety of activities and methods to influence change. Tipping points can be reached in a multitude of different ways. The following challenges in evaluation and establishing attribution are adapted and expanded from Jones (2011):[23]

- Non-linear nature of policy processes; complex, multifaceted processes which defy causality analysis (even when adopting the two-way model referred to in the Evaluation Inception Report, Figure 3).

- Plausible counter-factuals cannot be established.

- 'Outright success' rarely achieved as compromises made along the way.

- Policy influence particularly susceptible to hindering aspects of the context (e.g. lack of political will may result in legislation stalled or dropped).

- Success may be due to alliances, networks, coalitions so individual contributions may be subsumed.

- Policy change often requires long time frames (not captured in short time frame evaluations).

23 Jones, H, 2011 *A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Policy Influence*' ODI Background Note, February 2011.

- Weak capacity in CSOs involved in policy dialogue to record and track their influencing work.

- Influencing work is often unique, rarely repeated or replicated with disincentives for sharing good practice (if something works the strategy may be guarded).

- Policy makers unwilling to attribute their decisions to the influence of others.

The case studies of CSO engagement in policy processes, purposely attempt to capture the different elements contributing to change in policy and practice. This holistic approach helped to ensure that the multiplicity of actions and actors were taken into account to unpack their relative contributions. This understanding alerted the team to the need for cautious interpretation of reported success in interviews, project reports and evaluations of individual organisations.

As well as examining impact-level outcomes, the teams examined process outcomes as legitimate markers of achievement within the CSO community. These include creation of new or expanded participatory space and official platforms for CS engagement, behaviour and attitude change of service providers and duty bearers. While the sections on CSO strategies and contribution to policy outcomes in this report rely on documented evidence relating to policy change for example, the section on DP strategies could in part be described as a *perception study* as it relies to an extent on how southern CSOs perceive the actions of DPs. However, this section also includes a review of DP funding mechanisms derived from DP interviews and documents, coupled with views and perspectives of CSOs from interviews and the web survey results.

2.5 Limitations and challenges

The criteria for the selection of the case study policy processes included relevance to the development agenda, that it had substantial CSO involvement, that is was well documented and that it was prioritised by society and donors. On the other hand it did not include the criteria that it was actually supported or funded by donors. While this was a deliberate feature of the evaluation design (as given in the ToR) it can also been seen as a limitation as conclusions regarding returns on investment/value for money (VfM) could not be drawn. The evaluation of the case studies did not include an assessment of the funding channels supporting policy dialogue within the case studies. Indeed to have done so would have added a new and complex dimension to the evaluation. So while the absence of this information could be described as a limitation, to include it would have negatively impacted on the freedom and flow of the processes required to analyse CSO policy engagement.

A further limitation was that the process did not naturally lead to an assessment of the role of INGOs at the global level. The focus of discussion with local and international staff of INGOs was limited to the case study process in country and, not on the wider global role of the INGO. Interview questions could have been included to examine this relationship in more detail but the scoping studies led to the conclusion that little was known about the global environment among interviewees in case study countries. This signals a structural limitation in the operating environment which is picked up in the findings (e.g. national CSOs do not always know how to link globally and use these links

strategically). The evaluation thus relies on the inputs from the Kampala, Stockholm, Copenhagen and Vienna workshops to include the global perspective of INGOs.

At another level, the evaluation was inevitably limited in scope by practical considerations. While having the advantage of examining the complete cycle of policy dialogue and multiple stakeholder contributions it nevertheless was limited by selection of just a few policy processes.

The time horizon suggested in the ToR was policy dialogue in the last five years. While this provides information on CSOs currently active and in particular the 'movers and shakers' identified in the ToR (3.1) it may have constrained the need to view the long-term perspective of change. Many of the achievements have not resulted from recent engagement but from longer term 'drip-drip' actions as well as incremental changes in the enabling environment. This limitation has been mitigated somewhat by the fact that all the teams in the three countries comprise members with long-term experience of the country context and participation and CS action in particular. The challenges and constraints in each Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda are detailed in the respective country reports.

2.6 Understanding the Theory of Change in relation to CSO engagement in policy processes

A generic ToC for policy dialogue engagement
For the purpose of this synthesis report, a generic ToC attempts to address the link between the strategies employed by CSOs in influencing policy change and policy implementation. The ToC has been developed primarily by considering the context and enabling environment and working forward from strategy to outcomes. It would be equally possible to take a particular policy change and work backwards using the ToC logic in the model to examine what factors in addition to CSOs contributed to policy influence and change. A feature of the generic model is the attempt to identify 'entry points' where DPs or CSOs can effect changes and enhancements to their capacity and approaches. The model suggests that there are many actors and no one linear means to achieve the outcome, but rather a dynamic which requires a multiplicity of actors and actions. It highlights the very real problems of institutional change which result from a multiplicity of actions.

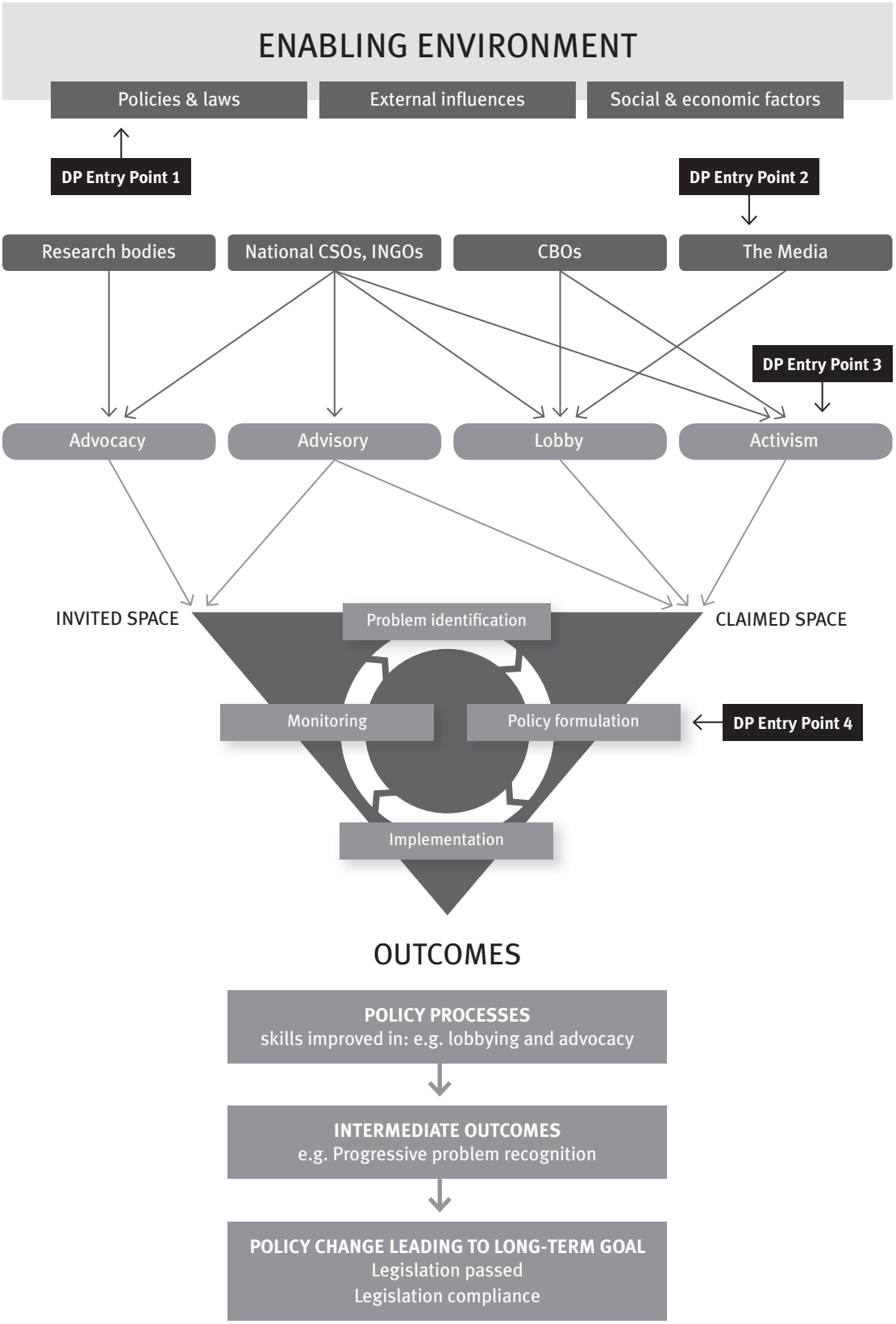
A Theory of Change explained
The model has been designed for use by CSOs and others stakeholders, as a 'working tool' for analysis of the change processes involved, so that they can modify or augment the key features of enabling environment, the CSO actors involved, the strategies used and the planned outcomes to suit their particular situation or policy area.

The ToC works from the outside top to the lower central section.

Enabling environment for policy dialogue: The outer section represents a complex array of constitutional provisions, laws, and social and political factors as well as external or international influences – defined here as the enabling environment.

The different CS actors (for example, research bodies, national CSOs, citizen groups, media etc.), with their different aims and interests operate in this environment.

Figure 2.1 Theory of Change model for CSO engagement in policy dialogue



CSO strategies (e.g. advocacy): Using a variety of strategies (represented here by four typical categories of engagement: advisory, advocacy, lobbying and activism) CSOs prepare for and use spaces for engagement (the inner triangle which identifies these as *invited* or *claimed spaces*).

Types of spaces: These spaces may be invited or claimed, then formal or informal, temporary or long term and provide the opportunity for a range of influencing actions to take place.

CSOs engage at different policy cycle stages: The actors (CSOs) enter these spaces at different times and using different strategies. These strategies are intended to impact on the inner circle (the policy cycle) through influencing new policy or policy amendments, or through monitoring implementation for compliance.

Outcomes of engagement: CSO actions within this multi-faceted, complex environment may contribute to change, defined as: Process outcomes (e.g. enhanced internal capacity); intermediate outcomes (e.g. a change in awareness by Government that a problem exists which needs addressing; Policy Change outcomes (e.g. legislation is passed) leading to achievement of long-terms goals which could contribute to an overall goal of reducing the number of people living in poverty.

Entry points: The model suggests that there are a number of possible entry points for supporting CSOs in the policy dialogue engagement process:

Entry point 1: working with Government to improve the enabling environment;

Entry point 2: building the capacity and organisational ability of CSOs and CSO networks through skill training, mentoring or through association with an international CSO partner;

Entry point 3: enhancing skills in engagement techniques such as advocacy and lobbying, and;

Entry point 4: DPs can help to create *invited spaces* and can influence Government to acknowledge *claimed spaces*.

The ToC and the Synthesis Report: the various components of the change model correspond to the flow of sections in this report, with the aim being that the ToC model can be linked to the analysis which follows.

3 Overview of the 'policy process' case studies

3.1 The country context (Bangladesh, Mozambique & Uganda)

All three countries selected for fieldwork have challenges in alleviating poverty and in provision of basic services to their citizens. Mozambique ranks as fifth lowest in the world in terms of its human development; Uganda 27th and Bangladesh 41st according to the United Nations (UN) 2010 Human Development Report. They share similar gross domestic products per capita (USD 418; USD 523 and USD 549 respectively in 2009). However, in other respects Bangladesh is quite different from the two African countries. The former has a total population estimated at 162 million in 2009. By contrast Uganda has a population of 32.7 million and Mozambique 22.9 million. Population density is a high; 1,126 persons per square kilometre in Bangladesh compared with 135 in Uganda and only 29 in Mozambique.[24] There are significant differences culturally between the Asian country and the two African countries. Each country's history and geo-political context has shaped its development and it relationship with CS and CSOs as described further below.

The historical context and CSO landscape
In each country particular political, Government, religious, legal and socio-economic environment and the earlier historical events which have shaped the country provide the backdrop and starting point for assessing CSO effectiveness in engagement in policy dialogue.

Bangladesh
Since the War of Independence in 1971, Bangladesh has experienced a mixed political history with periods of democracy, coups, martial law and interim caretaker Governments. The growth of the formal third sector can be traced back to the period immediately post-Independence when NGOs flourished in the drive to provide relief and support for reconstruction following the destruction caused by the war. A second boost was provided by the massive aid investment channelled through NGOs during Military Rule in the 1980s leading to a proliferation of mainly service-provision NGOs. It is widely reported that Bangladesh has more NGOs than any other country and this is mostly attributed to the donor-driven boom in the 1980s and early 1990s. Following the restoration of democracy in the early 1990s, funds were once more preferentially channelled to Government and NGOs were pressured to find ways to self-finance. This fuelled the mushrooming of micro-finance services and large numbers of NGOs engaged in this activity leaving only a handful of movements and membership organisations committed to mobilisation, empowerment and rights-based programmes. NGOs' own micro-finance activities continue to provide opportunities for substantial capital accumulation and cover operating costs, but development programmes, (some of which are very large indeed, e.g. BRAC (Building Resources Across Communities) receives USD 160 million annually) remain largely funded by DPs.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, new CSOs emerged and some old ones transformed to espouse the rights-based approach. The latter moved from service delivery to facilitating citizens to realise their rights and demand services, accountability and transparency from duty bearers. At this time a number of CSOs adopted a social movement mantle

24 UN data, country profile information.

and mobilised people to confront issues such as land rights, social justice and equality. Some of these were genuine people's movements (e.g. Samata, Nijera Kori) while others were basically NGOs working in a more facilitative way (e.g. the Rangpur Dinajpur Rural Service). The result was a surge in numbers of NGOs and social movements which seriously promoted participatory development and encouraged the empowerment of beneficiaries and members, who in turn began to access the political landscape in more informed ways through the exercise of franchise, as candidates in local government elections, members of health centre and school management committees and the shalish (local courts).

Today, the CSO landscape comprises:

1. Vast numbers of micro-finance and other service delivery NGOs operating from national to very local level in every district in Bangladesh. Smaller NGOs are contracted by larger NGOs or INGOs or Government to provide health and education or project-based services. These generally have little input into policy dialogue except through network organisations such as CAMPE (the network of non-Government primary education providers) and the Association of Land Reform and Development (ALRD).

2. A smaller number of NGOs at national and local level supporting rights-based approaches which have increasingly become involved in supporting local government reform and promoting civic engagement. These are supported directly or indirectly by a number of DPs active in local governance. As a result of their activity there is a growing number of local community-based organisations (CBOs) such as local watchdog committees (health, education and corruption in particular) and issue-based groups such as local Women Against Violence groups operating at local level. Some of this action is federated in order to have greater impact on policy dialogue. Some CBOs have been facilitated through Government initiatives e.g. school management committees, school-level implementation projects, community clinic management committees, farmer field schools etc.

3. A strong Trade Union movement which provides support to members across a wide range of employment but it often regarded as highly politicised and difficult to engage constructively. Bangladesh also has many professional associations, which like Trade Unions, are also often convened along partisan lines. Associations of journalists and members of the legal profession are arguably becoming less partisan and more vocal in championing development issues. Chambers of Commerce are very influential with the Government but are perceived to only engage around business issues.

4. An extremely small number of independent research bodies and Think Tanks which are continually called upon to produce position papers and evaluation studies. These depend on commissions for their survival which potentially compromises their independence and limits their agenda.

5. Various service clubs particularly in the capital and provincial towns. They mostly support service provision-type projects e.g. eye hospitals, special schools, but some are active and influential in policy dialogue.

6. A small amount of diaspora activity which is largely concerned with raising funds for service provision in Bangladesh but may be active in lobbying for change in international policy within their host countries and is occasionally engaged in internet-based activism.

7. Low-level national involvement in internet activism.

Mozambique
In Mozambique, the colonial history played a significant part in the early development of CSOs, with the State maintaining a significant influence on CSO activity today. Immediately after Independence in 1975, the ruling (one-party state) Frente de Libertacao de Mocambique (Frelimo) set up the so-called "democratic mass organisations".[25] The purpose of these organisations was to continue – albeit under different ideology – the patterns of supervision and control used under the Portuguese colonialism system under the cover of "Security of the State". In parallel, independent developments took place, some dating back to the colonial era; e.g. the establishment of the Christian Council of Mozambique (CCM),[26] Cáritas de Moçambique and the national peasants' union União Nacional dos Camponeses (UNAC).[27] These CSOs still survive and represent some of the genuine member-based CSOs in the country today.

The Mozambican CSO landscape has evolved since independence with three main kinds of CSOs being identified:[28]

- A small elite of individual and platform organisations, who participate and interact with state institutions. Based mainly in Maputo city, they are typically well-funded (having attracted the attention of donors) professional and with the capacity to mobilise funding. While they may be accountable to their members, many have no proper constituency, but act "on behalf of" certain groups and defend their causes, e.g. women's and/or children's rights.

- A significant group of organisations of medium size and with limited funds, with potential for policy engagement, but often with no clear expression or willingness to engage. Many of these organisations are demand- or opportunity-driven, i.e. in relation to the donor community's changing agendas (gender, HIV/AIDS, and most recently climate change). Often the main objective is service delivery (and employment), but also elements of advocacy and defence of specific rights issues are sometimes on their agenda. These organisations in many cases have no constituency and may simply be a vehicle for the leader to run his or her 'sole trader' organisation.[29]

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25 The so-called democratic mass organisations are OMM (women's organisation), OTM (workers' organisation) and OJM (youth organisation), as well as the two professional -interest organisations ONP (national teachers' organisation) and ONJ.

26 CCM was established already in 1948.ational journalists' organisation).

27 José Negrão: "A Propósito das Relações Entre as ONGs do Norte e a Sociedade Civil Moçambicana" (2003), available in http://www.iid.org.mz/Relacoes_entre_ONG_do_Norte_e_Sociedade_Civil_do_Sul.pdf.

28 Interview with the NGOs Forum of Gaza, and with the representative of Magariro, the latter organisation based in Chimoio, Manica.

29 This category of CSOs was polemically designated "James Bond-organisations" referring to the fact that they have no office and everything is governed from the James Bond-like attaché case of the leader!

- The majority of CSOs are small and relatively unknown, working only at provincial and district level, with limited capacity. While generally committed to their members, they typically lack the financial resources to meet their basic day-to-day running costs. These organisations are often sector specific, with economic or social objectives, e.g. community and farmers' associations, parents' groups, women's associations, sports and youth associations, local councils and community development committees.

The fourth category identified in Mozambique, being part of CS, but outside of formal institutions but which is of growing importance, includes the spontaneous street gatherings and mass demonstrations that have played a significant role in reacting to the perceived inequitable and unjust economic policies. While this category was not evaluated in any detail, it can be very influential element of overall of CS response to Government policies.

Uganda

Uganda has since 2006 been governed under the multi-party political dispensation, following twenty years under single party rule by the National Resistance Movement (NRM). However, in spite of the transformation from single party to multi-party political system, the NRM still operates as a de-facto single party because it has a large majority in parliament due in part to its well documented use of measures to limit the effectiveness of the opposition. With the ruling party and the state seemingly fused in their operations, without clear boundaries of separation of powers the space, the operational independence, the level of CSOs influence and their effectiveness is compromised.[30]

The CSOs landscape in Uganda is characterised as having "overall intense CSO activity",[31] with an estimated 10,000 officially-registered NGOs, however, the number of NGOs which are active and operational is unknown.[32] Types of CSOs range from community organisations, coalitions and networks on thematic issues or geographical location, faith-based organisations, political and social organisations and more recently the cultural institutions and other forms of organising. A study by DENIVA reveals that CSOs are constituted by a large number of "community groups in the form of CSOs such as NGO networks, coalitions, trade unions, and other forms of collaborative bodies" such as urban based professional groups.[33] Other organisations and CSOs which are actively engaged in policy dialogue include the private sector associations, lawyers associations, teachers associations, the Women Doctors Association, the Media Women Association and to a limited extent, the Journalists Association. Citizen participation in CSOs, according to the study, "appears extreme", characterised by membership of community and mutual help groups.[34] The same study points out that "volunteering to CSOs is prevalent" among the population, with reasons "linked to Uganda's history of civil strife and repressive regimes".

30 Drawn from the findings of the Joint Evaluation Scoping Exercise Uganda, September 2011.
31 DENIVA 2006, CIVICUS Civil Society Index Report.
32 Ministry of Internal Affairs: http://www.mia.go.ug/pagex.php?p=reg_local
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.

A view expressed by an analysis prepared by the Uganda NGO Forum was that donor funding contributed to CSOs remaining less significant than they might otherwise have been as donors have mainly promoted two types of NGO/CSOs (UNGOF, 2007),[35] namely:

- Advocacy organisations that are mainly "urban based and elite run and managed, formed by individuals often exclusively run by them, most vocal on policy and occasionally in the political arena". According to the view, this type of CSO is preoccupied with "advocacy on all sorts of issues in governance, including human rights, anti-corruption, poverty eradication, children, women, environment etc".

- Membership Network or Professional Association type of NGO, with membership of either individuals or NGOs in the first category. The Networks also tend to be pre-occupied with thematic issues such as education, children, women, agriculture or may be broad-base focused.

The paper argues that donors and INGOs have shied away from supported "political oriented CSO groups", in preferance for "technocratic policy processes and the dynamic of relating with the state summed up in the rhetoric of 'partnership', hence, the CSOs have remained politically insignificant.[36]

The 2007 paper described above raises important issues, but changes have, however, occurred in the last five years, which have seen CSOs move from working in an *ad hoc* manner to one comprising more deliberate joint actions through effective coalitions and networks on various policy issues. These CSO networks have been formed at national and district levels, based on geographical location, and within these, they also form issue based networks. At community level, CSOs have developed partnerships and alliances with communities, and supported establishment of structures or strengthened existing formal community-based structures with volunteers who are trained to monitor policy implementation and Government programmes to ensure effective service delivery.

CSO advocacy is increasingly becoming recognised by Government as a legitimate area of work by CSOs (DENIVA: 2006). However, it is observed that advocacy work is also highly donor driven, and the CSOs highly donor dependent.[37] The Ugandan Government, according to the study has remained ambivalent on what constitutes "allowable advocacy activities" for CSOs, especially when they 'stray' into what is seen as the political arena (DENIVA 2006).

In 2008 the Government of Uganda through the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) and with the support of the European Union embarked on developing the NGO Policy. The policy was approved by Cabinet and became operational in 2010. The policy was developed with the participation of CSOs in Uganda although some organisations still complain that their input was largely ignored. The broad aim of the policy is to:

"to set a framework, that strengthens the relationship between the NGO sector and Government and enhance capacities and the effectiveness in the areas of service delivery, advocacy and empowerment….ultimately, a stronger NGO sector should contribute to the institutionalization of a culture of civic inclusiveness and participation as well as mutual accountability by all stakeholders in the important processes that affect the lives of citizens at different levels".

35 Uganda NGO Forum, Civil Society and Politics, A Niche for Civil Society Organisations in the Revived Multiparty political System in Uganda, 2007, Working Paper No.1, Arthur Larok.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.

The NGO Policy was spearheaded by the OPM and put the NGO Registration Board under the Ministry of Internal Affairs which is the Ministry responsible for the police, prisons and immigration departments. This would tend to suggest that Government perceives NGOs as a security matter. The OPM, which is the leader of government business and coordinates all government ministries, sees NGOs as development vehicles, which contradicts the essence of the controversial NGO Registration (Amendment) Act 2006 that is seen as being harsh on NGOs.

3.2 The 'Policy Process' case studies

Overview of the 'policy process' case studies

Bangladesh

i. Primary education was selected as a case study because it is highly relevant to citizens and Government alike and constitutes an unambiguous public good. The policy dialogue which has taken place in recent years is regarded as relatively successful. A new Education Policy was enacted in 2010 and the third phase of the Sector-wide Programme supported by 18 DPs was signed off in October 2011. CSOs had been actively involved in these and more effort than before had been made by Government to create formal *invited spaces* for their participation. The Government's Education Standing Committee is one of few standing committees which seem to function and is regarded as quite progressive and active. CAMPE, a network of non-government education providers has, among others, developed a remarkable collaborative relationship with Government and has earned respect from its member organisations as well as the citizenry at large. It is actively expanding its reach to include Teachers Unions, Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), School Management Committees, local government standing committees, student bodies and private sector corporate responsibility initiatives thereby covering a range of CSO activity. The case illustrates the process that CSOs pursued which began with confrontational *claimed space* to building respect and trust with Government which has opened up opportunities for engagement in *invited space*. Controversial and emergent issues are still played out in *claimed space*, including strategic use of print and electronic media.

ii. Local government was selected as it is highly relevant to citizens since it carries the potential to improve local service delivery through enhancing the transparency and accountability of the lowest tiers of elected representatives. Policy dialogue around local government in Bangladesh focuses on the three areas of (a) **decentralisation**, (b) **citizen participation** and (c) **terms and conditions for locally elected representatives**, particularly women. It was also selected as it has received considerable attention from DPs. Relatively new professional associations of local government representatives have been convened and supported by DPs to lobby and advocate for change. The newly enacted Local Government Acts (2009/10) provide a mandate for a range of civic engagement activities including annual community-level planning, open budgets and inclusion of citizens in standing committees and ward-level committees. Opportunities for watchdog activities and public hearings have increased largely through the facilitation of social movements and NGOs and the media has shown a growing interest in public accountability issues.

There are considerable barriers to furthering the decentralisation agenda whereas more progress has been made in terms of citizen participation. There are a few closed *invited spaces* for dialogue around the former whereas a raft of legislation enabling the latter. There is recognition that this legislation has materialised only through Government's own direct experience over three decades which has built its confidence in the importance of citizen engagement. Vested interests mean less can be achieved in the other areas.

iii. Minority land rights: The consensus among those consulted in selecting case studies suggested that at least one should be an issue affecting a minority, in other words not an issue necessarily endorsed by, or in deed relevant to the majority of Bangladeshis. Land rights are the most urgent issue among the Adivasi population, particularly in the Chittagong Hill Tracts where a number of abuses continue resulting from land disputes. The Chittagong Peace Accord (1997) has yet to be fully implemented despite international pressure and considerable investment in the area since the Accord was signed. Post Accord there has been a proliferation of CSOs activity in the CHT but often with little co-ordination, limited capacity and inadequate legitimacy to act on behalf of communities. Most CSOs are involved in service delivery and few actively engage in policy dialogue. This case illustrates how *invited spaces* can become tokenistic as the Government prefers a stance of 'no decision' on the complex and conflicting land regulations operating in the area. There are a number of vested interests, (political, military and corporate, which depend on this indecision. Very recently, CSOs have been threatened with revocation of their registration if they engage in advocacy. The case also illustrates how difficult it is for the Adivasi population to gather wider support and exploit *claimed spaces* to champion their cause.

iv. Food security: During the consultations, food security was raised as an issue of key relevance to people living in poverty yet very little was known among the CSO community about policy dialogue around this issue. Speculation abounded that the issues were tied up with world food policy, food sovereignty and the influence of multi-national and national companies commandeering land for large scale tobacco, shrimp, forest products, bio-fuel and construction activities. There was much concern among participants that they could identify only a handful of CSOs involved in policy dialogue and a need to understand why this was the case. DPs involved in this study have no direct support for food security but their Governments do channel money through UN agencies for this purpose so they too were alarmed by the apparent lack of CS engagement in policy dialogue. Food security was selected as a mini- case study to reflect on this conundrum and understand the forces at play which has limited the scope for policy dialogue.

Mozambique

i. District planning and budget monitoring. This policy process represents a DP-supported Government initiative (*invited space*) to engage CS in dialogue at different levels. DPs have had a strong influence in the establishment of decentralised district planning and budget monitoring processes, which are also characterised by being on-going processes. The district planning and budget monitoring process is nationwide and constitutes the overall development framework within which all decentralised policy processes take place. CSOs are actively involved at national and provincial level in policy dialogue through established spaces (Development Observatories, (DOs)), and at district level through Community Participation and Consultation Institutions. National-level research and advocacy organisations, in particular, have furthered effective dialogue through

evidence documented in studies, and the independent media has also played a significant role in supporting the voice of CSOs. The case illustrates how *invited spaces* tend to be gradually co-opted and less effective over time, but also how CS finds alternative solutions to maintain momentum and influence.

ii. Process leading to approval of Legislation on Domestic Violence: This policy process represents an example of a *claimed space*, in which CSOs have taken the initiative to advocate for new legislation, the Law on Domestic Violence to be adopted. The policy process took place from 2000 to 2009, when the Law was sanctioned by Parliament, but the impact is yet to be seen, as law enforcement is still a critical challenge. The case study has focused on the role of the different CS-actors, their strategic choices in terms of alliances and multiple channels of influence. Women's organisations were in the forefront of the policy process, but it has been concluded that a more effective outreach may have been achieved, had broader based organisations also been involved. The case study has shown that strong leadership and the capacity to form coalitions and make use of complementary initiatives and processes have been successful strategies.

Uganda

i. Anti-corruption: Transparency and accountability: Policy dialogue on corruption has been one of the most controversial and most sustained policy dialogue processes in Uganda. It cuts across almost all sectors and is an area of concern for the Ugandan public, CSOs, Government, the media and development partners. Government and DPs have themselves invested time and resources in the formation of anti-corruption institutions, yet the practice continues. The long-term goal for CSOs and other institutions engaged in policy dialogue on anti-corruption in Uganda was identified as "*A well governed and corruption free society in Uganda*". The policy outcomes expected by CSOs include: Accountable and transparent public officers at central and local government level; well-resourced anti-corruption public institutions effectively combating corruption and; attainment of high quality of delivery of services. Key CSO actors include ACODE, the Anti-corruption coalition Uganda and Uganda Debt Network.

ii. Gender equality, social inclusion, and legal reform: The policy dialogue on gender and women's rights in Uganda has been on-going for more than 30 years and was influential in the formation of the Uganda 1995 Constitution. The Constitution made provisions for recognition of the rights of women, after strong lobby and advocacy as well as continued dialogue with the Constitutional Review Commission and the parliament. Thus, the Constitution recognised and provided for affirmative action for the marginalised (including women) in political positions, resulting in an increase in the women's representation in district leadership positions and in the national parliament. Although the Constitution has positive provisions, the laws of Uganda still discriminate against women and girls on matters of inheritance, marriage and divorce as well as property ownership. It remains a major area of public concern both at national level and local level, affecting women in all strata of society, but especially the poor. CSOs are active in this sector and have been shown to influence change through a range of policy engagement.

iii. Environment and natural resources governance (with a focus on forestry): The third area selected was in natural resources governance which continues to be an area of major debate in Uganda with a focus on policies, practices and laws affecting the environment and national resources management. The particular focus chosen in this sector was in forestry governance where CSOs have been pro-active in influencing policy formulation as well as in engaging in the implementation stage of the policy cycle: During the study the team worked engaged with the NRM-oriented CSOs such as the Uganda Forestry Working Group (UFWG), NRM Working Group, ACODE, Environmental Alert, UWASNET as well as representatives of the media. The CSOs have substantially contributed to dialogue on policies and laws including the Water Policy, Soil Policy and Act, Forests Act, the degazetting of forests, wetlands and several others. The study selected one key and internationally recognised forest governance challenge which was the Government's plan to allocate part of Mabira Forest, one of the remaining rain forests in the country to a sugarcane cartel. As well as being a high-profile case with interest to a wide sector of the public it also has international climate change implications. The study assessed the role played by a strong lobby of CSOs, in collaboration with the business community, the role of local government and community involvement as well as mass uprisings.

Table 3.1 Summary of Features of 'Policy Process Case Studies'

Country/ case study	Space	Initiative: Government or CSO	DP relationship	National/ decentralised	On-going/ specific intended result
Bangladesh					
Primary education	First claimed invited	Both	DP supported (both sides)	Mainly at national level	Primary Education Policy, on-going to ensure compliance
Local government	Claimed (mainly)	CSOs	DP supported	Mainly at local level	Genuine decentralisation-on-going
Minority rights/ Chittagong Hill Tracts	Invited (tokenistic) and attempts at claiming space	Government	DP demand	National but a minority issue with international rather than national community backing	Settlement of land ownership-on-going
Food Security	Claimed (very limited invited space)	CSOs	Not supported	National and local	On-going- many issues but very few actors
Mozambique					
District planning & budget monitoring	Invited	Government	Strong influence from DPs	Centralised and decentralised	On-going
Legislation on domestic violence	Claimed space	CSO	Support from DPs	Mainly at national level	Law enacted-further work on compliance
Uganda					
Governance, accountability and anti-corruption	Invited and claimed spaces, but increasingly less GO tolerance of criticism	CSO	Tacit support from DPs	National and District level	To ensure policies are implemented an corruption reduced
Gender responsive legislation	Invited and claimed	CSO and Government (National Gender Machinery)	Strong support from DPs	Initiated at national level with local level buy in	Specific result (re. laws enacted) but process up-holding law on-going
Forest management and governance	Often invited, but also claimed where policies contested	CSO	Strong internal civil support & international DPs	National and throughout country in forest areas	Adherence to Government forestry policy

4 The enabling environment for CSO engagement

4.1 Introduction

For "civil society to flourish it requires a favourable enabling environment, which depends upon the actions and policies of all development actors – donors, Governments and CSOs themselves."[38] A fundamental question posed for the evaluation is therefore to assess what are the enablers to CSO engagement, what are the barriers at country level and how these can be addressed in the context of the country case study findings. The ToR for the evaluation drew on a definition for the enabling environment drawn up by Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness (see Box 4.1).

Box 4.1 A Definition of the Enabling Environment

> The enabling environment can be seen as a function of the legal freedom (freedom of association, expression, right of information legal recognition of CSOs), financial freedom (right to seek and secure funding from legal sources), and political freedom (space provided for CSOs in policy discussion) allowed by the legislation and/or practice in a country.[39]

The enabling environment was first explored during the scoping studies, where it was concluded that the concept as defined above was somewhat limited, and that it needed to embrace the informal conditions that facilitate or hinder CSO engagement, as well as including CSO internal factors (e.g. legitimacy, capacity and network arrangements) and DP support. The nine case studies thus revisited the formal factors (as defined above) while also attempting to assess the importance of other additional factors that affected CSO strategies and outcomes.

The assessment of the enabling environment was broadly reviewed within two main areas of analysis: legal and political factors, and economic and social factors. While it is possible to take a 'snapshot' of the present, in all three countries the historical context played a major part in shaping the enabling environment found today.

Historical context
The colonial legacy inherited in all three countries has influenced the enabling environment found today. This is particularly apparent in Mozambique where the so-called "democratic mass organisations" were established by the ruling party Frelimo at independence in 1975 to continue the patterns of supervision and control established under Portuguese rule. In addition however a number of independent CSOs such as the National Peasants Union – which still survive today and represent an example of genuine member-based CSOs. Mozambique experienced a lengthy 16-year civil war and a gradual move towards economic reform during the 1990s. It was not however until the establishment of the Poverty Observatories (POs), that CS had a space for policy dialogue with

38 From conceptual framework to guide case study approach and analysis (seen Annex A2) with reference to: OECD 2010: Civil Society Effectiveness.

39 From the Evaluation ToR, based on text in 'Open Forum Sectoral and Country consultations: A synthesis of outcomes, Towards a Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness'. September 2010, Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness (derived from pp. 48-50).

Government and DPs. The basic rights of association and organisation only date back to the New Constitution of 2004.

Uganda was also mired in civil war and political mayhem, with political and economic stability returning earlier than in Mozambique with the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 providing a comprehensive and legal and institutional framework for policy formulation, spelling out a mandate for CSOs to participate and influence policy formulation: "*Every citizen has a right to participate in the affairs of Government…. In accordance with the law*". Further it goes on to set out the obligations of citizens to hold Government accountable, including their duty to combat corruption and abuse of public office providing a legal sound basis for the current enabling environment compared to the overt control being exercised by Government in Mozambique with heavy reliance on DP initiatives to make headway in enabling environment reforms.

In Bangladesh, which gained independence in 1971 with its progressive Constitution adopted the following year, has the largest number of NGOs in the world (over 2,000 registered with the NGO Affairs Board) with a further 300,000 associations and societies registered under various other laws. However, the phrase 'civil society' has only recently taken hold, with the last five years showing a shift towards a common understanding of CS being different from the specific notion of NGOs to include the range and type of civil organisations given in Section 1.4 on 'Terms and definitions'.

4.2 The current legal and political environment

It is the legal environment which in the first instance defines the theoretical boundaries of the enabling environment. As the results from the three country studies demonstrate, the politics shapes the realities both nationally and at local level so that the situation facing CSOs may in practice be very different from the legal provisions on the statute book.

Taking the situation in Bangladesh, the freedom of operation of NGOs dates back to the 1972 Constitution mentioned above, which predates similar freedoms provided in Uganda (1995 Constitution) and with the 2004 amendment seeing the guarantee of rights of association and organisation. The Law of Association in the case of Mozambique (1991) brought a new impetus to the growth of CSOs but newly-registered organisations faced a raft of challenges as described further below. In Uganda the decentralisation policy was enshrined in the 1995 constitution, which is supposed to allow for consultation with citizens. In practice little consultation takes place, not helped by the rapid increase in the number of Districts from 39 when the constitution was enacted to 112 in 2012. The Access to information Act (2005 aims to promote an efficient, effective, transparent and accountable Government. In reality the bureaucracy and costs of making an application deters poor citizens from attempting to access information at a local level. The Right to Information Act (2009) in Bangladesh was seen as a significant breakthrough in terms of accountability and transparency (itself a result of pressure from CSOs and the media). Like Uganda, requests for information have to be official, take time and in many cases staff have not been appointed to deal with requests and data is simply not accessible.

Registration
All three country case studies require CSOs to be registered in one form or another (although in Uganda CSO networks in some cases chose not to be registered as it allowed

the more unfettered freedom of movement.[40] Similarly in Bangladesh some CSOs choose not to register in order to preserve their independence).

Following the Ugandan NGOs Act (2006), the Government embarked on developing a progressive NGO policy (2008), which was developed with the participation of CSOs, although CSOs complained their contribution was largely ignored. The policy which became operational in 2010 recognised the contribution that CSOs can make to service delivery, advocacy and empowerment and the importance of civic inclusiveness. However considerable mistrust has developed between CSOs and Government as while on the one hand the policy development was led by the OPM (which was seen as a positive) but with the administration of the process being transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (with responsibility amongst other things for police and prisons) seemingly relegating the NGO policy to a security matter. Thus NGOs have contested the law, with concerns for example that sub-committees which monitor NGOs comprised representatives of security departments. A further development is the requirement to re-register annually, with the implication being (as the CSOs see it) that if an organisation in some way 'crosses' the Government, registration will be withheld. A level of mutual suspicion thus continues to exist between the two parties.

CSOs in Mozambique also have a range of challenges with registration. There are two factors here. Uniquely CSOs have to be linked to a line ministry. The origins of this appear to relate to the assumption that the majority of CSOs are in fact service delivery agencies. On the ground CSOs find themselves being pressured to associate with one ministry or another. As is common in all registration processes the procedure is very bureaucratic and often involves extensive to travel to provincial capitals and burdensome documentation. There are examples of applications for registration being delayed or simply receiving no response to requests for registration as in the case of the association for sexual minority rights.

In Bangladesh, CSOs that seek funding from foreign donors must be registered with the NGO Affairs Bureau whereas in Uganda, it seems that registration is not a requirement for DP support, with re-registration needed every five years). As in Mozambique the process involves sanction from the line ministry closest to the sector in which the CSO operates, so for rights-based organisations this may entail approval from a series of line ministries. As in all three countries supervision of CSOs s is linked to the security departments, so that they are subject to random security visits to ensure there is no 'anti-state activity'. Again there are concerns that CSO freedoms are being curtailed.

Other factors: In Mozambique the poor record and performance of the Judiciary is seen as hindering factor, with CSOs fearful that in any confrontation with the Government they will not be fairly represented. Similar concerns exist in Uganda.

Aside from the specifics of the legal environment created by Government the political environment has a very strong influence on the ability of CSOs to engage in policy dialogue. On the surface in both Uganda and Mozambique the laws governing CSOs may appear quite positive in providing the space for engagement. On the other hand, taking the example of Mozambique the space for engagement which the legal framework provides has over the last five years been in characterised by imposition of *ad hoc* barriers and bureaucracy, at times quite hostile to CSOs so that in practice the legal enabling

40 As was the case with the Uganda Forestry Working Group (personal communication during stakeholder interviews in February 2012).

factors are trumped In Uganda this situation is partly explained by misunderstanding the role of CSOs and seeing them as possible sympathizers with the opposition party. At other times it is simply a question of not wanting to engage with those with a different view to that of the party in power. In Mozambique the voting system is one where the people vote for a party, rather than a particular politician. While this system is common in many countries, the view was expressed by interviewees that in this situation politicians owe their allegiance to the party rather than their constituency base (including CSOs). The political environment of course varies from country to country and with the evaluation indicating that this is possibly the single most important factor in creating a positive enabling environment for CSOs to operate. It is also probably the most difficult to influence from an external perspective. It does however require careful analysis and understanding of DPs seeking to support CSOs in policy dialogue activities.

4.3 Economic, financial and social factors

A primary enabling factor for CSOs to engage in any substantive way is of course their ability to either generate their own funds or to access external funds. This section considers alternative sources of funding (donor, Government, membership or private), taxation and how particular sources of funds may compromise CSO independence.

Donor funding
The country study findings in Bangladesh suggested that donor funding for policy-related matters including Government accountability and advocacy (which is 'resource light') was low, due perhaps to the difficulty of making available the small quantities needed, compared to the level of funds provided to service-delivery NGOs. In Uganda the main issue that DPs faced was working through Government (sector support) or through INGOs, with less direct contracting of CSOs. All three countries recognised the shift towards increasing need by DPs to demonstrate VfM or quantified returns on investment in their portfolios, with outcomes of rights-based engagement being particularly difficult to measure, at least in the short term. A further issue voiced by smaller organisations, outside the main circle of 'professional bidders' is the sense that they are often excluded from conventional donor funding arrangements. Smaller organisations include new start up CSOs, faith-based organisations or those considered a higher risk such as activist groups.

In addition to the influence felt on agenda setting, donor funding was also noted as limiting flexibility by virtue of the accounting requirements which were often not in synch with the needs of agile and responsive advocacy and policy processes. While the details of different funding modalities are addressed in the later chapter (see Section 6.4), it is important to note here that this disconnect between strategies and administration of budgets was widely considered problematic.

Government funding
Government funding is sometimes available for engagement in policy dialogue; however, in Mozambique the level of Government funding is very low, with only 3% of funds coming from this source (INE Census 2003). In Uganda, Government does provide funding through sector support mechanisms, although figures of amounts of money from this source were not available. In Bangladesh considerable funds are channelled to NGOs through Government but there was no recent data to quantify the level. However, it is safe to assume that nearly all of these funds are for service delivery rather than support

to engage in policy dialogue although there are signs that in the education policy context at least Government may direct funds for this. In all countries concern was raised that Government funding will compromise the possibilities to criticise Government.

Private funding
Some of the CSOs in the case studies are membership bodies and do collect membership subscriptions which contribute to supporting the activities of the CSO. In Bangladesh, there is a prevailing assumption that such resource mobilisation will always be inadequate because members cannot afford fees. However, little effort has been made in this regard mainly, as the evaluation was told, because of the dependency on DP funds. To date little has been achieved in mobilising funds from the general public for policy dialogue and advocacy activities and philanthropists in all three countries continue to favour supporting traditional charitable institutions for the disadvantaged. CSOs' search for alternative funding sources such as private sector funds, foundations etc. remains in its infancy. In all three countries caution was expressed regarding private sector funding for advocacy which may give primacy to corporate interests.

Taxation
The application and level of taxation is another factor in all three countries. In Bangladesh the legislation is confusing and contradictory, with one law giving blanket tax exemption to CSOs and another obliging them to pay tax requiring more time and money to be spent on hiring lawyers to sort it out. CSOs in Mozambique also have tax obligations and they are no less onerous. There is a requirement to have a tax number and to submit annual returns, although there are exemptions (for example an organisation can be VAT exempt) although this needs a formal request. The principle overall finding is that the tax laws for CSOs are confusing and the procedures bureaucratic and in general CSOs do not have the information or the expertise to deal with their tax affairs properly. Equally Government tax authorities are not set up to handle their cases speedily or efficiently.

Poverty
At a local level, poverty itself may hinder willingness to engage on political matters. CSOs often need to prioritise supporting communities to meet their basic needs for food, water and shelter, with policy engagement seen as a much lower priority Types of space for CSO engagement in policy dialogue.

This section considers the types of space for CSO engagement. The definition of *invited* or *claimed spaces* for policy dialogue was given in Section 1.4 (Terms and definitions). It explores the similarities and differences found in the three countries and attempts to analyse the problems associated with *claimed* and *invited space* in relation to the enabling environment. It aims to review the relationship between these spaces which sometimes includes attempts to limit CS voice).

Invited space
In all three countries *invited space* has been offered for CSO engagement to varying degrees. Where Governments had a shared interest in the policy under consideration *invited spaces* are more likely to be provided. In the Bangladesh Primary Education case study for example, there are a range of *invited spaces* compared to the other policy processes, with CSOs being invited to help with policy development both in formal *invited spaces* (advising a parliamentary standing committee) as well as less formally providing research and advice directly to ministry departments. However, where issues were more

contested, *invited space* was found to be non-existent, tokenistic or limited. This was starkly illustrated by the Bangladesh Local Government case where there were no spaces to debate national decentralisation (Government contested) but many at community level where participatory planning and budgeting (Government endorsed) is now mandatory under law.

The DOs in Mozambique offer *invited space*, but there is scepticism here that CSOs are invited to give credence to decisions already taken and a sense that these are artificial creations supported by DPs, with the CSO engagement 'written in' to the process, with no genuine, mutual respect for CSO or Government roles. The country report concluded that in this case, such *invited spaces*, far from strengthening CSO's role in policy dialogue risked CSOs becoming instruments of co-option and manipulation with elite CS-groups effectively capturing the space for their own purposes, which then become partisan.

In Uganda the forestry policies explicitly set out *invited spaces* for CSO engagement (National Forestry Plan 2002) and CSOs did make important contributions to that process, but while CSOs continue to contribute to debate and discussion on Government committees here too there is CSO scepticism and it is reported that where alternative views are put forward these simply create friction between the parties. Experience suggests that the openness of the Government to engage in dialogue is directly related to whether the subject is controversial or non-controversial, with the space widening or closing accordingly. But the forestry case in Uganda and primary education in Bangladesh showed that relationships can be built between CSOs and Government technical departments (i.e. not political committees) which can accommodate controversial issues in trusted spaces. Government technical officers welcome advice and research material produced by CSOs as they lack resources and experience themselves, and where they find themselves (along with CSOs) defending the implementation of the official policy.

The distinction between the official policy agenda and the actual (on the ground) political agenda is best illustrated by the situation in the forestry sector in Uganda. The country has one of most comprehensive policies for sustainable management of a country's forest resources in the region. Yet the departments charged with implementing this policy are often so highly politicised that the reality is that the policy on sustainable forest management is effectively discarded, with laws and regulations being disregarded in the pursuit of either a political goal or for personal gain.

Claimed spaces

With limited functional *invited space*, CSOs resort to, or actively choose to use *claimed spaces* through a variety of approaches including education and mobilisation of CS for demonstrations, active use of the media to generate public interest, demanding public hearings, mounting campaigns and public interest litigation, providing research and position papers for consideration. CSOs can exercise their own agency and control of issues in *claimed space* and some eschew *invited space* for this reason.

Claimed space does not have to be confrontational and Bangladesh, for example has seen a growing number of citizen watchdog committees (around education, health environment and corruption) formed often (but not exclusively) with NGO facilitation support and many use collaborative negotiation to achieve results. *Claimed space* action may be limited by risks, exclusion/threat by power holders or lack of mainstream support. In Bangladesh *claimed space* in the Food Security case study was found to be minimal and in the Chittagong Hill Tracts land issues, CSOs are extremely constrained for these reasons.

5 CSO strategies for policy engagement

5.1 Relevance of CSO strategies for policy engagement

Introduction
Relevance in this context refers to the closeness of CSO policy dialogue engagement to the needs of their constituencies and CS in general.[41] Given that CSOs are increasingly important development actors, and as such have a responsibility to demonstrate their relevance in terms of whether they are fully aware of the needs of their constituencies, their means of communication, how they identify their interests and needs and how accountable they are to the people they seek to serve.[42] The findings draw on related studies, results of the country interviews and results of the global workshop (Kampala) where the constituency question was considered.

Relevance of CSOs engagement in Bangladesh
In Bangladesh, a study commissioned by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) on their engagement with CS (2011) identified polarised views regarding NGOs' (not CSOs) role in CS, with youth and business persons expressing concerns about NGOs lack of independence and perceived vested interests. They questioned the NGOs assumption that they legitimately represented people's voices. Although this represented a somewhat negative view of constituency support, the legitimacy of CSOs (as opposed to NGOs) fared somewhat better. Key players in some arenas such as education have been established, with the largest coalition, CAMPE claiming it is a "constituency driven-organisation" (see Box 5.1).

Box 5.1 CAMPE as an example of relevance to its constituency

The 2012 external review of CAMPE supported its relevance to its constituency: "Recently it has laudably moved from the safety of working exclusively with a 'like-minded' agenda to provision of platforms for different voices (e.g. Teachers Associations, parents, students) and debate as well as exploring means for more direct action such as public interest litigation. It is therefore moving more towards provision of space for public action rather than relying on its own direct action and this needs to be appreciated as an important shift." [43]

In reality, even at national level, accountability of individual member NGOs tends to be prioritised towards their 'executive councils', with less accountability towards their constituencies (students, teachers, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) etc.). At central level, NGOs working in local governance reform in Bangladesh have little leverage unlike those in primary education, and have opted instead to support Local Government Associations (LGAs) (which have between them potential membership of more than 100,000 elected representatives). At the local level NGOs, rather than representing a constituency *per se*, are acting in a catalytic role and encouraging the emergence of citizen's forums which can channel the voice of citizens themselves.

41 The relevance of DP strategies in terms of supporting CSOs in achieving an influence on policy processes is assessed in Chapter 6, Development partners' support to CSOs.
42 The ToR set out the evaluation questions needed to capture 'relevance' in this context.
43 External Review of CAMPE, February, 2012, page 4.

In the case of the Chittagong Hill Tracts land rights, the leading indigenous CSO has legitimacy conferred by the Adivasi population but also legitimacy through its recognition as a negotiating partner by the Government of Bangladesh. It is accountable to its members (although leadership is based on inheritance, through sons of headmen). However, as the issues championed are minority ones there is little felt relevance by the general population for these issues. For the fourth case study on Food Security the ALRD, is the only network body representing CSOs in the sector (some 260 are represented). Its core competence is land rights and it has basically been co-opted as a known and respected CSO within *invited spaces* with little expertise in food security research and activism. The issues of food security and displacement of agriculturally-productive land are critical issues for ordinary people and yet little is being done to champion these.

Relevance of CSO engagement in Mozambique
In Mozambique, the study formed a relatively negative view of the extent to which CSOs represent and work with a proper constituency at national level, although at local level, small CSOs seemed to be genuinely involving and serving their constituents.

There is an irony in that the small number of elite, professional organisations in the country (see Section 3.1, *Mozambique*) while not having a proper constituency as such, often do defend legitimate interests which coincide with the most critical concerns of society. In fact the Mozambique country report concedes that in this instance these CSOs are not accountable to a constituency but to the general public. On the other hand the small scale, local-level organisations, while better connected and responsive to their constituencies, may have very little impact on policy formulation or implementation.

In the case of District Planning and Budget Monitoring, the record of engagement is poor both in terms of engagement of the citizens in the processes by Government and CSOs, and in terms of the absence of incentives for the people to exercise their rights. On the wider point on relevance of activities and representation, a recent CIVICUS Civil Society Index indicated that mechanisms supposed to create major dynamics in CSOs such as improved organisations and networking were being 'derailed' because of weak representation by members and poor communication. The case studies carried out in Mozambique confirmed this finding, with indications that national level CSOs were starting to act as if they were independent bodies, rather than representing and being accountable to their constituencies.

Relevance of CSO engagement in Uganda
The CSO movement in Uganda on the other hand appears to have strong links with its constituents although some commentators on the Government side have reservations on the level of accountability of CSOs to their members. The CIVICUS Civil Society Index for example shows that in Uganda a high proportion of respondents were members of at least one CSO (80% according to the World Values Survey)). In addition a 2003 survey suggested that "*on the whole Ugandans continue to exhibit one of the highest densities of associational life of any of the countries surveyed*".[44]

A key finding in Uganda in terms of the relevance of the policy engagement vis-à-vis CSO constituencies was the growth of CSO networks and coalitions across a range of sectors in the country (within the CIVICUS regional survey, 43% of respondents stating that networks and umbrella organisations were generally effective). That said, the same

44 2003 Afrobarometer Survey (Logan et al 2003: 212: 42-43).

survey indicated that in regional consultations, CSOs were poor at communicating with their members. However, the more recent research undertaken as part of this evaluation indicates that the networking of CSOs does significantly improve communication between their members and members of the community, with the networks comprising national as well as regional and district or community-level members, ensuring contact with grass roots stakeholders (as found in the Forestry Governance case study).

Box 5.2 Examples of CSO relevance from the Uganda Country Study

Case study on gender-based legislation:
CSOs working with the Government and the Law Reform Commission (ULRC) were able to make direct input into bills and laws, and reach communities which the Ministry was unable to do. The same case study found that gender responsive CSOs were accountable to their target groups of CSOs engaged on women's rights. A further example was the case of the Coalition for Domestic Violence Prevention (CEDOVIP) which works directly with communities at grass roots level.

Case study on sustainable forest management:
In the forestry sector, CSOs work very effectively within the network formed by one of the principal alliances, the Uganda Forestry Working Group (UFWG). The evaluation team members followed the activities of the group at one of their national General Assembly meetings, and at district level, where CSO members engage directly with community based representatives (for example in implementing the 'Collaborative Forest Management Agreements' between district authorities and communities).

It is concluded that there an intrinsic strength in the CSO movement in Uganda, stemming from the importance attached to 'associational activities' which appears to be embedded in the ways communities work together. The effectiveness of networking arrangements also suggests that CSOs at national level are well connected to their members and constituencies at regional and district level, conferring a high degree of relevance to the work of CSOs in the policy process case studies considered.

Perspectives on relevance: The global workshop, Kampala
The global workshop in Kampala in 2012 generated some interesting perspectives on the constituency issue and whether CSOs needed a constituency base to be effective.

Box 5.3 Is a constituency necessary for CSO effectiveness?

There seemed to be a broad agreement that CSOs benefit from having constituency to be effective, but that in some sectors it was not necessarily a prerequisite, with examples of the latter including climate change, HIV/AIDS and animal rights movements. One view was that knowledge of the government system and how it works was more important than a strong constituency base. A similar position was expressed suggesting that good evidence-based research was sometimes more effective than having a constituency

On the other hand, it was recognised that being able to mobilise members made it easier to claim space for engagement with Governments and that collective action (strength in numbers) would more easily lead to Government response but that this could also be achieved by strategic alliances (e.g. the Mozambique domestic violence lobby). There

were suggestions that a CSO could derive its legitimacy through interest from donors, rather than having its own domestic constituency *per se*. The use of social media was also highlighted and that if used innovatively, it was an effective way of building and communicating with its constituency. A broad conclusion expressed which may sum up the situation was that for a CSO engagement to be effective and sustained over the longer term a constituency base was beneficial. However, as addressed later in the report, other valid sources of legitimacy can suffice, especially when combined with evidence of the CSO's accountability.

Why some CSOs do not engage

In Bangladesh it was found that many NGOs working in the education service sector providing a range of adult and child education services did not engage in policy dialogue beyond attempts to resolve implementation problems. This is typical of service provision NGOs in other countries, some of which may actually be contracted by Government and are loathe to place this relationship at risk by engaging in policy dialogue.

CSOs in Bangladesh indicated that challenging the Government on corruption and other sensitive issues such as the decentralisation agenda carries a risk of surveillance or revocation of their registration. This is one reason why organisations do not register (even though it precludes applications for foreign funding). A similar situation occurs in Uganda, where the forestry sector CSO umbrella group, the UFWG has not formally registered as a network to enable them to work more flexibly and without bureaucratic interference.

The case studies in Mozambique provided a useful insight into reasons why CSOs do not engage in policy dialogue. In the case of Maputo-based organisations, the engagement may only occur when directly related to the financial support they receive from DPs. In other cases at a more local level or regional level, it appears that the views of the Provincial Governor dictate whether or not policy engagement is encouraged or even allowed. Another factor which can influence engagement by local CSOs is the presence of international organisations or NGOs (such as Concern) that may have provided capacity building to CSOs to enable them to have the confidence and resources to engage in policy dialogue. Perhaps most telling is that at a local level, where the priority concerns are with meeting basic needs and in directly addressing poverty issues, engaging in policy dialogue is not a high priority for many CSOs.

5.2 CSO strategies for policy engagement

A typology of CSO engagement in policy dialogue

While the term policy dialogue is defined in the AAA (see definitions section), at country level the understanding of 'policy dialogue' is shaped by local experience.

In Mozambique CSO's have been influenced by three principle engagements: the Land Campaign (where a series of principles of engagement were established),[45] during the process of formulating the Government's long-term strategy known as 'Agenda 2025' (which described a more positive public image of CSOs), and the government initiative to establish the so-called POs to provide a space for CS to engage on the anti-poverty strategy.

45 Section 4.1 Mozambique Country Report.

In Uganda, a range of views were expressed by respondents as to their understanding of the term. See Box 5.4 below:

Box 5.4 Definitions of policy dialogue (Uganda CSO Scoping Study, 2011)

- Organising round table forums with policy makers to discuss pertinent policy issues.
- Participating in legislative drafting and contributing alternative reports on Uganda's implementation of its obligations.
- Engaging with policy makers on issues as they emerge. Having a collective voice on pertinent policy issues and presenting evidence to the policy makers.
- Presenting position papers to Government or contributing to on-going policy formulation.
- A transparent, participatory and inclusive process that incorporate issues of others and ensures responsiveness in government processes.
- A process that allows Government to utilise alternatives views from CSOs, and to strengthen service delivery and democratic processes.

Overview of strategic approaches

Analysis of the approaches to policy dialogue developed by the CSOs in the nine policy process case studies displayed a variety of methods used, presenting an often complex and inter-changing mix. A number of CSOs, in particular the umbrella organisations, publish strategic plans setting out the planned programme and division of responsibilities between members[46] which facilitates both an analysis of methods used as well as comparing actual outcomes to plans.

For the most part however, strategic approaches employed by CSOs were not well articulated as strategies or plans *per se*. While written strategy documents were reviewed and assessed where available, a full assessment of the processes behind the preparation of an organisation's strategy was outside the remit of this evaluation,[47] but it was expected that the evaluation would lead to some conclusions regarding what works and what does not.

For the purpose of this study, the framework for analysis of the methods of engagement in policy dialogue was derived from the typology drawn up by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) representatives in the Reference Group. It is recognised that an assortment of strategies is usually adopted by CSOs, running both sequentially and in parallel. The effectiveness of these strategies is assessed in Sections 5.4 and 5.5.

46 A good example is the Uganda Forestry Working Group Strategic Plan (2011-16).

47 In terms of the strategy preparation process, e.g. of the Uganda Forestry Working Group Strategic Plan, the process facilitated by funds from WWF Uganda and support from Future Dialogues International being a Ugandan consultancy firm.

Table 5.1 Methods of Engagement in Policy Dialogue

Direct and Formal	Direct and Informal	Indirect Contribution to Dialogue
• Advocacy and campaigning (including public litigation)[48] • Invited space for policy reform • Evidence-based research • Monitoring (and holding to account)	• Behind the scenes lobbying • Networking and collation building • Demonstration and mass action	• Information education and training • Capacity building for supply side CSO engagement

Direct and formal strategies

Advocacy and campaigning
In Bangladesh, two of the case studies; Primary Education and CHT Land Rights applied a range of direct and formal methods (as defined above). In Primary Education, advocacy and campaigning were very strong features of CSO's strategy, around issues such as quality of education, mother language education and pre-primary education which appear to be part of an on-going campaign programme. These campaigns have involved not only CSOs and CS generally but have also included politicians and senior government officials as advocates for change. Strategic use is made of the media to promote the messages and media has in fact been proactive on these issues. Whilst these approaches serve to ensure that issues are well known and debated in the public domain, often responsiveness has been achieved through threatened public interest litigation and informal protests rather than mass awareness. There continues to be a need translate mass support achieved through campaigns into demand for action.

The CHT Land Rights movement also pursues visible and strong advocacy and campaigning as part of their strategy for change in policies, but unlike education, CHT Land Rights is a specific cause in a particular region, and is limited to the CSOs directly involved, except for the human-rights issues raised, which are taken up more widely by CSOs (and especially international CSOs) advocating improvement in human rights.

Evidence-based research
Evidence-based research has been shown to be an effective strategy employed by CSOs in policy engagement and in many cases linked to advocacy and campaigning. In Uganda the publication of evidence-based research by CSOs is well established in the case studies covered and continues to grow. The scale and breadth of research conducted is testimony to its importance as a powerful tool for engaging on policy dialogue. Examples include the gender advocacy CSOs which invested time and resources to collect and analyse data on gender-based violence to inform the debate through published statistics as part of the process of calling for reform of the law. CSOs and CSO platforms in the forestry sector are particularly prominent in the use of evidence-based research, with many examples of research material being used for advocacy processes. These include reports on the negative impact of degazettement[49] on the threatened Mabira Forest Reserve (to the East of Kampala) where a range of high quality and persuasive studies set out the case for

48 Although not part of the typology drawn up by the CIDA member of the Reference Group, it is added here as it featured prominently in the Uganda case studies.

49 Meaning the forest's status as a forest reserve would be downgraded, and a notice to that effect placed in the official government gazette.

the forest's protection and maintenance and its wider importance to the biodiversity and ecology of the Lake Victoria basin.[50]

These advocacy strategies, supported by high-quality research are also used to target and influence the programmes of international agencies, with evidence-based research successfully used to inform and modify clauses in the agreement with the World Bank on the construction of a major hydro-power project.[51] In the forestry sector, the independent media has been particularly active and a 'mouthpiece' for many of the forest sector campaigns.

Also in Uganda, in the case study on governance, accountability and anti-corruption, the Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group (CSBAG) made numerous representations to Parliament on its views on spending priorities and present different perspectives on the needs of the various sectors (education, health, water, etc.). A similar experience was found in Mozambique, where the UNICEF–supported Budget Monitoring Forum (BFM), comprising four key CSOs established in 2010 succeeded in working with the Parliamentary and Budgetary Committee, making use of CS-produced reports on budget monitoring.

In Mozambique evidence-based research played a critical role in combating domestic violence. In 1989 women's rights CSOs first highlighted that violence against women (VAW) was widespread, and importantly identified it as a manifestation of a structural problem in the country of historically-unequal power. Interestingly, a research study was also conducted by the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs in 2004 that set out the scale of domestic VAW from an official perspective, in effect legitimising the cause. This was then followed up by further qualitative studies by the CSO Women and Law in Southern Africa (WLSA) Mozambique which again confirmed that domestic violence against women was a serious and widespread problem. This case study in fact illustrates the range of strategies that may have to be employed from direct informal dialogue to indirect contribution to the dialogue, with each approach reinforcing the other to achieve the desired outcomes.

In the CHT Land Rights study, while the CSOs linked to this case are vigorous campaigners, they are not so well equipped with evidence-based research. The study identified this as a gap citing the need to document cases of abuse and harassment to support their cause as well as more detailed study of court cases involving disputed land. Similarly the LGAs have recognised that their case needs to be better supported with hard evidence and that currently there is a paucity of good quality independent research.

In Bangladesh, the evaluation found that in primary education, CAMPE might be expected to monitor policy and programme implementation, but has yet to manage this on the scale needed to consistently hold Government to account. They recognise that they need to connect better with PTAs, school management committees and local-level education standing committees to monitor policy compliance at local level. Local media has been used to publicise both good and bad stories (for example, publicising cases of sexual harassment and corporal punishment in schools and the measures taken to address

50 These include: Nature Uganda (2011). The Economic valuation of the Proposed Degazettement of Mabira Central Forest Reserve.

51 As in the case of the agreement between the Government of Uganda and the World Bank for the Bujagali Hydo-power project in with the case put forward in 'Facts about violated World Bank and African Development Bank policies in the controversial Bujagali Project; published by the National Association of Professional Environmentalists (NAPE), 2008.

these problems). In the Local Government case study, formal monitoring of programmes is beginning through the mandated *invited spaces* (e.g. open budget meetings, ward-level planning). The evaluation found that there is a mushrooming of citizens' forums using a variety of means to hold duty bearers to account. These more often play out in *claimed spaces* rather than *invited spaces* through demonstrations, rallies, public hearings and naming and shaming tactics promoted by local media. This may be a feature of the newness of *invited spaces* rather than a reaction to their non-functioning.

In Mozambique the District Planning and Monitoring case study was of course designed to address the monitoring issue. The country study found that systematic budget monitoring by CSOs was only very recent and was not yet consolidated into a regular process. It was introduced under various INGO-supported projects, with CSO involvement through participation in the Budget Monitoring Forum of four CSOs set up on early 2010 with support from UNICEF. Monitoring was still regarded as a major challenge, which raised many controversial issues. It was noted that in districts visited as part of the field study, policy dialogue was not occurring as an interactive, mutual process.

Direct and informal approaches

In this category, CSO engagement with Government or other stakeholders through 'behind the scenes lobbying' and the rather different approach of using demonstrations and mass action is considered.

Lobbying is an important and often underrated strategy for influencing policy. While lobbying may be part of a planned process of engagement, in this context the range of informal contact and encounters that occurs between government officials and CSO representatives on an unplanned basis (for example, when attending a conference or even a meeting in a 'stairwell') goes generally unrecorded, yet is potentially an important contributor to policy engagement. Lobbying is often facilitated by the personal networks that are strong among the urban middle classes in many countries where the pool of people is relatively small, with many government and CSO professionals having attended the same university for example. These provide the means for the more or less continuous and low-level interchange of ideas that occurs in the background of the more formal, and visible policy engagement processes.

The Bangladesh country report concludes that lobbying is a very important means of influencing and has been used effectively in primary education. An example of this were the efforts to highlight early childhood education in the education policy and making pre-schooling as mandatory in government schools, which were largely the result of behind-the-scenes lobbying. In these situations, it is often possible and expedient for the CSO to play a low profile role, allowing the Government to then announce outcomes as if their own initiative.

Lobbying plays a significant part of the methods used in Uganda where for example, the UFWG expressed its core business in policy engagement as "*The network will focus on advocacy and lobbying for good forestry related policies…*".[52] . Lobbying is of course practiced at local level as well as national level. In the case of the Mabira Forest in Uganda, which was being threatened by degazettement by Government, CBOs adjacent to the forest lobbied local politicians and negotiated with Parliamentarians not to degazette the forest reserve. *The behind-the-scenes* work of the nationally-based CSOs

52 Section 3, Strategic directors for 2011-15 (sic), UFWG Strategic Plan 2011-16, September 2011. Funding for plan preparation was provided by WWF Uganda.

in this case was to convince local farmers and forest users in the locality of the benefits of good forestry management to their livelihoods, and that they should not rely on the political promises of 'new jobs' in sugarcane factories. The study found that the local forest users unsurprisingly, did not need much convincing that the benefits to them and their families of keeping the forest intact outweighed promises of employment!

Activism - demonstration and mass action
Activism in the form of public demonstrations, petitions and the like is a visible and very familiar form of CS engagement where other forms of policy dialogue have stalled, failed or are not possible, or where CSO/CS choose this strategy in order to force public and Government attention. They may occur spontaneously, often led by members of the public where, for example, an injustice or clear abuse of the system takes place. Such forms of activism may or may not include CSOs in the process. In the country studies, activism was found to be an element of the strategies employed by CSOs although there were clear differences between the three countries and the case studies covered.

In Bangladesh in the case of the Primary Education policy process CSOs may engage in mass demonstrations to further their cause, but these tend to be promotional rallies rather than protests. Protest action has been supported by CAMPE (for example in 2012 they facilitated dialogue between parents and the Ministry of Education following extreme public reaction to high admission fees). Generally this type of action has not been necessary as the working relationship between CAMPE and the Department for Primary Education is well established, with a significant amount of social capital built up. This enables them to exploit informal *invited spaces*. That said, Teachers Associations (which are CSOs according to the definition used in this study) will stage demonstrations and hunger strikes from time to time to bring attention to their cause.

CSOs supporting CHT Land Rights issues organise demonstrations, rallies and campaigns as one of their main strategies, but their protests are described as extremely constrained. LGAs in Bangladesh use mass demonstrations as part of their engagement strategy, and they receive good media coverage. This serves to highlight issues in the public domain, and points to the lack of official space for dialogue (despite the elected nature of their positions). There are suggestions that in Bangladesh, there is growing confidence in 'people power' and some groups are taking extreme and violent measures to raise concerns, indicating frustration with more peaceful means of policy engagement. It is also noted that in the 'crowded space' of daily protests all reported similarly in the press, it is these more extreme methods which get attention.

In Uganda, the study considered the role of CSOs in organising public demonstrations and petitions. In the case of the gender-responsive legislation, gender and women's rights organisations arranged public demonstrations as part of the on-going support for improved legislation. They also arranged spontaneous demonstrations in extreme cases of abuse or where abuse suspects have been released. The form usually followed is for demonstrators to take a signed petition to the Minister or official in charge. The petitioning process is increasing more sophisticatedly, with SMS media being used to petition and to communicate with the public. Similar developments are on the increase in Bangladesh, although they are less developed in Mozambique.

A feature of activism and mass protest movement in Uganda is that a number of CSOs make use of this approach as a key element of their strategy, even though their actions bring them into direct conflict with the authorities, putting their personal safety at considerable risk. The Executive Director of the National Association of Professional

Environmentalists was arrested and imprisoned on charges of terrorism in the case of the campaign to save the Mabira Forest. Other CSOs had their premises surrounded or broken into with computing equipment taken away or damaged. In this case (involving the threat of clearing the forest to plant sugarcane) a parallel and more peaceful set of protests organised by local CBOs was taking place involving forest walks and public hearings. These same CBOs having been trained and 'empowered' by national CSOs (see section above on lobbying).

While activism and mass demonstration remain important means of taking action on policy matters, CSOs in Kampala now regard the CBO and other local groups as being potentially the more powerful resource to engage directly with local government through advocacy and other peaceful means, with the national CSO focus being to continue to build awareness and capacity at local level.

5.3 Networking

As a broad generalisation, individual CSOs have limited resources, scale or capacity and in turn limited power to successfully influence policy change acting on their own. Strategic alliances are often central to successful influence. Networking of like-minded individual CSOs has been a natural development, allowing CSOs to share resources, exchange information and to increase the overall size to the **critical mass** necessary to influence policy change. This has been the dominant form of network (e.g. in Bangladesh, CAMPE was originally only open to membership of education-providing NGOs, and ALRD originally comprised NGOs working on land rights issues). However, more recently it has been recognised that numbers are not necessarily the crucial factor, and that bringing together a range of CSO actors, which are not necessarily like-minded but are committed to a common cause (albeit form different perspectives) can be an extremely effective strategy. Not only can they benefit from different expertise that the range of CSOs bring to the alliance but campaigns and messages benefit from better targeting to embrace different positions. CSOs recognise that networks provide a collective voice and influence (which they promote in their membership literature)[53] which they believe makes them more credible when engaging with Governments on policy issues. This evaluation notes a number of attempts to build stronger alliances, often including unconventional partners. For example, in Bangladesh CAMPE is networking with Teachers Unions, private sector educational institutions, madrasahs and others to further important primary education issues.

Uganda illustrates the case of a country which, while criticised some five years ago for having its CSOs working individually, has seen a rapid and deliberate effort to increase the number and type of networks and coalitions across a range of policy issues. In the policy process case studies, all the causes relied heavily on a mix of networks, coalitions and alliances, with for example, as many as fourteen such groups identified and contacted during the field study stage. In the case of the CSO movement to achieve improved gender legislation, four coalitions were in evidence (e.g. the Coalition on Domestic Violence Bill and the Sexual Offences Bill Coalition). In the forestry sector CSOs have come together as a strategic alliance to address strategic and controversial issues in a collective manner. Importantly this alliance deliberately decided not to register itself and to keep the relationship informal, in part to protect individuals who might then be subjected

53 The Uganda National NGO forum sites collective voice and influence as one of the key benefits from membership (UNNGO forum website, 2012).

to official scrutiny and intimidation. This group, the UFWG has been particularly successful in broadening its 'membership' across a wide range of organisations as well as linking vertically with district and community-based groups, thus being able to harness what is now perceived as the real 'civil society power' in Uganda – the communities at local level living in small towns and villages across the country.

In Bangladesh an organisation such as CAMPE has been able to speak on behalf of its members (more than 1,600 NGOs), but because it does not have a programme of primary education itself it is not seen by Government as a competitor. Instead it draws on the range of experience of its members and acts as a conduit for their ideas. Constituent NGOs purposely use CAMPE to exert influence on their behalf, knowing that Government will not accept criticism directly from them. Government conveniently can and does invite CAMPE as a legitimate representative of NGO education providers without appearing to favour/disfavour particular NGOs. CAMPE can champion ideas which may be less popular with Government without risk to any service delivery programme.

CS engagement in policy dialogue in Mozambique also uses networks and platforms, which are *invited* to engage in policy dialogue. However, interviews with CS representatives suggested that the main platform initiatives of LINK, the National Forum for Mozambican NGOs (TEIA) and JOINT have suffered a loss of momentum in recent times as they become fragmented and lose their legitimacy, acting as if reverting back to become individual organisations, rather than representing their constituencies.

Networks, coalitions or indeed loose groups of CSOs are clearly playing an important role in many of the policy cases studied and indeed these groupings are already receiving and benefiting from donor support, with the evidence for this documented in the country case studies. However, in some cases, as in Mozambique, some of the earlier, successful platforms have now 'lost their way', and are acting as individual organisations pursuing their own agenda. Others have lost their initial energy and drive, as for example the Bangladesh report notes that CAMPE is one of very few networks which has survived in-fighting, burn out and politicisation. However, much effort is required to establish successful, formal networks. For example, the networks of local government representatives in Bangladesh were first established in 2003 and are still working out their modus operandi, distracting them from the issues they are supposed to be advocating for.

The evaluation suggests that while networking is often key to successful engagement in policy dialogue, the establishment of networks as organisations may not always be appropriate. Some policy issues or causes have short lifecycles, and time and effort directed to organising the network detracts from the core business of influencing change which can be achieved through informal networking. Networks with long term objectives of, for example, monitoring compliance to policy changes may be worth investing in as organisations. These will probably choose to become legitimate policy dialogue partners and occupy *invited spaces*. But for process and legislation change outcomes more fluid networking arrangements are usually a better option.

5.4 Effectiveness and outcomes of CSO influence on policy processes

Introduction

This section, based on the findings from the nine policy process case studies, considers the effectiveness and outcomes of CSO engagement in policy dialogue to which CSOs have contributed in the nine specific policy areas.

The analysis of outcomes broadly follows the approach outlined in the Conceptual Framework document drawn up as part of this evaluation to guide the case study approach and analysis (although the use of the term 'outcomes' is further expanded here). The analysis also links directly to the ToC model developed in this synthesis report to attempt to better understand the complex processes and interactions that occur. For the purpose of this analysis, following the logic in the ToC model four levels of outcome are recognised:

- **CSO activity outcomes:** relating primarily to internal and external organisational capacity,

- **Intermediate process outcomes:** in effect identified milestones on the path towards policy change, such as greater recognition and awareness (by Government and CS) of the policy issues being addressed,

- **Policy change outcomes:** in terms of the enactment of a new law, implementation of that law and policy enforcement, and

- **Long-term outcomes:** the broader development objectives associated with the policy engagement, either explicitly or implicitly stated, which might take many years to achieve (e.g. reduction in levels of corruption, or longer term still, improvements in living standards for poor people) and involve sustained changes in behaviour and relationships between duty bearers and rights holders.

These achievements and outcomes are summarised in Tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 by country for the four categories given above. The detailed assessment given below focuses on the intermediate process outcomes and on policy change outcomes which DP support strategies can themselves expect to influence.

Intermediate process outcomes – influencing the engagement processes

Bangladesh 1: Influence in the education sector
In Bangladesh the influence exerted by the CAMPE coalition of CSOs working in the primary education sector is an example of a CSO coalition working very closely with the Government agencies in what is effectively a symbiotic relationship (with Government responsible for only 48% of primary education and the rest supported by CSOs and private sector). With the established service provision relationship and social capital that has been developed between CAMPE and government agencies over more than two decades, Government has effectively included them as an established partner in the policy dialogue process. Their participation has been promoted by DPs, with the interaction of these three principal actors important in formalising the extent of engagement that was possible. However, it is argued that a more important strategy than participation in these *formal invited spaces* is the *behind-the-scenes* contact between CAMPE and Government. In effect, this constitutes an 'unofficial' *invited space*. The formal *invited space* nevertheless contributes to legitimising the role of CAMPE and other CSOs in the eyes of their constituencies and wider public.

The extent and type of influence exerted by CAMPE on the development of the National Education Policy and its implementation in Bangladesh is set out in some detail in the Country Report. A fortuitous and unpredicted opportunity was provided to CAMPE by the two-year Caretaker Government period when the Executive Director was appointed

as Education Advisor. The Executive Director was able to engage a range of stakeholders in drafting the policy which was taken up following restoration of democratic Government by the Awami League. CAMPE was instrumental in ensuring that the Awami League manifesto included a commitment to developing a new education policy, recommending that it should be a consultative process. Electronic media communications contributed to the final process as did the more traditional press. CSOs were, however, not able to influence all elements of the policy, as the debate surrounding secular and religious education (a controversial and vested interest issue for Government) did not take place openly and was in effect a closed space to CSOs.

Bangladesh 2: Influence in local government policy processes
In the second case study on Local Government, of the issues covered there has only been success in relation to encouraging citizen participation in local government affairs. This has not been a CS-driven outcome, but a result of donor requirements over many years for citizen participation in infrastructure projects, which built up sufficient government experience and confidence for these to become mandatory legal requirements. Although this is a promising development, it could share the demise of DOs set up by law in Mozambique as provision of spaces which were ultimately either not used or were misused.

However, NGOs have been active in facilitating citizens' groups in engaging with local government before these legal provisions came into force, by building their capacity and confidence to voice their demands in *claimed spaces*. Some of this has been around a particular theme such as gender and development (GAD Alliance), or corruption (Transparency International) and was seen to be influential. Some CSOs adopt a confrontational approach, while others take a more collaborative line although both approaches have demonstrated results. The challenge now is to use this varied experience, honed through *direct and informal* means to engage productively in the *invited spaces* created by law (*direct and formal*).

The main feature of this case study was that of NGOs taking up a position as facilitators, empowering citizens and CBOs to *themselves* take on a policy influencing and policy watchdog role. Likewise, LGAs are being supported by programmes and NGOs to advocate for decentralisation and improved conditions of service *themselves* thus capitalising on their passion for change and their knowledge of the policy making environment.

Bangladesh 3: Influence in CHT Land Rights
CSOs in the CHT land rights case study play an important role in awareness creation and mobilising people on land laws and on ways the Adivasi are losing ownership of their land. Although the media campaign is important, it has failed to make it a mainstream issue. On the other hand CHT land rights has attracted international attention and support for the tenets of the CHT Peace Accord through international campaigns using research, publications (in particular through blogs and social media), and signed petitions calling for action. However, unlike the influence exerted by the CSOs in the education sector (in the example given above), CSO influence has not been substantial, and with no political incentive to progress past the current impasse, Government prefers the position of 'no decision' in order to maintain good relations with the various vested interests.

Bangladesh 4: Influence in the Food Security sector
In this case study, despite the apparent importance of the issues, CSO strategies to influence policy aspects of food security issues have been minimal and ineffective, with

the more important actor being the media which occasionally highlights issues of the misuse of land and on food price increases.[54]

Mozambique 1: Influence in District Planning and Budgeting policy process
In Mozambique, the District Planning and Budget Monitoring case study revealed a fairly bleak picture in terms of CSO influence on policy engagement. The DOs and Consultative Councils, the former being a Government-designed space for consultation where the other main actors are DPs, do not provide a real opportunity for CSOs to influence policy processes. There are various factors at work here. Unlike Bangladesh and Uganda there is no real climate or acceptance of the role of criticism or debate. Invitations to participate are often selective (purposively excluding the more critical groups), and in any case the CSOs themselves are poorly resourced and poorly organised. Similarly on the matter of budget monitoring, which is in any case a new process in the country, the sensitivity to criticism of the process, a lack of information, and a lack of skills and capability in the CSO sector has led to very limited engagement with Government and little influence on the budget.

Mozambique 2: Influence in Domestic Violence and Gender related policy process
Evidence suggests that the process of introducing legislation on domestic violence in Mozambique (being similar to the Gender Responsive Legislation study in Uganda) was a result of the influence of the CSOs involved, albeit the final result flawed to some extent by omissions and distortions. CSO efforts on influencing the process spanned a period of at least 15 years starting with an 'All Against Violence' public campaign aimed at eradicating violence against women. It was organised by a group of Mozambican CSOs drawing inspiration and legitimacy from the 4th Women's Forum held in Beijing in 1995. The detailed history of the process is given in the Mozambique case study, but the main elements include the role played by a range of CSOs which came together in a multi-disciplinary group during 2000 to 2001. They contributed to drafting a law on domestic VAW (with different CSOs involved in various capacities, legal drafting, research, and judicial counselling, etc.). However, following amendments made in Parliament, seeking to accommodate complaints of certain (mainly male) groups, that the bill had discriminated against men, the final law was considered by many who had fought the campaign to lack harmonisation, and was seen as a distortion of the CS proposals. Nevertheless, CSOs are credited with being a significant force in influencing this process, even though the final outcome failed to achieve their original longer term aims (as discussed in the section on outcomes below).

Uganda 1: Influencing Gender Responsive Legislation
This case provides a further example of the length of time required to influence policy. Taking even longer than the gender-related legislation in Mozambique, dialogue in one form or another has been on-going since the colonial period, but more visibly after independence in 1962. It was suppressed during 1971-80 but was resumed again with progress made during the Constitution drafting in 1988-95, which recognised the rights of women (following strong lobbying and advocacy), with commitments to the protection of social justice and equality to all Ugandans. However, in spite of these positive provisions, the laws continue to discriminate against women in the areas of inheritance, marriage and property ownership for example. In the specific case of CSO influence on

54 The reasons for this situation are not fully clear, but the *invited space* on this issue is very limited with only one CSO (the Association of Land Reform and Development) the only de facto organisation invited. The few attempts by a variety of CSOs to claim space has been disparate and largely ineffective.

gender responsive legislation, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development continues to provide space to CSOs to actively engage in policy dialogue processes, where ministry officials work with CSO such as the Uganda Women's Network to influence policy change. Importantly, the gender laws that have been recently enacted (e.g. Domestic Violence Act 2010) provide a supportive legislative framework for CSO engagement.

As in the situation encountered by CSOs in Mozambique, where the legislation is slow to finally pass into law, in Uganda, gender-based policy remains highly political, challenges power relations, and with influential vested interests acting against change, progress is slow. Ugandan politicians claim that gender-responsive laws will impact negatively on their own personal positions and political interests; others tend not to support the policies openly, while privately backing the law.

A further factor in the slow pace of legislation may be the lack of a coordinated programme of engagement by CSOs, where overlapping mandates and competition between CSOs for visibility reduce their effectiveness. However, CSOs may have learned lessons from this experience, as coordination through networking and their ability to work more effectively with government departments has reportedly improved.

A further criticism was that CSOs tended to focus on the situation at the national level failing to engage sufficiently with the grass roots, apart from research and some raising of awareness among communities. In Uganda, part of the reason for this appears to be a deliberate strategy of local CSOs to avoid confrontation with powerful district institutions such as the Resident Commissioners Office.

Uganda 2: Influence in forest sector management policy processes
The space for forestry sector CSOs to engage with Government on policy matters dates back to the 2001 Forestry Policy and the 2002 National Forestry Plan, which provided invited space for CSOs to participate in important decision-making fora. This also led to the establishment of the UFWG, being a network of CSOs in the sector. While CSOs have continued to engage with and influence policy in recent years, including climate change legislation, the focus of CSO engagement has moved to the implementation and monitoring stages of the 'policy cycle'. Their message is "*Strong policies, weak governance, poor implementation and lack of compliance with the laws and regulations in the forest sector*". In stark terms the high ideals set out by Government for the sustainable management of the nation's forests are not being followed, with the resulting destruction of the country's vital and natural resource. CSO's are confronting this situation in a number of ways at national and local levels. The former includes working with Government (civil servants and politicians sympathetic the cause) to update and improve some of the legislation on sustainable forest management, assisting in development of operational guidelines on policy implementation and monitoring the implementation of government programmes and holding Government to account through research papers and dissemination of information through the media and published reports. CSOs also challenge Government over degazettement of forests or land-grabbing schemes through a range of tactics. At district and community level, CSOs provide training to communities on sustainable forest management including encouraging them to take ownership, work in local alliances with officials and politicians to safeguard against national Government excesses.

Overall CSOs, often working closely with the media have been a powerful influence on the development of policy, but more importantly have successfully challenged Government in a number of high profile cases, including the proposed degazettement of the Mabira Forest. The strategy to encourage local ownership of the forests is seen as a potentially more powerful and effective means of influencing the maintenance and sustainable use of the forest estate in the country.

Uganda 3: Influencing the anti-corruption initiative
Multiple entry points for CSOs engagement in policy dialogue on anti-corruption exist. CSOs have provided inputs in the policy process including: inclusion of an incentive for whistle blowing in the Whistle blowers Act, enforcement of accountability requirements for Constituency Development Fund, where very few Members of Parliament (MPs) accounted for the monies received. As a result of fraudulent use of the fund, the CDF was suspended and an MP prosecuted. Other laws CSOs have contributed to include Good Governance Laws, the Access to Public Information Act 2005 and the Anti-Corruption Act 2009. CSOs also participated in the formulation of the National strategy to fight Corruption and rebuild ethics and integrity in Uganda 2009-13, and the Regulatory framework for Oil and Gas.

CSOs contribute to policy monitoring and lesson learning at district level, which has been met with mixed reactions from the authorities. At the local level, CSOs have intensified policy dialogue through organising community dialogue meetings, recognised as an important input into the local processes. Establishment of community structures and systems which monitor service delivery and hold officials accountable has strengthened CSO effectiveness.

Policy change outcomes
This aim of this section on outcomes of policy dialogue is to present an assessment of the effectiveness of CSOs engagement in policy dialogue in terms of the specific achievements, or outcomes, both planned and unexpected in relation to engagement in policy dialogue, with reference to the key stages of the policy cycle, policy formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy results and outcomes.

The CSO policy engagement outcomes (using the criteria as defined above) as well as unexpected results identified during the detailed field work stages, are summarised in the following Tables 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 by country, with attempts made where evidence exists to consider the question of attribution (or at least contribution) on a case by case basis. It is important to note, however, that the nine case studies were purposely selected to demonstrate examples both of successful policy engagement as well as those that were less successful in order to understand the processes at work. Thus, while the outcomes given below can be assessed for each case individually, and lessons and conclusions drawn, the results cannot be used to describe a wider pattern of achievement across the nine case studies as a whole.

Given the above qualification, in four of the case studies policy change outcomes were observed (with a fifth making a small contribution to change). For example, in Bangladesh the National Education Policy contains a wide range of issues which had been advocated by CAMPE. It was also claimed that they had influenced the last two sector wide approaches in primary education. But compliance to policy and practice improvements (long-term goals) is still to be established. In Mozambique the law against VAW was adopted (policy change outcome) and this was in large part attributed to CSO

activity over several decades. As the bill has only recently been passed it is too early to assess its effectiveness in terms of reducing VAW (long-term outcome). In Uganda, all three policy process case studies contributed to policy change outcomes in one way or another, although it was in the gender responsive legislation case study with the enactment of the Domestic Violence Bill and the success in preventing the degazettement of the Mabira Forest, that the work of CSOs was seen as a major contributing factor. CSOs also made a contribution to the Access to Information Act in the governance and anti-corruption case study.

In the other three case studies in Bangladesh there was no significant indication of policy change to date (although individual CS actors had influenced local government policy and LGAs played a crucial role in reining in excesses of Government in proposals in the new Local Governance Acts through their mass demonstrations and protests). In the case of the CHT dispute, it seems that international pressure in support of the land issues has the most potential to force policy change. In the case of the food security issue, this is likely to remain marginalised unless it receives external support. In Mozambique, the district planning and budget monitoring initiative had no impact on policy change, although the actual creation of an *invited space* for CSO engagement with Government was widely regarded as a success.

CSOs' contribution to change

There are difficulties in measuring policy influence directly as so many contributing factors exist. CAMPE in Bangladesh made some quantitative assessment of their effectiveness by comparing the number of recommendations they had made to Government, with the number that were eventually included in the policy. There is limited quantifiable evidence available in the other case studies, but based on specific documented information where available, the views of stakeholders associated with a particular policy area, and the assessment of the available evidence carried out by the evaluation team, it is concluded that where CSOs have set out to challenge the Governments, CSOs have been important, influential players in shaping policy, even if as in some cases it has taken decades to achieve.

In summary, long-term goals are just that, long term, so that to affect sustainable behaviour change outcomes, time horizons of not less than 10 years should be considered. Interim outcomes can be expected within shorter time frames but are nevertheless extremely susceptible to the prevailing socio-economic and political environment making normative predictions of successful outcomes problematic.

The choice of strategies and likelihood of success is strongly predicated on the nature of the issue. Unequivocal public good issues such as primary education can play out through *invited spaces*. Where issues are more contested then the case studies have shown that strategies require exploitation of overt *claimed space* or informal *invited spaces* which are opened up as a result of relationship building with Government (behind the scenes lobbying).

During the Kampala workshop a participant provided a useful analogy for describing CSO strategies; most are long term and slow, and like turning a large ship *around* and few are like *speedboats* which exploit right moments to influence. These can and should co-exist but require different conceptual understanding and support.

Table 5.2 BANGLADESH: Summary of CSO Achievements and Outcomes in Policy Process Case Studies

Country/ case study	Process Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Policy Change Outcome at formulation stage	Policy Change at Implementation & M&E stages	Unexpected results
Bangladesh					
Primary education	CAMPE developed as an effective Coalition, with 1300 NGOs, CSOs ensuring coherent approach to policy change.	Education Watch research undertaken by CAMPE widely quoted and recognised as influential in policy dialogue.	National Education Policy 2010 includes wide range of issues advocated by CSOs (attribution: CAMPE Annual Report claims 80% of recommendations accepted in NEP). But failure to influence national budget allocation for education.	NEP broadly accepted by diverse group of stakeholder incl. different political parties. Monitoring of adherence less well developed at local level.	
	CAMPE recognised as professional and non-partisan with exceptional and wide respect for the ED.		CSO influenced design of PEDP III, which included many approaches advocated by CSOs.	CSO participation in Joint Annual Review of PEDP II.	
				Note: CSOs failed to influence national budget re: education provisions.	
Local Government (focus on public participation)	LG Associations have large membership – but need capacity building.	Demonstrable change in public interest to participate in LG processes of fiscal decentralisation and increasing recognition of the LGAs as credible bargaining bodies.	Demonstrable change in public interest to participate in LG processes of fiscal decentralisation and increasing recognition of the LGAs as credible bargaining bodies.	Lack of locally administered budgets inhibits progress in LG but LGER taking more cognisance of electorate (moving from patronage style politics to genuine representational style politics).	Duplication of programmes supporting LG associations has created tensions and stalled progress. NGOs involved in LG often strategically drop out of direct policy dialogue in favour of LGAs.

Country/ case study	Process Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Policy Change Outcome at formulation stage	Policy Change at Implementation & M&E stages	Unexpected results
	Emergence of active Citizen Groups.	Growing sense of people power and some demonstrable examples of change at local level.		Improvement of safety net and welfare provisions in particular and some progress with increased transparency and accountability.	Re-emergence of social movements and volunteer citizen action.
Minority rights/ Chittagong Hill Tracts land rights	Emergence and capacitation of Adivasi – led CSOs championing these issues.	CSOs representing Adivasis have gained acceptance and legitimacy with GOB.	No change in policy: Government has stance of 'No decision' on issue.	Little progress: Edicts of the Peace Accord not fully implemented.	Sections of Government wrongly interpret Accord as giving recognition to Adivasis autonomy.
		International support increased and some pressure on GOB from international community.	Outcome not achieved: Objective of legal and secure ownership of land by Adivasis community not yet achieved.		

Table 5.3 MOZAMBIQUE: Summary of CSO Achievements and Outcomes in Policy Process Case Studies

Country/ case study	Process Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Policy Change Outcome at formulation stage	Policy Change at Implementation & M&E stages	Unexpected results
Mozambique					
District Planning & budget Monitoring	Formation of Coalitions around specific issues at national level proving more effective – but this mainly at national level.	Setting up formal mechanisms of engagement with Government considered an achievement of CSOs.	While de facto changes made to practice at local level, at national level no policy changes made in supporting local government planning and budget processes.	NIL	With introduction of the 'Open Presidency' experience, focus of Local Councils moved to the way decisions are made. Communities' scrutiny increased and seven district administrators were removed or transferred.
	Mixed results: Development Observatories ineffective according to one source; other sources suggest indications of improvement.	CSO participation in District Planning and Budgeting process yielding only limited results & influence.	In one province, Manica, CSO and government officials jointly prepared the Strategic Plan for the Province. This seen as a unique experience and a break with the past hostile CSO-Government relations.		
		Some attention being paid by Government to questions raised by CSOs (in form of evidence-based research).			

Country/ case study	Process Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Policy Change Outcome at formulation stage	Policy Change at Implementation & M&E stages	Unexpected results
Legislation on domestic violence		Public sensitised to the important of the domestic violence issue. State institutions sensitized and aware of scale and importance of domestic violence against women.	Law on Domestic Violence against Women adopted; this achievement in large part attributed to CSOs. Despite its limitations it is recognised as a benefit to society.	Bill only passed in 2009. However, concern by CSO groups that the legal framework has negative implications for the effectiveness of programmes aimed at reducing violence against women.	Policy dialogue process led to approval of national action plan to prevent and fight violence against women (2008-12) one year before Government adopted the bill itself.

Table 5.4 UGANDA: Summary of CSO Achievements and Outcomes in Policy Process Case Studies

Country/ case study	Process Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Policy Change Outcome at formulation stage	Policy Change at Implementation & M&E stages	Unexpected results
Uganda					
Governance, accountability and anti-corruption	Networks/Coalitions Anti-corruption: Coalitions formed to enhance effectiveness: Anti-corruption coalition (ACCU) established working at national, regional and local levels.	CSOs under the CSBAG network umbrella, made numerous presentations to Parliament on sector spending priorities. CSOs attend the annual Public Expenditure Review as invitees.	Contribution to Access to Information Act.	CSOs contribute to the Health sector budget formulation process. Official at MOH attributes increased spend on maternal health care to CSOs. Monitoring of government processes.	
	Education: Forum for Education NGO established to head up Education for All (EFA).	CSOs (e.g. UHNHCO) invited to participate as members of the Health Policy Advisory Committee.		In Health Sector, National CSOs (sometimes with INGOs) use service delivery projects a basis for engaging in policy dialogue; Also share their strategic plans with District Local Government and incorporate CSO budget into district budget.	
	Civil Society Budget Advocacy Group.	Forum for Education NGOs is member of Education Sector Consultative Committee.		No policy change resulting from survey: Education Sector: A CSO in conjunction with National NGO Forum conducted first country-wide education survey to assess performance. However, this was not accepted by the Ministry and therefore no policy change resulted.	

Country/ case study	Process Outcome	Intermediate Outcome	Policy Change Outcome at formulation stage	Policy Change at Implementation & M&E stages	Unexpected results
Gender Responsive legislation: Overall Objective to eliminate laws that discriminate against women	Increased level of networking and cooperation between CSOs: • Coalition on Domestic violence bill • Coalition on Domestic Violence Act • Sexual Offences Bill Coalition • Marriage & Divorce Bill Coalition	Improved collaboration between CSOs and government departments.	Active influence on legislation by CSOs: • Domestic Violence Bill enacted 2010; note DPs acknowledged contribution of CSOs • Sexual Offences Bill and Marriage and Divorce Bill	CSOs facilitate implementation by improving awareness of new legislation.	
Forest management and governance	Effective networks/ coalitions established, viz: Uganda Forestry Working Group Uganda Forestry Learning Governance Group		National Forest Policy (2001) developed in consultative manner including with CSOs. Success in Prevention of degazettement of Forests, especially Mabira Forest.	Communities empowered by CSOs to resist abuse of forestry policy.	

6 Development partners' support to CSOs

6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines DP support to CS engagement in policy dialogue. It draws on the Scoping Studies conducted in each of the three study countries in late 2011 where the current portfolios of CSO support of the six DPs participating in the evaluation were reviewed. It also draws on the nine policy process case studies undertaken (2012) and reported on in the three Country Reports which complement this Synthesis Report.

As noted in the methodology, the case studies were designed to review policy themes holistically rather than by DP intervention and so provided information on support derived from other sources beyond the participating DPs. This chapter assesses DP support strategies, channels of support and relevance, and how well the challenges of the operating context are met and leads to effective outcomes.

It is recognised that different DPs have adopted their own approaches for support to CSOs underpinned by their own guiding and financing principles. This means that some of the statements within this section will not apply to all DPs whereas others are more generalised. Wherever possible the report notes exceptions, but as DP strategies are constantly evolving, this may not always reflect current practice. Similarly the recommendations given in Chapter 8 will have to be digested by DPs and made use of in a more tailor-made way through a suitable forum for example, the informal donor group on CS support.

6.2 Development partner strategies

All the commissioning DPs[55] endorse the principle of active participation of CS in development and support the Accra Agenda on Action for Aid Effectiveness (2008) pledge to "*support efforts to increase the capacity of all development actors – parliaments, central and local governments, civil society organisations, research institutes, media and the private sector – to take an active role in dialogue on development policy and on the role of aid in contributing to countries' development objectives*". The rationale for support is embedded in the promotion of democratic principles and the role of CS in demanding accountability from the State.

There are four key accountabilities demanded within and supporting the policy dialogue cycle[56] (Chapter 1, Figure 1.1) as follows:

1. **Social accountability;** which is the responsiveness and performance of the state to citizens in terms of its ability to deliver quality public services and goods and to meet its obligations for the fulfilment of human rights. CS engagement involves influencing and monitoring of the country's leaders, parliament, politicians, public officials and market actors and their performance and use of power in this regard.

55 The Commissioning DPs being ADC/Austria, Danida/Denmark, Sida/Sweden (Management Group) as well as CIDA/Canada, Ministry of Foreign Affairs/Finland and SDC/Switzerland.

56 Adapted from 'Guidelines: The Swedish Embassy's Support to Mozambican Civil Society Organisations, 2009.

2. **Transparency and financial accountability** includes the monitoring of public finances, the transparency of budgets and public audits and parliamentary oversight mechanisms towards more efficient and equitable use of public resources.

3. **Legal accountability and the Rule of Law** refers to the need to strengthen the rule of law and to ensure that there are proper mechanisms for redress and sanctions when there is malpractice.

4. **Political accountability** refers to the existence of a multi-party system providing a real choice for voters and the inclusion and diversity of political parties which confers the possibility for citizens to remove non-performing elected representatives through elections.

DP strategies address all of the above to a greater or lesser extent depending on their own priorities and the context in which assistance is given. In order to realise any of these accountabilities, both citizens and state must have access to information, have the capacity to exercise rights, meet obligations and demand these accountabilities. Social accountability, in particular, provides a measure of the desired outcome of the improved quality and equity in delivery of public services and contributions to the achievement of the MDGs, while the other three accountabilities relate more to the processes operating within the policy dialogue cycle which enable this outcome to be realised.

Despite the seemingly-common understanding of the rationale for support to CS engagement, in practice, DP support strategies differ depending on the particular priorities emphasised in their global development aid policies and which are also nuanced within different country contexts. The extent and nature of support given is dependent on the DP's domestic political climate and understanding of the roles played by CS within their own national context. Danida, for example, regards its commitment to policy dialogue as higher than other DPs because of the political support it enjoys. The country case studies all point to the need for a better and common understanding of the nature and role of active CS as a prerequisite to understand how best to support and not distort their natural dynamic and evolution. While harmonisation may exist in the language used by DPs describing the support to CS, the means adopted by different DPs suggests there remain gaps in mutual understanding.[57]

Furthermore, the imperatives of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness have led to DPs assuming that CSOs benefiting from their funding should also adopt the harmonisation agenda. This has led to an observed trend among DPs to have greater expectations than before of steering CSOs towards DP thematic priorities and official development policy. Whilst this is usually consensual, there are cases where the autonomy and independence of a CSO to define its own interests and sphere of influence may be compromised (see Box 6.1).

57 A typical example of how DPs view CS differently is their take on volunteerism. Some DPs hold strong views about not providing monetary incentives for CS engagement ('*buying participation*') whilst others consider compensation essential.

Box 6.1 Overriding the CSO 'right to initiative'

CAMPE is a national network comprising more than 1500 CSOs working in primary education which advocates for the tenets of *Education for All* in Bangladesh. It is well respected and has developed an effective and collaborative approach to working with Government mostly in primary education. Its trusted reputation enables it to broker relationship between different education stakeholders including Teacher's Unions, private schools, Madrasahs, parents and students and different elements of Government.

Its major funding from a DP was terminated this year. The letter explaining this noted: "*As we have communicated to you and your staff on various occasions over the last years, a continued support of CAMPE would only be possible under the condition of a very clear inclusion of the skills development issue.*" (this being one of the DP strategic priorities but is not yet a priority for CAMPE, which still has much to accomplish in primary education first).

A key rationale of DP support to CSOs in policy dialogue is to bring the voice of people living in poverty and other marginalised and vulnerable groups into the policy dialogue process, either directly or indirectly. The core comparative advantage which attracts DP support is the connectedness which CSOs are deemed to have with those who generally are excluded from policy dialogue. Support to CSOs recognises the need to mitigate the intrinsic dilemma that those most excluded are also more likely to be averse to associational behaviour as they are more likely to be preoccupied with making ends meet and satisfying their everyday needs. This premise raises several important concerns; the representativeness of the CSO and the extent to which demands are really from the grass roots (see Section 5.5).

To meet these concerns DP funding strategies have to be appropriate. Our interviews with staff of both participating DPs and other donors suggest three major positive and encouraging changes in the way DP support strategies for CS engagement have developed over recent years:

- Increasing recognition and support to CSOs beyond traditional NGOs and CBOs to include activist groups, faith-based groups, professional associations, trade unions, not-for-profit media suggesting a more pluralistic approach to promoting public policy dialogue.

- Genuine efforts to introduce and test out different funding modalities more suited to the nature of policy dialogue work.

- Increasing recognition of the importance of working on both sides of the CS-state engagement process to nurture a readiness to engage and create structures and processes through which to engage (*invited spaces*).

DPs are supporting different strategies to advance CS engagement in policy dialogue which include supporting a wide range of CS activity (see Chapter 5) assisting Governments to put in place measures to enable increased and meaningful engagement (from the establishment of Anti-Corruption Commissions to e-governance), tackling the situational hindrances to engagement with measures such as 'Right to Information' legislation and introduction of Citizen Charters and linking national CSOs with international discourse and solidarity.

6.3 Challenges in support to CS engagement

There are several challenges inherent in supporting CS engagement in policy dialogue which have not been fully accommodated in current funding modalities despite efforts and innovations introduced by DPs. These include:

Long time frames needed for change
The outcomes of policy dialogue are ultimately changes in attitude and behaviour of politicians and legislators as well as the enhanced social accountability (responsiveness and performance) of service providers. The Domestic Violence and Local Government case studies in Mozambique and Bangladesh respectively indicate that change took several decades. Most funding modalities have relatively short timeframes which are widely regarded as too short to achieve the ambitious targets often articulated in log frames, results frameworks and ToCs.

Non-linear processes
Change resulting from engagement in policy dialogue is not a linear process. It is particularly vulnerable to changes in Government and regime changes. The country case studies demonstrate how progress can be stop-start and how issues can be side-lined so that new ways to achieve change have to be developed to respond to the evolving context. In the Bangladesh local government case study, it was noted that attempts to promote public participation were initiated in the 1980s but successive Governments routinely overturned legislation and provisions made by their predecessors.

Unpredictable processes
Opportunities to affect change often depend on the right moments which are not always predictable. Projects may fail to be flexible enough to respond to emergent opportunities. Much of the successful CS action in democratic governance depends on exploiting '*right moments*' when an issue is given high profile, a new Government takes office, new '*invited space*' is provided or a new law enacted. While some '*moments*' are predictable (e.g. national and local elections), others are largely serendipitous (e.g. the Caretaker Government in Bangladesh covered a two-year period which could not have been predicted. This provided a number of opportunities for policy development).

Supporting the 'right' agents of change
Related to the point above regarding '*right moments*', is the fact that '*agents for change*' are most effective when championing issues which they are passionate about and which are indigenously-driven. CS action to demand accountability and influence policy and practice works when citizens feel issues are crucial and significant. Pre-determined themes for DP support are often regarded as restrictive, often missing significant issues or seeming to impose external agendas. Furthermore, as time passes needs change and pre-determined themes initiative by DPs may lag behind. In addition, different donors tend to identify similar themes in their global and country specific programmes creating over-funding for some (beyond absorptive capacity) and paucity of funds for other badly needed areas.

Support is needed to assist CSOs to claim space, not just to work in *invited space*
DP support is more easily directed at *invited spaces*, creating structures and platforms for engagement than supporting CS to *claim space*. DP strategies tend to support coalitions and network building promoting the notions of like-mindedness and critical mass as pre-requisites for change. But change processes are propelled by pluralism, diverse voices

and positions. As was eloquently noted in Bangladesh, "*What is the point of the converted talking to the converted in safe spaces?*" But dissent inevitably carries risk for CSOs and their DP support. It was particularly apparent in the Mozambique case study that any criticism of the Government was assumed to be 'Opposition-driven'. Overt criticism in most situations poses dilemmas, especially for INGOs and DPs whose presence is at the discretion of the Government, but it also creates problems and uncertainty for local CSOs which are mostly registered and controlled by their Governments. Currently there seems to be no satisfactory means for DPs to provide financial support to non-registered CSOs, with the possible exception of the funding provided to the Uganda Forestry Working Group, which is not registered as network, although some of its key members are themselves registered as individual organisations. Arguably some powerful CS forces for change are not currently fundable because of these constraints and risks to the DP.

Policy engagement is relatively resource light
Many DPs have found themselves with bigger budgets and less manpower as a result of concentration in smaller numbers of focal countries or other re-structuring measures introduced to increase efficiency in aid delivery, particularly in the wake of the Paris Agenda on Aid Effectiveness (2005). The case studies confirm that many 'small fund' windows have been closed down in recent years and there is a growing preference for large-scale pooled funds. This is a serious setback to small-scale CSOs (and indeed CS (as opposed to CSO) processes which could be supported by discretionary small funds).

Whilst DPs report more funds being channelled to CSOs, those interviewed during the evaluation, recognised that without appropriate disaggregation it is not possible to establish whether this translates into more funds for processes such as policy dialogue or is mostly taken up by service delivery and humanitarian assistance. The CSOs themselves indicate that the funds for 'soft' processes such as dialogue are diminishing and point to the demise of small CSOs championing very local or minority interests.[58] The increasing demand for demonstration of VfM or results has also tended to privilege service provision activity over process change which is still regarded as hard to measure. The desire to disburse large amounts with low transaction costs is blamed for the often heard concerns in all three case study countries that DPs '*love darling CSOs to death*', in other words place too much financial resources and expectations on a smaller number of CSOs beyond their absorptive capacities.

All these concerns mean that most conventional forms of DP financial support are considered by CSOs as not entirely satisfactory for policy engagement work as they are short term, insufficiently flexible and felt to be dominated by DP agendas. The view was shared by most of the DPs interviewed in this evaluation and some good attempts to try to mitigate these constraints had been attempted e.g. core funding, innovation funds and flexible funds. However, it was widely agreed that financing modalities remain sub-optimal.

6.4 Channels for support

The study is not an evaluation of the different support modalities but rather attempts to compare funding modalities in order to draw out some lessons learned. Such comparisons are complicated by the fact that different DPs use different language to describe

58 Danida, by contrast, suggested to the study team that there are DP resources (supply) but not the CSO resources at country level to take these up (demand).

their different modalities, that these modalities are constantly evolving and DP respondents were not always clear themselves on the details of the modalities which determine their strengths and weaknesses. DPs are aware that funding modalities have not always been appropriate and are constantly refining these and experimenting with alternatives so this report may not adequately capture the full breadth of experience. Table 6.1 gives some definitions in an attempt to provide some clarity in comparing different funding modalities but is not necessarily comprehensive:

Table 6.1 Funding modalities: An attempt at a definition

Type of DP funding available for CS engagement	Description
Contracting	Donor mandated deliverables defined in contracts which are awarded to CSOs on competitive basis. Usually involve public calls for tenders and generally rather short term.
Direct grant (also called project funding)	Bilateral funding negotiated between the DP and CSO for specified results within thematic area as given in the DP Country Strategy. Usually defined by results framework or log frame and a short time frame (2-4 years). Fund recipients usually identified through relationship building but may be through calls for proposals. A variation involves several donors co-financing an agreed project.
Core Funding (also called Framework Agreements)	Grants made to organisations based on mutually negotiated outcomes which support the organisation as a whole (covering operating and development costs) rather than just project-related costs. Grant recipients have generally had long term relationships with the DPs before entering into this kind of agreement. More prevalent as an arrangement between domestic INGOs than with NGOs in aid recipient country.
Funding through INGO intermediaries	Project-type funding provided by INGOs to local CSOs. The funding often originates through framework agreements or partnership funds sourced in their country of origin.
Joint Trust/Challenge Funds (sometimes called Pooled Funds)	Involves the establishment of a fund management system which can accept funds from multiple sources and disburse and manage these on behalf of the DPs, usually with a particular predetermined thematic purpose. The intermediaries may be INGOs, private management companies, networks or local foundations. Usually provide CSOs funding through projects but may contract services or may be able to provide core funding. Fund recipients usually identified through 'calls for proposals.'
Funding through DP intermediaries	Funds managed by another DP on the donors behalf e.g. UN managed funds.
Sector/budget support	Multi-donor direct Government support which may have earmarked windows for CS engagement. These funds for CSOs are generally channelled through Government and managed through 'calls for proposals'.
Research and Innovation grants	Usually small grants operated by DP from Head Office or local Embassy/DP office and awarded on competitive basis.
Own mandated projects	DPs develop their own projects with short-term technical expertise or through existing organisations to meet objectives derived from their own country strategies.

Type of DP funding available for CS engagement	Description
Small project windows	DPs manage facilities for small grants usually under a particular theme e.g. Gender or Human Rights. These have mostly closed down in recent years because of efficiency concerns.
Unallocated funds/ small action funds/ strategic funds	Variously named flexible funds often available at the discretion of the local DP office to meet emerging needs. Generally small-scale and often used for pilot programmes, national election-related needs or other significant events.

There was a strong convergence of opinions among CSOs in all three countries that the modality least suited to the needs of engagement in policy dialogue is contracting. All funding through intermediaries received some criticism from CSOs which generally preferred direct funding relationships with the DP. The most-preferred support out of those currently used was a mix of flexible and core funding. The idea of a new kind of funding modality 'resources for all' and adaptive funds for the processes of engagement rather than projects were thought to hold much potential by both CS and DP evaluation participants and was endorsed as a potential innovation during the Kampala global workshop (see Chapter 8, 'Recommendations' for more details).

Contracting

Contracting is not a method much used by the donors involved in this evaluation although the SDC may use their small discretionary in-country flexible funds for this purpose. However, the rigorous competitive procedures adopted for mandated projects by SDC more recently bear all the hallmarks of contractual arrangements. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) uses contracting for most of its work and CSOs indicated that they found this inappropriate for their policy dialogue engagement work. The issue cited was that it limits their own innovation and assumes a '*one size fits all*' approach to changing attitudes and behaviour regardless of local context.

Box 6.2 CSO criticism of contractual arrangements

Many NGOs (working in policy dialogue in the local government sector) are critical of the contractual arrangements which define events which have to be carried out (e.g. workshop, fair, social audit) rather than appreciating the complexity of behaviour change outcomes or processes of policy dialogue. They are also concerned about expert-driven' design (of DPs) which may not match ground realities, may be 'one size fits all' and constrains local innovation, creativity and activism. Increasingly CSOs choose not to avail these opportunities and those that do tell us it is often 'for survival' rather than them meeting their ideologies.

Source: Bangladesh Country Report

The official DP position of those using contracting modalities maintains that competitive bidding provides better VfM although the case studies revealed that individuals working for DPs may be less convinced of this, citing problems of limited response to calls for tender, considerable work weeding out 'time wasters' and the problems associated with CSOs managing multiple contracts which may duplicate work and the not-uncommon practice of double accounting for results.

The transaction costs for CSOs bidding for and managing contracts are considered very high by CSOs themselves who also expressed distaste in having to compete with organisations with which they feel they need to collaborate.

Direct grant project funding is the most common form of funding[59] but carries many of the drawbacks contained in contracts. Although they are usually developed by the organisation which will implement them and are often identified through 'calls for proposals', several studies have pointed to the fact that the harmonisation agenda has led to DPs expecting that projects will complement their programmes resulting in less space for diversity or innovation. There is a prevailing perception that there is less chance now than in the past for CSOs to be supported to '*do their own thing*' and more likelihood that they will be expected to align with Governments' (donor and recipient) agendas.

Projects are always short-term and the increasing pressure to demonstrate results puts unrealistic pressure on implementers. To get project approval overly ambitious targets are predicted and/or service delivery is privileged as this is regarded as easier to measure than political, social and behavioural change. Especially for activist organisations the conditions contained in contracts and projects pose a real threat of stifling the energy and passion that attracted the DP to fund the CSO in the first place.

The nature of CS engagement work (gathering evidence, building cases, long-term lobbying, responding to key moments, travelling in-country and outside) may incur relatively high administration costs and more than conventional service delivery-type activities. As one Ugandan CSO respondent noted "*(DPs) put conditionalities up front like; no computers, no support to transport and a restrictive budget on administrative costs. Yet in the Ugandan context CSO engagement in policy dialogue requires heavy investment in operational costs, especially given the dynamic political and economic context*". DPs tend to impose administrative costs as fixed percentages of total project costs which may be unrealistically low. For example, the travel costs incurred by the CSOs active in the CHT in Bangladesh to participate in the capital city-based platforms and consultations are extremely high and outcomes from these frustratingly small.

Projects are somewhat unpredictable forms of funding for CSOs in the long term and relying on apportioned costs from projects to support the organisation is both risky and can damage the continuity and maturation of the organisation as staff cannot be retained and other services are curtailed when projects come to an end.

Both contracts and projects contribute to the phenomenon commonly referred to as '*silos of activity*' which is particularly unhelpful in the arena of policy dialogue which benefits from sharing, networking and building constituents of support. The desire to demonstrate comparative advantage to win contracts and project funding creates competition among the very CS actors which should be finding ways to work together, share resources and experiences.

Core funding

The terminology surrounding 'core funding' is confusing. For some it refers only to funding the administrative elements of an organisation (the *being*) while for others it implies funding the organisation as a whole (both *being* and *doing* elements). The former recognises that an organisation has certain core costs which need support for the organi-

59 85% and 86% of the web surveyed CSOs in Bangladesh and Uganda respectively had received this form of project funding in the last five years.

sation to continue to grow and develop, retain staff and build commitment. CSOs say this is preferred to the arbitrary '*percentage of project costs*' described above as it promotes continuity and can be more flexibly used. However, the latter interpretation of core funding (i.e. for *being* and *doing*) is the most preferred. But although CSOs feel that core funding predicated on their filling a public good role and providing the flexibility to respond to the ever-changing context for policy dialogue is the most appropriate form of funding and despite this need having been voiced for many years, the evaluation confirms that this is still the exception rather than the rule for most DPs.

Some DPs have been experimenting with the provision of more core funds recently. Sida is a notable example and claims to provide 80% of their CS-marked funds as core funding. Others' reluctance to provide core funding seems, from discussions with DPs, to be primarily based on their lack of trust (sometimes born out of bad experience) and the unwillingness to cede control. It is also evident that the time needed to identify suitable CSOs, for negotiating outcomes and building trust between the DP and CSO is considerable and a significant transaction cost for DPs and CSOs alike. DPs also indicate that core funding may compromise independence of the CSO although CSOs feel that where they can secure multiple sources for their core funding including local sources to endow connectedness to the general public this should not be a major concern. Furthermore, they argue that core funding has less vulnerability to co-option by the funder's agenda than contracting or projects.

Sida has signalled an intention to increase core funding but like other DPs points out that it is difficult at present to provide core funding within sector programmes or other jointly-funded programmes. On the other hand, CIDA currently has no means to provide core funding.

INGO intermediaries[60]

There are two main perspectives on the role of INGOs in the support provided to national CSOs to engage in policy dialogue. From the perspective of donors, resources at DP head office or in country are not designed or resourced to administer the thousands of CSO related programmes supported. Thus, the channelling of funds through INGOs is undertaken as a necessary and pragmatic solution to this challenge. Finland largely depends on this mechanism as they are in the special case of having closed their local funds. Secondly, channelling of funds to single issue INGOs, which the DP supports, allows the INGO to set their own agenda for work in the host country.

While the examples cited above provide good justification for the approach adopted, funds channelled through INGO intermediaries are not always regarded by CSOs as effective as bilateral funds. There is a prevailing feeling among critics that the INGOs introduce further conditions and create a buffer between the CSO and the source of funds which may lead to over-zealous interpretation of DP demands. As noted by one Ugandan CSO echoing thoughts expressed in all the case study countries, "*The intermediaries bring in their own conditions and end up frustrating the intended recipient CSOs*" Just like the criticism directed at DPs, INGOs are also criticised for promoting their own agendas over indigenous issues.

On the other hand, advantages of this mode of funding include the technical assistance which may be provided by the INGOs (often and in particular providing assistance to

60 This section relies mostly on the views expressed by national CSOs as only a small number of intermediary INGO funders were included in the study.

the CSO to meet financial reporting and reporting of achievements demands of the DPs) and the links to national and global networks as well as knowledge sharing. Notwithstanding these advantages there are often tensions in these relationships around power, decision-making and competition for resources and status.

Joint Trust/Challenge Funds
This modality involves the establishment of a fund management system which can accept funds from multiple sources and disburse and manage these on behalf of the DPs. Examples can be seen in all three study countries (see Box 6.3).

Box 6.3 Examples of Trust Funds in each of the evaluation countries

Programa AGIR was established in Mozambique in May 2010 by the Swedish Embassy. The programme supports CS organisations that are working to enhance public participation in development processes; promote access to information; demand accountability from Government; fight against corruption; monitor government policies and promote the respect for human rights, including gender equality and child rights. Danida has recently joined this programme.

Manusher Jonno was established in Bangladesh in 2002 with DFID funds. It became an independent Foundation in 2006 and provides funding and capacity building to CSOs to promote human rights and good governance through project funds ranging from USD 36,000 to USD 1.0 million. It is now also funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy.

Democratic and Governance Facility in Uganda was formed in 2011 based on the experience of the Danish-funded HUGO programme and is supported by eight DPs including three of this study's participation DPs (ADC, Sida and Danida). It will support projects which deepen democracy, enhance voice and accountability and protection of human rights.

These funds were set up with efficiency and local knowledge as key advantages over DP managed small grant facilities. Although this evaluation did not look at the first of these premises it was nevertheless a concern of many that these mechanisms were not necessarily efficient. A particularly stark example was noted in the Mozambique case study where funds to a local radio station were channelled through five organisations (see Box 6.4).

Earlier work in Bangladesh on which the case study drew (DFID, 2011) showed that one particular funding intermediary, the Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF), had moved from funding many small projects to funding fewer larger projects because of high transaction costs over its first few years of operation. Critics feel that it no longer serves the function of substituting for the closure of DP small project windows.

There seem to be other problems with Joint Funds like this. For example, in Bangladesh some CSOs complain that MJF is a competitor as it is perceived as taking over advocacy efforts of its grantees, promoting like-mindedness rather than diversity and excluding less well-known or well-connected CSOs. Despite considerable efforts it has failed to attract funding beyond DFID and the Royal Norwegian Embassy although a number of DPs have considered it and then rejected the idea. In Mozambique there were concerns about the dominance of particular DP agendas in another Trust Fund (Civil Society Support Mechanism) which was started in 2007 by DFID and Irish Aid (and now includes USAID) which prompted Sida to set up an alternative in 2010 (Program AGIR – see Box

6.3). A web survey respondent in Uganda voiced the concerns of others in other countries indicating that managed joint funds. "*are not effective channels for CSO support because of conflict of interest. You will find that they also have programmes to implement in their own right besides acting as a donor intermediary*".

Box 6.4 Long Value Chains

Radio Vembe is a community radio station in Mozambique is the end recipient of Swedish funds which pass through multiple layers each of which exacts transaction costs. The Swedish Embassy in Maputo provides funds to ibis which is a Danish NGO which manages Programa AGIR window 'Access to information'. Ibis provides grant funding to FORCOM (Forum of Community Radio Stations), a national umbrella organisation which in turn funds a movement called ORAM (the Associacao Rural de Ajuda Mutua) a movement of farmers associations concerned with land rights. ORAM contributes to Radio Vembe. Efficiency is questionable.

Developed from the Mozambique Case Study Report

Funding through donor intermediaries

The evaluation indicates that DPs funding through other donors is regarded largely as an administrative efficiency measure and in line with the objectives of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. DP interviewees tended to know little about the details of such programmes and generally felt less able to influence the design or implementation of the programmes mainly because of lack of time. Funding through UN bodies or International Financing Institutions (IFIs) is currently not considered the most appropriate way to support CSOs directly in policy dialogue engagement as the financial support and decisions are generally controlled by recipient Governments. On the other hand, there is clear benefit in supporting the institutional provision of information to citizens including preparation of policy notes, analytical papers and Citizen Charters as well as provision of *invited spaces* for CS engagement. However, these can be reduced to tokenistic displays of participatory democracy and CSO participation may be limited to cherry-picked allies which legitimate Government action. At worst, Government contracts for CSOs may result in the emergence of what are variously termed in the different case study countries as '*sign board NGOs*' , '*Brief-case NGOs*' and '*False NGOs*' set up to exploit cronyism for Government funding. Nevertheless, UN organisations and IFIs can have considerable clout in changing behaviour and attitudes within Government towards more inclusive engagement and the strategy of working on the supply-side is essential.

Sector/budget support

The evaluation did not find much evidence of funds within sector/budget support which were ring-fenced for CS engagement beyond somewhat formulaic, mandated consultations. The problems noted above for funding through UN and IFI intermediaries hold here too. The opportunities for CS engagement depend on political will and concessions will most likely be to places and spaces of engagement which can be controlled. As noted by one Ugandan CSO web survey respondent, "*Support through Government-led programmes is not effective at all because of weak accountability systems and structures which are prone to corruption*".

There are moves to introduce a voice and accountability window within the education sector wide-approach in Bangladesh in the future. The challenge will be to design it to ensure open access and independence.

Research and innovation funds
Independent research is the basis of informed CS engagement in policy dialogue and yet the support available is often insufficient. In the Bangladesh country report the lack of such research was noted as '*shamefully inadequate*'. The participating DPs do have research and innovation grant facilities but these are often administered from Head Offices rather than locally. These may be managed as direct grants or competitive funds. Either way they suffer from the same problems of other modalities that they privilege organisations which are well-networked, established and known over local, small and new CSOs. This evaluation found that details of such funds were not well known by DP staff in country and so CSOs were unlikely to be directed to these opportunities.

SDC in Bangladesh has a plan to establish a Challenge Fund for local government research and this is a noteworthy innovation. It is hoped that it will be able to meet some of the shortfall in research in local government and '*may open up to actors beyond the usual suspects*'.

Own mandated funds
SDC and Danida continue to develop and support their own projects which they staff through direct contracts or consultancy firm/INGO-managed contracts. There is an advantage to developing a complementary portfolio of projects through this modality which can address the wide spectrum of actors and the enabling environment. CSOs may mistakenly raise concern over what they see as promotion of external agendas, whereas DPs can legitimately hold a position on issues which they consider important, not least issues such as human rights. By DPs being more transparent in their own aims, and through closer consultation between DP and CSO concerns over DP's programmes may be reduced, allowing naturally-emerging and embedded CS action to be encouraged as part of a more open and transparent process.

Small project windows
Small project windows are becoming a thing of the past. They were DP-managed facilities for small-scale funding to CSOs. Usually locally managed they often required the establishment of a Project Implementation Unit and funded 30-50 small projects. These were particularly appropriate for CSO engagement in policy dialogue work as they provide small-scale funds for innovative, diverse and responsive activities. Most of these have closed recently and the joint funding mechanisms established to replace them may be transferring the transaction costs rather than necessarily reducing them.

Flexible funds
Flexible funds (variously referred to as unallocated funds, strategic funds or small action funds) are very important for supporting CS engagement in policy dialogue. Generally requiring very little 'red tape' and simple short concept notes they are ideal ways to support processes and responsive key moments in policy dialogue. SDC (in Bangladesh) maintains small action funds in country which can be signed off by the ambassador and may be able to support eighty or more small actions per year. Sida has 'strategic funds' in country which can be used for innovative initiatives within their country thematic priorities and can also reallocate unused budgets with ambassadorial approval. Similarly Danida has the possibility to be responsive with its 'unallocated funds' at country level.

Although these funds are very useful, CSOs cannot apply for them as they are allocated at the discretion of the DP. This requires the CSO to build up a relationship with the DP, particularly at ambassadorial level.

6.5 Relevance of DP support

Relevance as defined in this section is limited to cover the extent to which the support activity is suited to the priorities and needs of the target group in the community and the CSOs (as recipients of the support) as well as its relevance from the DP policy perspective.

The workshops and survey conducted with CSOs in all three countries indicated that the CSOs felt that the support they had received from DPs was responsive and enhanced their engagement in policy dialogue and was therefore relevant. However the CSOs felt that DPs do not '*generally understand the main challenges facing CSOs*'. By contrast DPs feel they are aware of the country context and they shape their decisions about support to CS accordingly. They are aware that they are limited by the lack of suitable funding and support modalities and admit to retaining a wariness of the political nature of policy dialogue. As a result there is still a tendency to support technical interventions rather than challenging power structures.

As mentioned before, a frequent complaint among CSOs is that DP funding support is determined by their priorities which are often global priorities, and hence relevant to donors. While these are recognised as being aligned with government priorities, the particular skew may not fit with CS reality. The situation is often exacerbated because many donors choose to focus on rather similar themes, resulting in excessive support in some areas (e.g. climate change) and under-attention to other areas (e.g. decentralisation). The frequent changing of priorities (based on geographic, security and thematic considerations) can have particularly profound effects on formal direct policy dialogue engagement which depends on social and political capital development and usually requires long time horizons to affect attitude and behavioural change. As noted by a web survey respondent from Bangladesh, "*DPs rarely allow CSOs to deviate from the approved proposal. They are hardly accommodating with the changing policy issues.*"

Whilst efforts are being made for DP support to become more relevant there are structural impediments in the demands they make in reporting results and accounting for funds spent. They tend to emphasise numbers (which often get conflated to inputs/outputs rather than outcomes which may involve structural, legislative, behaviour change) and the budgets and efficiencies rather than effectiveness in projects.

The perceived need for donors to disburse large sums of money poses another problem for CS engagement in policy dialogue which is often resource-light. Many CSOs avoid receiving large sums (in Bangladesh they were often viewed as a *spoiler*). DP staff confirmed to members of the team that they are under significant pressure to spend available funds, and often prefer to focus on a smaller number of projects for this reason. With a few exceptions, there is a perceived failure of DPs to understand behaviour change programming which require few resources.

CSOs noted the critical importance of having DP staff with technical and field expertise. The nature of policy dialogue dictates the need for clear contextual, cultural understand-

ing of how and why things work. The socio-psychological nature of engagement is best understood by those who have practiced in this field themselves. CSOs could identify those whom they felt were exceptionally helpful and noted how important this was to their work. The constant turnover of staff, especially foreign staff is another issue CSOs felt affected their relevance.

It needs also to be noted that some CSOs avoid DP support because it compromises their agility and independence in policy dialogue. Some DPs insist on their own visibility by including their logo on all published material. In fact many mid and end of project evaluations require an assessment of this visibility. This among other means to ensure fund attribution can compromise the independence of CSOs and the nature of the issues in policy dialogue on which they are engaged.

7 Conclusions and lessons learned

7.1 Overview

The purpose of this section is to draw out the principle lessons learned from both the findings of the study of CSO engagement and on DP support. The lessons learned were reviewed and developed in a series of in-country reflection workshops between November 2011 and March 2012, a global workshop held in Kampala in May 2012 with representatives of national and international CSOs, DPs and Governments as well as three workshops in Austria, Denmark and Sweden with DP stakeholders, INGO representatives and members of the academic community. The lessons are intended to provide a basis for reflection and consideration by both CSOs and DPs. For CSOs in drawing up their strategies for engagement in policy dialogue and in the way they interact and engage with DPs, with a further aim being to enable CSOs and the other main actors to consider what they can do differently to improve beneficial outcomes from the policy engagement process. For DPs, the lessons provide an opportunity to reflect on how best to develop support strategies for CS engagement in policy dialogue in the future.

7.2 Lessons on CSO engagement

The evaluation highlights the need for CS engagement beyond representational politics to influence both the formulation of policy and the way it is implemented. CSOs have the advantage over elected representatives of having long-term perspectives, beyond five-year terms of office, as well as more nuanced understanding of diverse CS opinion beyond majority-driven issues. CSOs may represent a wide range of constituencies and provide a conduit for influencing policies. As a group, they may be able to better appreciate the needs of the population as a whole, as well as the needs of minorities and minority issues. Aside from the support they may or may not receive from their Governments, CSOs are for the most part the beneficiaries of a supportive international community (although DP policies do change).[61] The way CSOs operate and the potential that exists for influencing policy varies greatly from context to context (between countries and within countries) so that this variation and diversity should be borne in mind in interpreting the lessons presented here.

The features of the enabling environment are insufficiently recognised
These are the principal factors in CS engagement. In both successful and less successful case studies it is clear that this has been insufficiently recognised in developing strategies for CS engagement. There was insufficient careful analysis of the power relations, the operating environment and potential for alliances in the way CSOs mounted their campaigns and attempted engagement. Even the diverse and impressive alliances built around the domestic violence legislation in Mozambique and Uganda failed to fully address issues of power relations. The case studies have shown that very different approaches are needed depending on whether the issues are a shared public good or evoke polarised positions, or appear to threaten Government positions.

61 "We will deepen our engagement with CSOs as independent development actors in their own right whose efforts complement those of Governments and the private sector. We share an interest in ensuring that CSO contributions to development reach their full potential". Source: Section 20; Accra Agenda for Action, September 2008.

Policy dialogue themes best championed by CSOs themselves
The evaluation has shown that issues which have been identified and championed by CSOs themselves have led to committed and sustained action and a higher chance of success than those initiated externally. The Primary Education case study in Bangladesh and the two domestic violence cases from Uganda and Mozambique show how indigenous movements grew from initial exposure to international meetings and then took many years to build alliances and support for change in policy. In contrast the 'participation by command' approach of the POs in Mozambique has been disappointing. The passion inspired by local initiatives around local priorities is critical to achieving policy dialogue outcomes and cannot be artificially created.

Determining if a policy issue is really a priority matter for the common good is difficult:
The evaluation has pointed out the concern regarding the dominance of DP themes in policy dialogue which may not necessarily reflect the CS priority needs, but there is also a problem with CSOs assuming they have a 'right' over determining priority needs. Thus, not all themes pursued by CSOs are necessarily priorities. This may be in part a consequence of 'chasing resources' but it is also a result of the lack of connectedness to the policy dialogue priorities of people living in poverty. For example:

- In Mozambique it was noted that some CSOs seem to act as if they were independent bodies and in Uganda CSOs were poor at communicating with their members, although this appears to be improving.

- Food security and the displacement of agricultural production by other land uses in Bangladesh is a major issue for ordinary people yet there is little or no advocacy action in this regard.

- The food riots in Mozambique were the result of ordinary citizens taking to the streets in protest over food prices, but where were the CSOs to take up the cause and on-going work in this area?

- Why have the land rights issues of the Adivasis in CHT been left to under-resourced indigenous CSOs and a handful of advocates outside the country to champion their cause, and not national CSOs?

These examples speak to the complexity of policy dialogue engagement, but one common factor is that CSOs are often concentrated in regional centres, and particularly capital cities where most policy dialogue takes place and their spokespersons may not have recent and direct connection with grass roots reality. In all three countries the study noted that elites with social connections and command of the language of policy dialogue occupy *invited spaces* but do not necessarily represent the issues of ordinary people.

CSOs lack human resource capacity undermining their effectiveness
A lack of CSO capacity for policy engagement undermines their credibility. While there were exceptions and differences between countries, the evaluation found examples where CSOs lacked the human resource capacity, skills and experience to successfully engage in policy dialogue. This is particularly true outside of the capital or regional centres. There are few opportunities for CSOs to acquire and improve on these skills within most developing country situations. DPs meanwhile have high expectations of the ability of CSOs to take policy processes forward without necessarily recognising the need to

include capacity building and concomitant equipment provision (in particular communication technology) as an integral part of the support provided.

Financial resources need to be fit for purpose
The evaluation confirmed that advocacy and other related policy dialogue work do not generally require a high level of financial resources. However, certain elements of policy engagement such as conducting research, the monitoring of policy implementation, particularly where it requires extensive data collection and travel (in cases of land grabbing, impact of dam construction, forestry etc.) and the forging of strategic alliances, can be costly. Often these costs are wrongly categorised as administrative costs when they are legitimate policy-related activity costs. This has important implications for enhancing the funding modalities of DPs, in order that they more properly address policy engagement needs.

Coalitions and networks not a panacea, but can be effective
The formation of CSO platforms, coalitions and networks can strengthen the effectiveness of an organisation both for the individual members, giving them greater confidence than when working on their own, as well as providing more work opportunities and revenue. Further, they provide opportunities for knowledge sharing and for increasing the influence of the CSO as both status and visibility are enhanced. Networks on the other hand need managing: a means of information dissemination needs to be worked out; coordination needs to be improved and an organisation must be identified which has the capacity to take a lead role. There are real costs involved and a danger that too many resources are tied to developing systems of coordination and organisation and less to action and influence. Networks often suffer from in-fighting and leadership fatigue which make them ineffective over time. There are also examples of networks being co-opted by politicians so that they lose their real constituency. The conclusion of the evaluation is that the supporting the *process of networking* is more important than the establishment and operation of networks *per se*.

Empowering those directly affected by a policy
A number of the case studies have pointed to the importance of empowering groups to assume their own agency for influencing policy change. CAMPE in Bangladesh recognises that to ensure compliance to the new education policy, teachers unions, parent teachers associations and school management committees as well as education watchdog committees need to be empowered to hold Government to account. This has already begun in forest management in Uganda, where CSOs at the national level are re-focusing their efforts towards empowerment of local CBOs coupled with engagement with local government and political bodies to address sustainable forest management issues.
Put simply a change in policy at national level does not imply it will be implemented. Uganda is a case in point were otherwise 'model' policies are simply ignored by those in positions of power when it suits them. The strategy for local government policy dialogue in Bangladesh has shifted from the ineffective efforts of direct action by NGOs to facilitating LGAs of elected representatives to advocate for themselves and build support for this in their own constituencies.

Legal provisions for participation do not necessarily work
Progressive laws on participation which mandate citizen participation in local decision-making have been enacted in Bangladesh, but this will not happen unless people feel able to claim the space and are helped to do this productively. The mandated space for

engagement in Mozambique district planning and budgeting processes has not been successful as it has been subject to manipulation and was never properly resourced.

Collaboration with the media is of growing importance
The media including the national press, but particularly electronic media, with a growing audience appetite for radio or TV 'talk shows' and interactive programmes, provides a ready-made 'advocacy opportunity' which CSOs are now exploiting. With the increasing confidence of the press, this medium is becoming increasingly proactive in all the study countries. This is illustrated by the well-publicised case of the Mabira Forest conflict in Uganda, where the media deliberately sought out CSOs to work with them to frustrate the Government's plans for selling off parts of the forest. In Bangladesh the media took the initiative to print the proposed new education policy and mounted on-line and SMS-based surveys to gauge reaction to elements of the policy. While the evaluation noted the support already provided to the media, it is an area which is of growing importance and can be expected to play an increasingly significant role in the future.

Governments may use CSOs to achieve legitimacy
Governments have been shown to use CSOs to gain legitimacy for their policies. This joint relationship, while genuine and appropriate in many situations, is deeply flawed in others if CSOs become co-opted onto roles which satisfy the perception of dialogue and consultation, without actually changing or influencing policy. CSOs themselves recognise their limitations in changing the Government/CSO relationship and have indicated that DPs could help build mechanisms for institutionalising and regularising frameworks for such relationships particularly for engagement on 'sensitive' issues such as corruption.

Providing evidence-based research is a key 'entry point' strategy
Evidence-based research was found to be a key entry point strategy for CSOs engaging in policy dialogue. Well researched, valid and robust information is a scarce resource in many advocacy strategies. There is a dearth of independent research and evidence on which to base sound advocacy strategies. Sometimes such research is sought by government agencies and by politicians who do not themselves have the resources to conduct surveys or evaluations or do not want them dismissed as politically biased. In Bangladesh, CAMPE's annual Education Watch studies and Ugandan CSO research in forest management were both highly regarded and referenced in government policies and practice. The evaluation concluded that there is potential for significant value added through the strengthening of the capacity of CSOs to systematically generate such information in order to raise their profile and build cases for policy change.

CSOs need a high level of professionalism and more transparency
Consistent with the need to be able to provide evidence-based reports to support their cause, CSOs need to achieve a high level of professionalism both individually, and in terms of the governance standards of their organisations. CSOs often seek to take the 'moral high ground' when it comes to fighting corruption cases or in holding Government accountable for its actions. But they do not necessarily have their own houses in order (as, for example, highlighted in the Bangladesh Transparency International report on NGO governance). The NGO Quality Assurance Certification Mechanism introduced in Uganda in 2006, is a self-regulatory process which is seen as a step in the right direction.

International partnerships can improve effectiveness
The formation of international partnerships can also improve effectiveness of engagement and in some cases may be essential (e.g. CHT land rights issues). Partnerships provide increased opportunities for funding from DPs, the possibility of building the internal capacity of national CSOs through formal training, as well as through exposure to other ideas and ways of organising and managing CSO activity. Linkage with international champions of the CS community such as BetterAid and Open Forum would ensure that national CSOs are better informed about their responsibilities to DPs and obligations to their constituencies, as well as equip them to be more proactive in steering their relationships with DPs. CSOs should seek a role where they can first exchange with DPs on a level platform, where joint decisions can be made as to what to fund, and on what levels of documentation and accountability of costs and deliverables are required. This implies the need for an improved framework for engagement, which in itself will need a consultation process.

7.3 Lessons on DP support

This section presents the lessons learned from the examination of the current support provided by DPs to CSOs to engage in policy dialogue in terms of the changing context for development aid and the review of CS effectiveness. It therefore draws on more than the findings presented in Chapter 6. It is important to recognise that progress in tackling these issues is uneven among the participating DPs (as well as the wider DP community), with some lessons currently being addressed by some DPs with others still representing important gaps in DP support.

DPs increasingly recognise CSOs' wider role, but funding instruments not yet fully appropriate
The AAA made an important contribution to the recognition of CSOs as distinct, independent and autonomous development actors. Most DPs now acknowledge that CSOs represent the diversity of public expression and as such contribute to effective democratic governance. The recognition that alignment of development aid meant alignment with the priorities of the citizens (not just aid recipient Governments) was a major step towards official promotion of CS engagement in policy dialogue. DP support is predicated on the principle that CSOs, with their roots in society, can bring their experiences and amplify the voices of people living in poverty and marginalised to the policy dialogue cycle. As pointed out by Griffin and Judge (2010)[62] most DPs now see support to CS as *an end in itself*.

DPs funding modalities remain sub-optimal for policy dialogue engagement
Despite the increasing importance attached to the provision of support to CSOs, DP policies and funding modalities can limit CSO effectiveness. The DAC Advisory Group (2011) recommends maintaining a variety of funding mechanisms to fund the diversity of CSOs but experience suggests these still do not fully meet the needs of CS engagement in policy dialogue. The pressures to scale-up disbursements, reduce transaction costs and to produce short-term development results have affected financing available for CSOs. According to most of the DPs interviewed in this evaluation the aid channelled to CSOs has increased slightly over the last decade, but these pressures mean that this does not necessarily translate into more money available for policy engagement (the majority

62 Griffin, J and R. Judge, Civil Society Policy and Practice in Donor Agencies, Governance and Social Development Resource Centre.

being used for service delivery and humanitarian assistance). Despite clear efforts to respond to the needs of advocacy-type CSOs, it is concluded that the range of DP funding instruments available is not yet fully appropriate.

The changing nature of CS engagement requires different ways of partnering
DPs have clearly moved beyond their earlier position of conflating the notion of CS with NGOs and embrace the wide diversity of CSOs as described in Section 1.4, but they have yet to find ways to support this wider diversity. There are no doubt challenges inherent in this wider definition as non-traditional CS partners require different ways of partnering. There is more perceived risk attached to working with some of these new partners and a greater need for flexibility. This requires still further adeptness in developing suitable financing modalities.

Yet further challenge is posed by the fact that recent studies have shown that CS action worldwide is changing from organisation-based to non-formal and spontaneous. The recent CIVICUS study (2011) notes evidence that people worldwide increasingly want to engage '*on their own terms*' rather than through conventional CSOs such as women's groups, faith-based groups, Trade Unions or local political parties. Time constraints coupled with rapid changes in electronic communications mean people progressively prefer to act in small, swift, episodic ways rather than belonging to groups or movements which take a more planned and structured approach to advocacy and change. In recent years global communication has demonstrated the power of spontaneous mass demonstrations or short-term campaigns (e.g. convened through mobile phones or social network sites) and immediacy of response which confirms the efficacy of these approaches. This has huge implications for the future development of aid funding to encourage CS engagement, suggesting a needed shift towards greater attention to supporting the enabling environment for engagement, rather than a focus on support of individual CSOs, alongside greater attention to CSO programming that facilities citizen and community empowerment activism.

Understanding the political economy is crucial in determining support strategies
This evaluation makes two important points regarding the context in which CS engages in policy dialogue: (1) the context for CSO engagement in policy dialogue is crucial both in terms of determining strategies for engagement and expectations of achievement and (2) the pace of contextual change is accelerating particularly as a result of globalisation. These factors preclude simplistic transfer of best practices from one context to another (even within countries). Another significant finding is that constellations of CSOs which are not necessarily 'like-minded' may successfully forge wide public demand for policy change, particularly where there is limited political will or vested interest barriers for change. This means that effectiveness will require strategies to embrace an understanding of potential (and possibly unconventional) strategic alliances and power relations. (See Recommendations, Chapter 8 re. political economy analysis).

Enhancing the enabling environment is of critical importance
CSO freedoms are often under threat: Following from the paragraph above and also in recognition of the overriding importance of the political factors which shape the process and outcomes of policy dialogue, the evaluation concluded that enhancing the enabling environments and safeguarding positive changes from future erosion was of critical importance. The evaluation noted the concern of CSOs that their freedoms are often under threat particularly when they are perceived as critical of Governments, with the regulatory frameworks in which CSOs operate often not conducive to engagement

in policy dialogue. In the Bangladesh case study it was noted for example, that NGOs suspected of activism in the CHT were threatened with peremptory closure by the Government in early 2012 and several social movements active in pressing for local government reform are under regular Government surveillance.

CSO regulatory bodies 'not fit for purpose': DPs in Bangladesh are well aware of the problems CSOs face but since the regulation of CSOs covers a wide a range of sectors, no DP to date has been able to develop a programme within the constraints of their sector-focused programmes for supporting the regulatory body in Bangladesh (the regulatory body being an organisation in dire need of capacity building and organisational development). A proposal which came out of the global workshop in Kampala referred to the fact that regulations in participating DPs' own countries are often simple and supportive for a diverse range of CSOs allowing relative freedoms including being critical of Government. It is concluded that these models could be useful starting points for what could be achieved in recipient countries in particular moving the Government mind-set from regulation and controlling to supporting and promoting the third sector.

The importance of appropriate legal measures to ensure CS rights: Promotion of legal measures which will ensure the necessary freedoms for CS engagement and support the formalisation of space for both formal and informal engagement are also critical elements of the enabling environment. The evaluation has shown that DPs have made efforts in this regard particularly by providing support to oversight bodies such as Anti-Corruption Commissions but that they may be too cautious in challenging diminishing freedoms and lack of political will which hinder CS engagement. Efforts to understand the political landscape such as Sweden's Power Analysis and DFID's Drivers of Change have demonstrated the importance of this and need revisiting and constant application in countries where development support is provided. The minimum enabling standards[63] acknowledged widely and which DPs can add greater support to include:

- freedom of association and assembly
- legal recognition facilitating the work of CSOs
- the right to freedom of expression
- freedom of movement, mobility rights and right to travel
- the right to operate free of unwarranted state interference
- the legal space to seek and secure necessary resources in support of legitimate roles in development.

There are of course other rights issues which need to be not only endorsed by law but also need to be adhered to. These include the rights of women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, marginalised communities as well as rights to information. CSOs can play important roles in challenging these rights through public information campaigns and engaging in public interest litigation but these can be costly processes

63 Derived from 'International Principles Protecting Civil Society in Defending Civil Society', A Report of the World Movement of Democracy and the International Centre for Not-for-Profit-Law, Feb 2008.

which too often fail to attract DP support. DPs have a role not only to provide financial support for upholding these various legal freedoms but crucially a diplomatic role.

Support for public education and active citizenship needs to be better targeted: A key lesson from the evaluation was that the dissemination of information about participatory democracy through CS, Government and private sector channels are important contributions to CS engagement in policy dialogue. DPs already support citizenship programmes in schools, NGOs providing political education to voters and elected representatives, local watchdog activities during elections and encourage CSOs to exploit opportunities for participating in decision making and evaluating state provision of services. However, more reflection on who is participating and why is required to ensure that *invited spaces* and quotas are not simply numerically filled but are productively utilised. There is a need to critically evaluate efforts towards participatory democracy so that information and education programmes are better targeted.

Donor driven agendas may be at variance with CSO priorities

A common concern expressed in all three country studies was the dominance of DP agenda in the support provided to CS engagement. This influence is seen as a threat to CS independence and their own initiatives and runs counter to the concept of vibrant CS being a public good or '*end in itself*'. CS representatives feel that it makes it difficult for some important thematic areas to be supported (e.g. CS engagement in food security issues in Bangladesh). With the changes in thematic focus evident in subsequent five-year country strategies of most DPs, CS representatives also feel that continuity in support is a problem and there is concern over CSOs '*following the money*' (as a means of survival) rather than concentrating on their core issues and values and the priorities of their constituencies or target groups.

Looking at DP support for CSO engagement as a whole in each country it is clear that there is much overlap around a rather small range of themes with other key issues marginalised or ignored. While DPs continue to promote their own agendas this undermines the AAA principle of CSOs having independent approaches and agendas for change. Funding that emphasises harmonisation and alignment can undermine the added value of CSOs promotion of its constituency interests. There is thus a need for improved dialogue between DPs and CSOs to set the policy engagement agenda, together with an emphasis on supporting the enabling environment. This would enable CSOs to operate in a demand-drive way, rather than following specific thematic foci, and would help an indigenous, diverse and pluralistic CS to evolve.

DP support needs to address temporary, informal CS processes of change

Support tends to be channelled to formally registered CSOs: Most DP support to CS engagement is channelled to CSOs themselves as organisations implementing programmes rather than to processes of change. This is partly because of the funding regulations which require recipients of foreign donations to be registered with Government regulatory bodies. Fluid movements, temporary coalitions, platforms and networks and small local issue-based groups can rarely access funds to support their engagement processes. When forced to become formal entities in an effort to access funding they lose the character which was their strength. Processes engaging a number of different actors

including debate and dissent are rarely able to be supported by DPs.[64] Several evaluation participants felt an urgent need to develop support mechanisms which can provide resources for informal and temporary CSOs as well as small responsive grants for unpredictable tipping point moments which occur during policy influencing processes.

A long-term commitment and perspective is needed
The evaluation shows that policy dialogue outcomes generally take time although they may be accelerated through windows of opportunity created by the (often fortuitous) coming together of a number of factors. The more common form of funded policy dialogue is steady and incremental. The short-term nature of most forms of DP funding is an impediment to building the capacity as well as the social and political capital needed by CSOs to effectively engage in long-term policy dialogue. Evaluation participants felt that support to advocacy CSOs which have earned public credibility and trust need to be secured and should not be subject to the uncertainties of project funding or changing DP priorities. These organisations provide a service for the public good as watchdogs and providers of independent evidence.

Preoccupation with results may lead to less funds for CSO policy dialogue[65]
The premise for an active vibrant CS lies in its ability to restrain Government excess, ensure accountability, and promote democratic processes and good governance. DP interest in supporting active CSOs also emphasises its role in promoting equity and adherence to human rights. A vibrant CSO sector will achieve this in a variety of ways. Simply being present may curb Government excess.

However, the evaluation has confirmed the perception that the current demand for results ends up in valuing service delivery over processes of change which take longer and are more difficult to measure. It also leads to a normative interpretation of results. CSOs may not always be fully effective in achieving policy and practice change, but that does not mean they should not be supported. They may present alternative ideas and policies, may be critical of the Government, may play key watchdog roles, may be able to articulate and provide evidence of the extent of problems but have little demonstrable impact on policy.

In addition to development outcomes *per se* (such as enhanced pro-poor service delivery) the support to CSOs is also intended as a means to promote public awareness about development and stimulate public debate. These are key elements of democratic process but conventional evaluations of programmes supporting development education reduce these elements to processes not outcomes. Despite the view that they are a good thing, advocacy and citizenship-building CSOs which have perceived weak links to achievement of MDGs are less likely to be funded.[66]

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64 USAID and GIZ are notable in having their own funds which they can use to support public debate and other processes directly without going through organisations. SDC seems to have this capacity to a limited extent also. However there is some concern about the neutrality of platforms created by and/or underwritten by a DP.

65 The OECD/DAC study, 2011 How DAC Members work with CS' Organisations; An overview' cautions DPs about the over emphasis on results and the challenges this poses to CSOs. e.g. it quotes the 2006 DAC peer review of the Netherlands which noted 'that results-based reporting might encourage a culture of risk-avoidance (NGOs may focus on delivering services which are easily measurable and move away from addressing underlying political issues)' as well as the need to retain flexibility.

66 Open Forum 2010 Draft International Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness provides evidence of a trend of marginalisation of CSO development education programming.

The measurements generally used for CS engagement in policy dialogue are more suited to logic-driven, service delivery-type programmes. Evaluation participants pointed to the need to measure '*value added*' rather than VfM for processes which are subject to such political and contextual unpredictability which is outside the control of CSOs.

The evaluation concluded that successful CS engagement requires careful strategic positioning as well as agility to adapt to changing circumstances and exploit tipping points. Capacity to do this involves understanding policy processes and decision-making behaviour. It requires formal knowledge of procedures and participatory tools but also requires efforts to build relationships and trust with policy shapers and makers. Many CSOs noted that the current DP pre-occupation with results has led to the reduction of funds available for CSOs for on-going strategic thinking and reflection (beyond start-up), lesson learning, staff capacity and confidence development and social and political capital accumulation despite the critical importance of these.

Different DP conditions are burdensome for CSOs
Many DPs continue to burden CSOs with their own conditions and requirements with regard to proposals, monitoring and evaluation and reporting. Even in joint-funded arrangements, CSOs say they are still often required to report separately and provide detailed financial breakdowns for each DP. This leads to high transaction costs. Furthermore CSOs complain that demands are made of small, informal organisations which are inappropriate and detract time away from their core action (see Chapter 4). Results-based framework reporting may be too detailed and inappropriate for CSOs engaged in the unpredictable processes of policy dialogue. The OECD/DAC study (2011) found that 80% of DPs have formats for reporting for at least some of their support and under a third allowed CSOs to use their own means of reporting. Financial accounting requirements with their focus on input accounting are not compatible with outcome-oriented results frameworks.

Evidence building is under-resourced
The need to link resource provision directly with MDG outcomes is widely perceived by CS representatives to have dampened DP support for research and evidence building. CSOs in all case study countries shared their concern about the paucity of resources for independent research as well as for building the capacity of staff to undertake effective 21st century lobbying and advocacy work. Research is often commissioned directly by DPs or is embedded within projects. Both risk undermining independence and do not allow for inclusion of diverse streams of research or alternative voices. There is often insufficient independent critique of research findings and inadequately substantiated 'evidence' percolates development dogma. Evaluation participants suggested that DPs have a role to play in demanding high standards of research and supporting an environment where contrasting findings can be debated in public.

DPs need to support confrontational as well as collaborative dialogue
CS action cannot be expected to achieve results simply through collaborative actions with Governments. CSOs have often accused DPs of being too soft on recipient Governments and not speaking out on behalf of CS. Similarly DPs have criticised CSOs for not being outspoken enough in *invited spaces* (e.g. DP disappointment in some instances with CAMPE in Bangladesh). While it is appreciated that DPs operate at the invitation of the host Governments, evaluation participants indicated that it may be helpful for DPs to put more effort into examining ways in which they can support controversial issues indirectly rather than side-step them completely. Here again the idea to support the

enabling environment which allows for protest, contestation, freedom of speech rather than 'risky' CSOs or 'controversial' issues directly may benefit from more consideration.

Reduced connectedness by DPs to grass roots reality
Both CSOs and DPs note that the way aid is managed currently puts huge demands on individual DP officers. Some DPs suggest that rather than reducing donor agency transaction costs, the harmonisation agenda may actually increase costs in time spent with other donors in negotiating and monitoring collaboration. Whatever the reason, it is clear that DP officers are less likely to visit projects and ordinary people than in the past and are less connected to the realities of the country in which they are working. There is a tendency to depend on INGOs to act as extended arms of the DP (through Trust Fund management or cascade funding through INGOs) and use them as a lens to view CS. Since it is the DPs which interface with recipient Governments not the INGOs, this creates a significant gap in the opportunities to influence the enabling environment.

DP staff need to understand the dynamics of the wider CS in order to advocate on their behalf for appropriate measures such as *invited spaces* and freedom of expression and the current working modalities limit this exposure. The trend to staff DP offices with civil servants rather than development professionals is perceived as further exacerbating the disconnect with the development significance of CS.

DP accountability is weak in host countries
The evaluation suggests that there is greater perceived accountability of DPs to their own (northern) Governments and taxpayers than to the host country. As a result, much of the information gathered from the CSOs on DP policy and strategy in the country case studies was based largely on perception and speculation. Although much has been triangulated by discussions with DPs and documentary review, there remains the issue that information about DP policies and practice regarding CSO support is not publicly available and /or accessible in sufficient detail in country.

The need for local interpretation of global DP policy and contextual decisions indicates the importance of improving the dialogue between DP and CS. Despite efforts by some DPs to provide public information on CSO funding decisions, evaluation participants feel there is a need for two-way interaction between DPs and CSOs in negotiating the levels and foci of CSO funding in country in addition to *post facto* provision of public information on allocations.

There is also an urgent need for distinctions to be made in allocations for service provision and advocacy when presenting details of funding.[67] Even where CSOs are informed of funding allocations, the wider context in which the funding country operates (e.g. diplomacy, security, trade) as well as their contribution to UN and other basket funds is not well understood. It was concluded that CSOs had a right to demand greater accountability and to be given more opportunities to engage in policy dialogue matters directly with DPs.

67 Although it is also recognised that some advocacy work is purposely funded 'under the radar' in order to reduce potential risks to the CSO.

The importance of DP non-financial assistance
The evaluation found that DPs have successfully provided a number of non-financial means of supporting CSOs.

- The case studies confirm that when a particular theme is highlighted by international conventions and endorsed by international agencies as well as the recipient Governments and seen as a shared public good (e.g. Education for All) the opportunities for CS engagement are likely to be supported. The issues transcend particular party politics and become a national agenda. DPs can and do play a key role in reminding signatory Governments of their responsibility to the tenets of such international conventions.

- The diplomatic relationship which DPs retain with recipient Governments are important avenues to ensure political priorities remain focused especially during political transition.

- In the same way that DPs foster inter-Government and private sector exchange, more could be done to broker international CS exchange. This is envisaged as facilitating bridges between DP's domestic CSOs as well as global CSOs and host country CSOs for capacity building, knowledge sharing and collaborative action.

- DPs also play a key role in the promotion of the role of CSOs to the public of the host country. Endorsing CSOs and publicising their effectiveness encourages embeddedness.

It was concluded that DPs should themselves both be more aware of the positive impact of non-financial support they provide and ensure that it is clearly portrayed as an important contributory element of the overall support.

Lessons to recommendations
The challenge now is how to take forward the lessons from the evaluation and to translate them into action which supports the development of vibrant civil societies. Chapter 8 thus provides some specific recommendations for both CSOs and DPs to this end, which have been shared and shaped with stakeholders during the period of the evaluation.

8 Recommendations

8.1 Introduction

The recommendations in this report are organised by the relevant stakeholder group (and where possible sub-groups within these main groups are identified). While it is implicit in these recommendations that changes and enhancements to the support processes will evolve through a process of stakeholder consultation and dialogue, some of the recommendations specifically involve both DPs and CSOs (both national and international) so that the first set of recommendations addresses them both. These are then followed by recommendations specific to the two main stakeholder groups. These recommendations have been shared, developed, extended and endorsed by CS and DPs in a series of validation workshops in country, in a Global Workshop held in Kampala and in donor country presentations over a period of months. The expectation is that DPs and CSOs will then take them forward as they see fit.

8.2 Recommendations for both DPs and CSOs

Prioritise and communicate themes and issues for policy dialogue

Targeted at:
- *Joint DPs forums, DP Country Offices, policy makers*

- *CSO umbrella organisations and networks*

CSOs to make more effort to promote local and contextual needs to DPs: It is recommended that CSOs make more effort to promote local and contextual needs to DPs and that DPs become more responsive to these rather than allowing global priorities dominate. This would be done to achieve a more balanced support for areas of policy dialogue in line with local priorities, which corresponds with the view of the AAA recommendations to align aid not just with national Governments but also with their citizens.

CSOs need to be proactive in identifying and communicating the important issues: CSOs, civic networks, independent research and the media need to be proactive in identifying the important governance, development, poverty and environmental issues which should be championed and to communicate these more effectively (and more innovatively) to DPs for a clearer understanding of the grass roots realities. This would assist DPs identifying and harmonising the support and in reducing gaps and overlaps. (Note: The review of the political economy recommended above should contribute to a better understanding of what issues are priorities for citizens of the recipient country and in particular people living in poverty.)

DPs to support emerging CSOs with new ideas: It is further recommended that support is provided not only to effective CSOs (i.e. those which have a track record) but also to those promoting alternative ideas, playing watchdog roles and raising critical voices.

More appropriate expectations of CS engagement in policy dialogue and improved monitoring and evaluation

Targeted at:
- *Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices*

- *CSO umbrella organisations and networks*

It is recommended that results-based models of intervention which are important means to objectively frame interventions are used but are better tailored to the needs of CS engagement programmes. At a minimum the different levels of outcomes noted in Section 5.4 should be distinguished.

It is recommended that DPs and CSOs jointly develop means effectively measuring policy dialogue processes through the development of appropriate indicators and instruments. CSOs need to take the lead to explore and develop means to explain and justify their policy dialogue work better, including the work which they carry out 'behind the scenes'.

It is further recommended that one option is a joint recognition that strong CS is an 'end in itself.' The AAA and subsequent international declarations on CS role in development re-iterate this and provide a good rationale therefore for this becoming a basis for measurement of investment.

Specifically, in relation to the measurement of process and outcome indicators of DP support, then it is recommended that DPs working with CSOs develop monitoring assessments that:

- Identify and use outcome and results indicators which measure a vibrant CS and the CSO contribution to this (to satisfy the claim that a strong CS is an 'end in itself').

- Develop good quality process tracking tools which CSOs can use to demonstrate their direct contributions to policy dialogue which are both public and behind the scenes. DPs will need to find ways accept process tracking as adequate measures of achievement.

- Draw up and disseminate standards of good practice for measuring these changes including standards for robust and quantifiable perception studies as well as for qualitative evaluations.

- Develop good documentation (knowledge management) within CSOs and DPs using web/cloud-based storage systems.

It is recommended that evidence of change is reported and publicised in ways which are appropriate to this type of investment. Thus, as an example to the recommendation above, where there is public trust in the core competence and defined mandate of any particular CSO, it may be sufficient for it to provide annual audited reports and short narratives of its activities and contributions supplemented by independent perception studies which assess and confirm their reach, influence and legitimacy to act on behalf of CS.

It is recommended that DPs balance their current predominant accountability to their own parliaments and public with accountability to those of the country they support. Information about their funding decisions and how they assess achievement should be made be publicly accessible. DPs should explain and justify their support particularly in the sensitive area of policy dialogue.

Likewise, CSOs need to balance their predominant accountability to the DPs with improved accountability to their own constituency (if they have one) and the public at large.

8.3 Recommendations for both DPs and national Governments

DPs and national Governments to be more proactive in influencing the enabling environment for policy dialogue

Targeted at:

- *Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices*

- *Relevant government departments providing coordinating or regulatory framework for CSOs*

The evaluation recommends that DPs, working with national Governments, should encourage enhancements of the enabling environment more generally. This would include taking specific action to improve the regulatory environment in which CSOs operate, as well as promoting the adoption of general democratic principles more systematically across all sectors. This should include the following:

- *Invited spaces:* directly promote the establishment of *invited spaces* for CS and CSO engagement as a matter of principle in all sectors. These include consultation spaces within development programmes at key strategic moments (e.g. planning, annual reviews, policy development) as well as the establishment and operationalisation of citizen participation in statutory oversight bodies such as parliamentary standing committees, Office of Ombudsman and Commissions (e.g. for human rights, information etc.) and local level planning and budget review meetings.

- *Continuous monitoring:* Ensure continuous monitoring of the actors and processes of engagement within these spaces with built in opportunities for adjustments, as the provision of *invited spaces* does not necessarily mean they are effective.

- *Actions to enhance freedom of speech and access to information:* CSOs (with DP support) should champion legislation change and compliance to ensure the necessary freedoms of speech and association as well as access to information.

- *Support programmes to improve civic education:* supporting civic education to demand state accountability and develop democratic norms beyond the ballot box.

- *Provide support to regulatory bodies:* provision of direct support to Government CSO regulatory bodies so that they transform into institutions which promote and encourage rather than control and restrict third sector participation.

- *Make resources available for contemporary platforms for engagement:* provision of resources, training and exposure to contemporary platforms for engagement (e.g. e-governance, productive use of social network and other internet based forms of CS-state interface).

8.4 Recommendations for DPs

Carry out regular contextual and political economy analyses at country level to provide the basis for a systems approach for action

Targeted at: Joint DP forums, policy makers
We recommend that a contextual and political economy analysis at country level is undertaken at least every five years by **independent research organisations** (i.e. not likely to benefit from the findings) and are jointly commissioned.[68] Joint DPs/CSOs (and preferably also host Government) commissioning of such political economy reviews would be expected to increase ownership by commissioning partners and provide the basis for establishing the diversity as well as the gaps in CS action. It would also provide a 'pulse take' of the prevailing political response. The analyses would be expected to identify the range of CS action including emerging CS actors and provide a basis for more nuanced **systems** approach[69] for action by CSOs (and indeed CS action which was not necessarily formally organised) and support by DPs. Based on the review of the political economy, the most strategic approaches and strategic alliances can be identified and supported for their potential synergy and enhanced effectiveness.

Identify new funding instruments and modalities

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, finance departments, DP Country Offices
The evaluation has shown that despite efforts to improve funding instruments, none of the current forms of funding CS engagement are without criticism. DAC (OECD, 2009) recommends as good practice, maintaining a wide range of support modalities suitable for the diversity of needs. A range of mechanisms means that actors of different sizes, strengths and interests can access funds and also helps ensure a diverse CS (see also Griffin and Judge, 2010), while the variety in DP funding modalities is tending to shrink rather than increase.

It is recommended that DPs undertake a more radical re-think of funding approaches to CSOs, engaging CSOs and INGOs in this process. A starting point for identifying new financing instruments should be based on an understanding of the needs of the many types of CSOs and CS activity, including those which are currently excluded from financial assistance (drawing on the review of political economy which forms our first recommendation). The needs are likely to include small funds, unrestricted funds,

68 The Citizen's Voice and Accountability Synthesis Report (2008) suggested considering undertaking joint country or sector analyses of the political economy on a regular basis and this remains a key recommendation in this study too as there is little evidence that this recommendation has been carried out.

69 The 2009 evaluation of the 9th EDF (EC funding for the ACP countries) which examined support to 40 CS support programmes also notes the importance of looking at the CS sector 'from a systems perspective' rather than the classical project approach – i.e. to think about how the different actors relate to each other rather than considering each non state actor independently.

flexible and agile response funds, funds for processes and funds which support the *right to initiative*.[70]

It is recommended that new funding modalities focus on three types of need:

1. *Long-term support:* It is recommended that DPs funding arrangements for CS engagement take on a longer-term perspective in order to achieve sustained behaviour change outcomes. The rationale for this recommendation is that successful CS engagement in policy dialogue often runs over long time periods, where CSOs build on their accumulated social and political capital to exercise influence. Further, it is recommended that core funding to trusted CSOs should be continued (and expanded where appropriate) for long-term advocacy support.

2. *Specific targeted support:* It is recommended that there is value in designing funding modalities which can support well-orchestrated action around a single legislative objective e.g. the Domestic Violence Act in Mozambique, the Right to Information Act in Bangladesh (policy change outcomes).

3. *Opportunistic right moments:* It is recommended that funding instruments are designed specifically to be able to respond to seizing 'right moments' to raise issues in the public domain or influence decision makers and these are rarely predictable. Such funds would need to be able be mobilised swiftly in order not to miss these windows of opportunity.

Support for (1) and (2) may be provided through 'project type' funding and is likely to be a mix of support to invited and *claimed spaces*. It is recommended that DPs agree to accept that these funding arrangements will incur higher costs, specifically:

- Transaction costs will be higher than for service delivery projects and built into the funds made available.

- Capacity building costs will be a higher proportion of total programme funds, at least in the short term, than for service provision projects because total project funds will be much lower (policy dialogue is relatively resource-light).

- Administrative costs may also be proportionally higher for advocacy and lobbying work than other forms of intervention as exchange of ideas, regular strategic reflection and adjustment may be legitimately a larger proportion of the programme costs.

- Process and outcome-led budgets (as opposed to activity-driven) are needed to enable the flexibility required for opportunistic, effective and 'behind the scenes' engagement.

Provide funds for public access resources, events and processes

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, finance departments, DP Country Offices
Resources for All: It is recommended that the new funding modalities also address the issues of providing support to the range of organisations, movements and spontaneous

70 I.e. the right for CSOs to identify their agenda and modus operandi independently of DP policy, priorities and strategy.

activism which cannot (or prefers not to) be registered but which contributes importantly to policy dialogue to enable:

- off-setting the closure of many small fund windows;
- provision of resources for local agenda, 'risky' actors and issues; and
- support to a wider range of CS action including small episodic actions which increasingly prevail.

Specifically it is recommended that DPs examine the potential for the *Resources for All* (or public access to resources approach) in Box 8.1. It side-steps the issue of the necessity to meet funding eligibility criteria which constrains many CSOs and much CS action from accessing DP support. It therefore has the potential for providing a more '*level playing field*' for a diverse range of CS actors.

Box 8.1 Resources for All

Resources for All responds to the need for providing support to small NGOs, CSOs (which have not become/not wanted to become NGOs) as well as the plethora of temporary issue-based movements and activist groups which make up a vibrant CS and which are not necessarily registered. There have been examples of similar initiatives but they serve the formal registered third sector only and are largely dependent on physical facilities. By contrast, these resources are entirely public-access and primarily web-based. They may provide information and advice about organising action, lobbying and running campaigns, comprehensive funding directories, etc. Small organisations may use this hub to benefit from bulk-bought services such as printing, accounting or insurance. As well as assisting with smaller but potentially important initiatives, public access resources enable new ideas to grow and new actors to emerge. In some donor countries public access resources are provided by the Government, but they can also be established by independent organisations.

A variation on Resources for All: A variation of the Resources for All approach can be applied for particular sectors. Thematic fund support is made available for processes rather than projects and consequently supports a diversity of actors (and positions). Additionally funds for *networking* rather than for individual organisations could be provided with the explicit aim of building relationships, partnerships and opportunities for collaboration including between dissenting groups. More needs to be done to ensure that CS action reaches to districts and villages rather than being concentrated in capital cities and this too can be accommodated in a systems approach.

Enhanced support to independent media and independent journalism

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices
It is recommended that DPs provide an enhanced level of support to the media, building on DPs recognition of the key role of the media in policy dialogue and the use CS can make of this channel of communication. This would augment the support some DPs have provided in journalism training, commissioning media coverage of issues, supporting popular TV chat shows and debate. For example, programmes could be usefully expanded to extend the skills and capacity of the media to provide public information and platforms for public debate; as well as to improve CSO capacity to use the media

productively in publicising their research, their positions on issues and to directly challenge inefficiency and inconsistencies. Citizen journalism should also be supported.

Fundamental is the regulatory framework within which the media operates. The cases show that this is often under threat of increasing state controls. DP support, both in terms of finance and voice, to protect the independence of the media is critical.

Invest in CSO capacity building

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices
This evaluation recommends that DP support should devote more resources to empower CSO *capacity to engage in policy dialogue*, with a change made to budget directives, so that capacity building allocations are not linked to a formulaic percentage of total investment (CS programmes being often relatively resource light). The recommendation here includes the need for a major shift in the approach to capacity building, as competitive funding modalities generally expect implementers to already have the skills and resources necessary to engage effectively but the reality is very different. This new approach would address the importance of up-grading these skills and capacities by investing in capacity building and equipping for *21st century advocacy* (e.g. state-of-the-art provision for computers, internet, mobile telephone and other technological innovations which facilitate information gathering and real time monitoring of policy dialogue and practice).

Within this context, DPs should support the development of a range of skills including:

- Lobbying and advocacy, negotiation and communication skills for behaviour change as well as evidence and case building are key skills which are not necessarily available in CS in developing countries.

- Legal education, public speaking and campaigning, writing and language skills which will further CSOs and individual CS members to present ideas and demands for policy dialogue and conduct themselves appropriately and productively in *invited spaces*.

Some of this support could be channelled through a 'Resources for All' window (see Box 8.1) but can also be supported by encouraging interaction between CSOs in developed and developing countries, (e.g. placements of young professionals, exchange visits, mentor arrangements etc.). A good example for exchange learning is to experience the arrangements for and practice of official lobbying of parliamentarians which many European countries practice. In particular much can be achieved by placing volunteers and interns from DP countries (including through corporate social responsibility initiatives) to bring their technological expertise to the CSO as well as brokering effective technical assistance linkages between DP country CSOs and those in recipient countries. DPs and embassies can broker contacts needed for international exchange much as they do for business interests.

Invest in building capacity among DP, particularly staff in Country Offices

Targeted at: Joint DPs forums, policy makers, DP Country Offices
Improved DP staff with CS engagement experience: It is recommended that DP staff, in particular those in country offices improve their knowledge management in CS

engagement processes. This should take the form of appropriately-designed immersions and in-country orientations covering support to CS engagement in policy dialogue work to give an improved understanding the complex environment in which CSOs operate.

Reduce Staff turnover: It is further recommended that the turnover of staff is reduced, and that where new staff are engaged, sufficient time is provided for hand-over among colleagues. This is important as the basic requirement for sound financing decisions for CS engagement in policy dialogue work implies a need for DP staff with good political knowledge as well as a well-developed institutional memory so that the turnover of staff has minimal effect on these decisions.

DP staff and CSO to be better connected to the grass roots: It is recommended that DPs, CSOs and INGOs improve their connectedness to people living in poverty particularly as the pace of change is accelerating. The same recommendations of ensuring DP staff have good political knowledge, enhancing institutional memory and ensuring regular opportunities to interact directly at grass roots (e.g. through professional immersions, Reality Check Approaches etc.) apply to CSOs too.

8.5 Recommendations for CSOs

(A) Operational recommendations

Targeted at: CSO/NGO forums, individual CSOs

CSOs to continue and expand their programmes to educate citizens

It is recommended that CSOs continue and expand their support programmes of educating citizens. This should focus on the need to promote in the young a sense of community responsibility and an awareness of the role CS can play in society, and in this context in particular how it can influence policy, which should be part of the school curriculum. Where DP support is available, this may be channelled through CSOs to enable them to continue and expand their current education initiatives through school, college and club visits to provide information to young people, so that the next generation is better equipped to participate and contribute to the influencing policy in their local areas and nationally. Youth parliaments and watchdog groups are important initiatives to support. This recommendation draws on the models of change used in the evaluation which highlight the importance of citizen education; moving people's expectations from *users* to *choosers* as they become more familiar with participatory democracy.

CSOs to make more use of social media

It is recommended that CSOs actively plan how to make most effective use of this technology which is fast penetrating even remote and poor regions and communities. It is not the role of this report to be prescriptive in this instance, as the revolution in its use is best left to those who can themselves develop appropriate applications whether it be in improving communication amongst members or for example in sharing and shaping ideas on policy matters through dialogue among a much wider range of CS members than was possible before. The role of DP support in this instance is seen as one of facilitating strategic thinking among CSOs and their constituents by provide funding for research, workshops and strategy development with follow up funding of pilot projects resulting from this process.

Build capacity to improve evidence gathering and research
It is recommended that CSOs seek support to develop their skills to commission, use, and critique research studies, and build the evidence case to support informed engagement in policy dialogue. Additionally this support will enhance the credibility and respect granted to CSOs, and in turn improve their effectiveness in influencing change.

(B) Organisational and governance recommendations

Targeted at: CSO/NGO forums, CSO/NGO networks (national and international)
Empower CS at grass roots level to take action themselves
It is recommended that CSOs facilitate the process of empowering CSOs and groups most directly affected by government policy (or perhaps lack of it). This implies supporting the empowerment of the constituents or local representatives of the constituents through national CSOs, and follows a radical shift in the strategic thinking of some CSOs in recent months. It is based on the finding that where conventional NGOs facilitate those most affected by particular policies to take action themselves rather than on their behalf, outcomes can be particularly effective.[71] Thus, this approach draws on local motivation and commitment to change and builds capacity to ensure local compliance when new laws and policies are made.

Build national and international strategic alliances
In relation to the recommendation on evidence-based research, it is further recommended that CSOs develop effective strategic alliances in order to harness the range of skills needed for effective policy dialogue and create a critical mass for change. The range of possible alliances includes research bodies, lawyers, media as well as diversity of CSOs including unconventional partners.

In parallel with these local alliances much can be achieved for national CSOs from greater connection with international CSOs which operate globally to challenge and support CS action, such as Open Forum and BetterAid Forum. Keeping up to date with the provisions they have negotiated for DP-CSO relationships will allow for closer monitoring of these at ground level (where translation into practice often lags or becomes distorted).

CSOs to build public confidence through self-regulation
Adopt Quality Assurance Standards: It recommended that CSOs promote the wider use of Codes of Practice and Quality Assurance standards as key ways to build public confidence in CSOs engaged in policy dialogue. As argued in this evaluation the litmus test for CSO achievement in policy dialogue often lies in the legitimacy and public confidence it earns. Current legislation and regulation for CSOs focuses on financial accountability and Government control of subversive activities rather than social accountability to the public. The CSO community needs to ensure that its public image is maintained and that the highest levels of transparency and accountability are upheld not only as individual organisations but collectively.

71 Examples given in this report include the empowerment of local communities and CBOs in the natural resources sector in Uganda and the support given to associations of local government representatives in Bangladesh.

It is also recommended that CSOs:

- Demonstrate the importance of public consultation *themselves*,
- continuously remind Governments of their need to listen to the diverse demands of citizens,
- publicly stand up against abuses of freedoms of speech and association,
- find ways to include political parties (as distinct from Governments) as integral parts of CS in policy dialogue processes; and
- promote the integrity and relevance of the CSO community, by encouraging transparency, insisting on public disclosure of financial accounts, adherence to codes of conduct and other means to build public trust in these institutions.

Annex A Terms of Reference

1 Background

The endorsement of the Paris declaration in March 2005 brought an increasing emphasis on aid effectiveness. However, at the time discussions were mostly focused on cooperation between states with little reference to civil society and the role it should play in the new aid effectiveness agenda.

The Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) 2008, however, had key implications for the role of and focus on aid effectiveness in civil society and civil society organisations (CSOs).

The diversity and number of civil society partners and their initiatives, in most cases coupled with little coordination and the mostly qualitative nature of civil society development results, create considerable challenges in defining and measuring strategic outcomes. While CSOs have developed a multitude of tools and mechanisms to promote their development effectiveness at the level of the individual organisations, platforms and coalitions, little meta-analysis has been done of the effectiveness of CSOs as change agents and an important stakeholder group. This has led to a general demand for more knowledge on the results of CSO work: i) beyond activity level to include information on results at output, **outcome** and where possible impact level, and ii) beyond the achievements of the individual CSO towards the collective result or contribution of CSOs to development.

CSOs are increasingly seen as having a key role in furthering democratic ownership by engaging in the policy making process and in holding governments accountable to policy commitments. This was reiterated in the AAA which emphasised the need for governments to broaden the engagement in development policies and '*engage in an open and inclusive dialogue*' (Para 13) including engagement with CSOs (Para 13a), and recognised the need for development partners (DPs) to '*support efforts to increase the capacity of all development actors [incl. CSOs] to take an active role in dialogue on development policy…*' (§13b).

The AAA furthermore recognised and promised to deepen the engagement with CSOs as '***independent actors in their own right*** *whose efforts complement those of governments and the private sector*'. This requires an enabling environment that allows CSOs to maximize their contributions to development (Para 20).

- This evaluation has been initiated by the Donor[72] Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness which is seeking to strengthen the cooperation and knowledge sharing among development partners in the area of civil society support. During a consultation process in April to June 2010 to discuss possible topics and priorities for joint evaluation work, the issues of aid effectiveness, the role of CSOs in policy dialogue, and the role of the enabling environment – including the role of DP support models in enabling or constraining CSO work – were all raised as key areas of interest. As a result it was decided to pursue two different and independent pieces of joint evaluation work i) this thematic evaluation focusing on civil society

72 The term development partner (DP or DPs) is used throughout these ToR except when the term 'donor' constitutes part of an established name or expression.

engagement in policy dialogue,[73] and ii) an evaluation study and mapping of joint and pooled funding mechanisms.[74]

The involvement of CSOs in policy dialogue is not new but is increasingly being encouraged by DPs. Among the DPs an important shift lies in the objectives of many civil society strategies, seeing the development of strong civil societies in the South as an end in itself, and in the increased importance given to advocacy activities and policy dialogue. There is an acknowledgement of the diverse roles civil society can play, a strong focus on partnership and consultation with civil society, and a move towards facilitating an environment where civil society can have a greater agenda setting role.[75]

Although policy dialogue is an area promoted by DPs in different ways, there is little comprehensive knowledge of the role that CSO involvement in policy development can have on domestic accountability and ownership of the development process including the role DPs can play in supporting and promoting it. As this is an issue of increasing importance, the evaluation is seen as a strategic input into discussions of CSO development effectiveness and donor aid effectiveness in the particular area of policy dialogue.

The evaluation is commissioned by three DPs – the Austrian Development Agency (ADA), Danish International Development Assistance (Danida), and Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency (Sida) on behalf of a larger group of bilateral DPs including Canadian International Development Agency (Cida), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland (hereafter Finnida), and Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC), who support the evaluation through their participation in a Reference Group.

2 Overall purpose, objectives and target audience

2.1 Purpose

The overall purpose of the evaluation is lesson learning, to provide information which can assist DPs in gaining a better understanding of how to best support CSOs in the area of policy dialogue in different types of enabling environments.

This implies gaining a better understanding of:

i) How CSOs engage in policy dialogue; the relevance and effectiveness of their policy work; what difference they make; and the constraining and enabling factors.

ii) How different DP support strategies[76] may influence CSO's ability to engage in policy dialogue. This will help DPs gain a better understanding of how best to provide effective support to CSO policy dialogue.

73 Please see Chapter 3 for our understanding of policy dialogue as well as definition of other key concepts.

74 Expected to be initiated second half of 2011.

75 Janice Griffin and Ruth Judge, Governance and Social Development Resource Centre (GSDRC), 2010, Civil Society policy and Practice in Donor Agencies, a DFID funded study.

76 See Section 3.1 for definition of donor support strategies.

2.2 Objectives

More specifically the evaluation has the following specific objectives:

i) Establish an understanding of how CSOs engage in policy development and implementation at different levels (issues, strategies, and type of interaction/ engagement), including how aspects of the enabling environment (such as power structures, political, social and legal institutions) influence the approaches CSOs choose.

ii) Assess how CSOs have contributed to policy dialogue – the relevance, effectiveness and outcomes of their work, and the identification of what works and what does not.

iii) Identify the enabling and the disabling factors, which affect CSO ability and willingness to play an effective role in policy dialogue, including the enabling environment, capacity constraints, and other key issues determined during the evaluation. This also includes an understanding of why some CSOs, who given their constituency and profile could be expected to be engaged in policy processes chose not to.

iv) Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of different DP support strategies both in terms of their efficiency i.e. transaction costs involved as well as in terms of their effectiveness i.e. ability to support effective CSO policy dialogue.

v) Finally the evaluation will identify lessons learned, and provide recommendations for future support to CSOs in the area of policy dialogue.

The evaluation lies somewhere between a classical evaluation (focusing on an assessment of interventions supported by the development partners) and a study (seeking to generate new knowledge on a given topic). The first purpose of the evaluation will resemble more of a study seeking to increase the conceptual understanding of civil society and government interaction in different contexts and circumstances. The second purpose seeking to understand the role different DP support strategies may play will resemble more of an evaluation.

The role of DP support will be covered as part of the discussion of transaction costs and enabling factors, but will not constitute a separate or additional exercise. The evaluation will primarily seek to learn from the different support strategies applied by the six DPs. However, the data collection among CSOs on this topic might also highlight relevant experience with alternative support strategies applied by other development partners or funders.

2.3 Intended users

The primary intended users of the evaluation are the CSO departments of the participating DPs (i.e. embassy staff, programme officers and advisors working directly with CSO support) who can use the evaluation findings to inform decision making on future programming and funding. Intended secondary users include the CSO community, government and the wider DP community in the three countries covered by the evaluation. Finally, the evaluation may be used by the international aid community at large, particularly the international CSO community, donor community and governments who may benefit from an increased understanding of the role civil society and donor support can play.

3 Scope of evaluation

3.1 Understanding of policy dialogue and selection of policy processes to focus on

The term 'policy dialogue' (or policy engagement) defined for the purpose of the evaluation relates to the involvement of CSOs and the influence they have on the government's agenda i.e. the **development** of policies and strategies on one hand and the **implementation** of policies and strategies at national and local level (i.e. holding governments to account) on the other. CSOs' policy dialogue might be through direct interaction with different levels of government structures as well as through *indirect* measures such as awareness raising on rights and entitlements and empowering people to access their rights (social mobilisation).

Understanding of policy dialogue in the Accra Agenda for Action:
In Paragraph 13 on broadening country-level policy dialogue on development, governments pledge to work for a broader involvement in preparing, implementing and monitoring national development plans and policies.

Policy dialogue covers a wide array of potential CSO/Government interaction. The engagement or interaction will differ in term of the *purpose* (policy development versus policy implementation), the *approach* (direct interaction with government versus indirect influence via social mobilization), the *topic* addressed (overall national development policy (PRSP), sector, theme or specific issue), the *level* at which policy dialogue takes place (local, national, regional and international although this evaluation will limit its focus to the two former), the *strategy* applied, etc.

It is therefore essential to limit the scope of the evaluation to a manageable level and to a level which allows meaningful comparison across case study countries. Rather than only focus on *national* level engagement, or only focus on policy *development*, the evaluation will look at policy dialogue in its different forms, but will narrow its focus to two or three policy processes (or sectors or issues) in each of the three case study countries. This should be policy processes which are of key importance to development and where CSOs have played an important role.

The evaluation will primarily seek to learn from CSOs **actively** engaged in policy dialogue within the selected policy areas (the 'movers and shakers'), whichever these CSOs might be. In order to also understand why some CSOs choose not to engage in policy dialogue the evaluation will also include a smaller number of CSOs which given their 'constituency' and 'profile' could have been expected to be actively engaged in the specific policy change processes but were not. (See Section 4.2 on sampling for further details).

3.2 Case study countries

The evaluation will be based on a case study analysis in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda. The selection of countries has been based on criteria of: i) scope of CSO support from the commissioning DPs; ii) different enabling environments, historical and cultural contexts, and iii) location of previous CSO evaluations.

3.3 Evaluation questions

The evaluation questions can be divided into two categories, firstly evaluation questions related to a context analysis, and secondly the core evaluation questions based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria.

As the country context is expected to play a key role in determining the space for and type of CSO engagement, the contextual analysis will provide essential knowledge required to answer the core evaluation questions.

Evaluation criteria	Evaluation questions related to the CONTEXT ANALYSIS
Context	1. How do different stakeholders **define** or perceive **policy dialogue** and what role do they see for civil society organisations in policy development and policy implementation 2. **Describe** the **enabling environment** for CSO engagement in policy dialogue and any key changes over the past five years in relation to: – The legal, political and financial freedoms of CSOs – The relationship between government and civil society in practice –including the power dynamics at play. – Identify the key issues determining the enabling environment 3. Identify **key policy areas** (sectors, issues, processes) that have influenced development and the development debate in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda, and where CSOs have played a key role over the past few years. 4. Describe what the **CSO policy landscape** looks like: – How can the CSOs involved in policy dialogue be described and categorized? This applies to CSOs involved in policy dialogue in i) general, and ii) in relation to the chosen policy areas. – Identify and describe CSOs who were not engaged in the chosen policy areas despite a relevant thematic focus. 5. Describe the **DP support strategies** applied in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda: – Basic trends and elements in the CSO strategies of the six DPs at a general level and how these play out at the country level. – Preferred channels of financial support (direct versus through intermediaries). – Type of support provided (core or programme & project support; targeted versus untargeted; non-financial support). – How do DPs seek to influence the space for effective CSO policy dialogue?

The core evaluation questions below are based on the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria – mainly relevance, efficiency and effectiveness – and will be assessed both in relation to CSO policy dialogue as well as to DP support. The evaluation will not focus on the effectiveness of any single, specific CSO but on CSOs as a group.

Evaluation criteria	CORE evaluation questions
Policy dialogue	6. **How do CSOs engage** in policy dialogue within the chosen policy areas? – What are the strategies CSOs apply? – Scope of policy dialogue? – Degree of networking / cooperation? – Intervention logic behind the strategies/approach chosen?
Relevance	7. How relevant is the CSO policy dialogue in relation to their constituencies? – Who are the CSO's constituencies? To which extent do CSOs have a clear idea of their constituencies? – How do CSOs engage/communicate with their constituencies? How are the rights and interests of their constituencies identified? How do CSOs obtain legitimacy? – How big are CSOs' constituencies? – What constituencies are excluded from dialogue in the particular policy areas? 8. What is the **relevance of DP support** vis-à-vis CSO needs? – What do different stakeholders perceive as the main needs of CSOs, particularly in relation to policy dialogue? Have the needs of CSO changed over time? – What influence do CSOs have on the support received? To which extent is the support demand versus supply driven? Are some needs easier to get funding for than others?
Efficiency	9. What are the **transaction costs for CSOs** involved in engaging with different DPs and different support strategies? 10. What are the **transaction costs for DPs** in engaging with different types of CSOs and different support strategies?
Effectiveness	11. How effective are the CSOs in **asserting influence on government through policy dialogue?** To what extent do CSOs: – Create debate and influence agenda setting i.e. getting their issues on the table – Influence policy formulation – Hold governments accountable to policy commitments – Mobilize their constituencies (for either policy formulation or implementation)? 12. How effective are the CSOs in **achieving their own specific policy objectives?** 13. What were the **unexpected results** of policy dialogue in the selected policy processes / policy areas?

Evaluation criteria	CORE evaluation questions
What works	14. What are the **factors influencing whether CSOs engage in policy processes** or not? Why are some CSOs who given their constituency and profile could engage in policy work, not doing so?
	15. What are the main enabling and **constraining factors** that affect the relevance and effectiveness of CSOs policy dialogue, both in general and in relation to CSOs own goals and objectives?
	– E.g. what role does aspects of the enabling environment, CSO capacity, resource constraints, and degree of networking play?
	16. To which extent do different **DP support strategies address the enabling and constraining factors** that CSOs face.
	17. What **role does flexibility** in DP strategies **play** in achieving results?
	18. What **value do different DP support strategies**, including indirect support **add** to the policy dialogue work of CSOs?

3.4 Definitions

The remaining part of Chapter 3 provides definitions of key concepts to the evaluation, i.e. civil society and CSOs, DP support strategies, and the enabling environment.

Definition of civil society and civil society organisations

The definition of Civil Society Organisations follows the definition used by the OECD report on '*Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness – Findings, recommendations and good practice (2009) in the 'BetterAid' series i.e.:' All non-market and non-state organisations outside of the family in which people organise themselves to pursue shared interests in the public domain. They include a wide range of organisations that include membership-based CSOs, cause-based CSOs and service oriented CSOs. Examples include community-based organisations and village organisations, environmental groups, women's rights groups, farmers associations, faith-based organisations, labour unions, co-operatives, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes, and the not-for-profit media*'.[77]

Definition of DP support strategies

The focus of the evaluation will be on DP support to CSO policy dialogue in partner countries (not in DP countries). In these Terms of Reference the term 'DP support strategies' refers to implementation strategies and incorporates the following main dimensions:

i) The **channel** of support. DP support to CSOs in partner countries is provided through different funding streams including ***direct* funding** provided directly from HQ, or from the embassy, country or regional team as well as **funding through intermediaries** such as local CSO network or umbrella organisations, joint or pooled funding mechanisms, or northern and international CSOs. Furthermore it should be noted that within or complementary to budget- and sector support DPs may also allocate a certain amount to CSOs.

77 Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, Findings, recommendations and good practice, 2009, 'BetterAid' series on aid effectiveness, OECD.

While the unit of analysis is CSO policy dialogue **in partner countries**, support provided through Northern/international CSOs to local CSOs active in policy dialogue will also be covered (as one of several funding streams). The value added of different funding streams will be explored.

ii) The **type of support** provided (e.g. core support and project/programme support)

iii) **Targeted** support (specifically aimed at CSOs policy dialogue/engagement through for example support to CSO networks, capacity building for policy engagement, research etc) versus **untargeted** support (not directly targeted towards policy dialogue/engagement, but which might still be used by CSOs to engage in policy dialogue).

iv) **Finally there is the more indirect support** (seeking to influence the space allowed for CSO policy dialogue and aiming at reforming the institutional environment). This can be done through support to government institutions encouraging CSO and citizen involvement, as well as politically by encouraging or putting pressure on governments to allow popular participation. This kind of dialogue might take place in relation to discussions on budget- and sector support or as a separate dialogue issue between DPs and partner governments.

These different dimensions of DP support should be considered and included in the overall discussions of DP support in the evaluation report.

Definition of enabling environment
The enabling environment can be seen as a function of the legal freedom (freedom of association, expression, right to information, legal recognition of CSOs etc), financial freedom (right to seek and secure funding from legal sources), and political freedom (space provided for CSOs in policy discussion) allowed by the legislation and/or practice in a country.[78] The distinction between legislation and practice must be kept in mind when analyzing the enabling environment as some countries might have a restrictive legislation but more relaxed implementation, whereas in other cases, the opposite might be true.

The Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness has identified a concrete list of issues key to the enabling environment, a list which can be useful to follow when assessing the enabling environment in each of the case study countries:[79]

– Mechanisms to ensure the promotion and protection of the rights to expression

– Peaceful assembly and association and access to information

– CSO specific policies such as CSO legislation and taxation regulations including charitable status provisions

78 Based on text in '*Open Forum Sectoral and Country Consultations: A Synthesis of Outcomes, Towards a Framework for CSO Development Effectiveness*', September 2010, Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness (derived from pp. 48-50).

79 Advisory group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, *Synthesis of recommendations and findings,* August 2008, p. 17. See www.powercube.net

– Regulations and norms to promote CSO transparency and accountability to their constituencies

– The general legal and judicial system and related mechanisms through which CSOs or their constituencies can seek legal recourse

– The degree to which multi-stakeholder dialogue is encouraged and practiced

– Measures to promote philanthropy and corporate social responsibility

While this definition provides a good starting point it is not exhaustive. A lot of factors affect the ability of CSOs to carry out policy dialogue in any given environment including the level of organisation in society, norms and traditions, capacity aspects, socioeconomic factors etc. In line with the AAA declaration (Paragraph 20c) DP support models are also part of the enabling environment. Part of the evaluation will be to identify which factors are key in determining the enabling environment in the selected case study countries.

4 Methodology and approach

The evaluation will be conducted as a two phase approach starting with a more open ended mapping process focusing on country context, conceptualization of policy dialogue, and identification of what is actually happening on the ground. This will provide key information to some of the evaluation questions as well as provide conceptual clarity and overview of key CSO activity required for an informed sampling process. Phase 2 will consist of the case study analysis. The two phased approach will imply two phases of data collection in the selected case study countries, including a comprehensive inception (mapping) phase.

4.1 Phase 1: Inception (mapping) phase

This inception phase and mapping exercise will be based on a documentation review as well as data collection in DP headquarters (among DPs and northern CSOs) and in case study countries (among a range of different stakeholders including DPs, government, CSO community – mainly umbrella organisations, networks or other forms of wider CSO representation – CSO grant mechanisms as well as other stakeholders knowledgeable about the work of CSOs such as think tanks, research institutions and the media). The aim of the first inception (mapping) phase is to conceptualise the issue of policy dialogue and to provide contextual information from the three case study countries. The idea is to provide essential background information necessary to answer the more analytical evaluation questions and to provide the basis for a well informed sampling process. The mapping exercise will cover five main issues:

i) **Conceptualization of policy dialogue and the role of CSOs by different stakeholders:** The aim is to identify how different stakeholder groups may differ in their perception of what is meant by policy dialogue and the role they feel CSOs should have in policy development and policy implementation.

ii) **Country context and enabling environment:** The aim is to understand the general CSO landscape within each country, the political and cultural context

within which CSOs operate, the relationship between the CSO community and government at different levels, and the space for CSO involvement.

Information will to the extent possible draw on work already done in the CIVICUS Civil Society Index project and other studies on enabling environments as well as other relevant documentation but will also be supplemented by updated information from the preliminary data collection phase. It may be useful to apply a power cube analysis (see section on analysis) to discuss the difference between invited, created and contested space and to understand how places, spaces and power for civil society are created, maintained and expanded at different levels of society.

iii) **Description of the CSO landscape in general, as well as in relation to the identified key policy processes.** During the initial inception phase the consultants will need to develop a conceptual framework which can be used across the three case study countries to guide the description of the CSO landscape and help structure and categorize the information on CSOs.

iv) **Identification of important recent policy processes** of interest to the study, where CSOs have played a key role, and a justified suggestion for which policy processes to focus on (see Section 4.2 on sampling).

v) **DP support to CSOs (in case study countries):** The aim is to provide an overview of:

- The *preferred DP support models* for channelling CSO support (which funding streams /support models are used by the six DPs and to which extent?).
- Type of DP support provided (core, project/programme support, targeted/untargeted).
- Non-financial support provided by DPs.

Realistically the consultations during the Inception phase will mainly take place at the national level. However, sub-national organisations and strategies will also be included in the evaluation during the second phase of data collection as the team of consultants works their way down the chain of events from what happens at central level to how it is followed up at the decentralised levels.

4.2 Sampling

Two types of sampling will need to be done:

i) Firstly during the Inception phase, 4-6 ***policy changes or policy processes of importance for development*** where CSOs have played a key role, must be identified in each of the three case study countries. The sample should be supported by a) a justified suggestion for why these policy processes are relevant, b) a brief overview of the scope of CSOs engaged in policy dialogue in each of the suggested areas, and c) a well justified suggestion for which 2-3 areas to focus on.

For the sake of comparison it would be preferable if one of the policy issues identified could cut across the three case study countries e.g. CSO involvement

in a social sector such as education or health. The remaining policy issues should be identified based on country context and DP interest. The final decision on policy processes will be made by the Management Group in close consultation with the embassies/coordination offices, Reference Group and the consultants.

ii) Secondly, once the final policy processes have been chosen, a sample of relevant CSOs to be covered in the second data collection phase must be identified before starting the second phase of data collection including:

- Key CSOs ***which have been important 'movers and shakers'*** in the selected policy change processes. While some of these CSOs are likely to be supported by one or more of the six DPs supporting the evaluation, others may get support from elsewhere or generate their own resources. The sample is likely to include both types.

- A smaller number of CSOs which given their 'constituency' and 'profile' could have been actively engaged in the specific policy processes but were not.

4.3 Phase 2: Case study

The second phase of data collection will focus on provide in-depth understanding of relevance, efficiency and effectiveness issues, based on data collection among actively engaged and some non-actively engaged CSOs in the selected policy processes as well as data collection among beneficiaries and other key stakeholders.

4.4 Data collection and sources of information

Effective policy dialogue will leave many different kinds of 'traces' which the consultants are expected to identify and pursue. This section outlines some of the possible sources of information, but the list is not exhaustive and must be elaborated on by the consultants. Data collection for the evaluation will include but not be limited to:

i) **A documentation review.** Relevant documentation will include:

- Information on disbursements;

- policies/strategies guiding CSO support (from DPs, northern CSOs, and fund managers);

- annual reports on CSO cooperation;

- country information in particular information from the CIVICUS Index Project on the Enabling Environment;

- other relevant studies, evaluations or research done on the role of CSOs in policy dialogue in general;

- Reporting, reviews, studies or evaluations done on CSOs selected for the case-study;

- Relevant policies/strategies within the policy processes chosen for the evaluation

– Relevant news articles, research, studies reports and statistics relevant to the policy processes chosen.

ii) Key informant **interviews and focus group discussions** with key stakeholder groups including *DP staff* at HQ, embassy and if relevant other levels; *government*/ parliament at central and decentralized levels; *CSOs* (northern, southern, local CSO networks and umbrella organisations); *CSO fund managers; think tanks and local academia*; and possibly the *media*. Representatives of different target groups must also be included as a source.

iii) **Case studies** among selected CSOs in order to assess the relevance, effectiveness and impact of their policy work, as well as to identify the enabling and constraining factors including the role of DP support as these selected CSOs have experienced it.

4.5 Analysis

The evaluation will need to strike a balance between on one hand developing stand alone country reports, which clearly reflect the different contexts in the three case study countries and which can be used in their own right, and on the other hand developing a Synthesis report, which can draw out more generic findings.

In order to facilitate a comparison of the analysis done in the three case study countries, and to ensure more analytical and less descriptive reports, the evaluation must develop an analytical framework/model as part of the Inception phase. The framework must provide guidance on:

– How to describe and categorise the CSO landscape.

– Help identify factors which are key in defining the enabling environment. It might be useful to use a *power cube* analysis,[80] in order to understand how places, spaces and power for civil society are created, maintained and expanded at different levels of society.

– How to assess efficiency, effectiveness and attribution.

All information should be triangulated i.e. based on different sources of information, stakeholders, data collection methods and/or analysis. There should throughout the evaluation reports be a critical and explicit discussion on the quality and aptness of data sources.

The assessment will be based on a number of individual organisations in order to say something about CSO contribution as a group. The assessment of the performance or contribution of individual organisations is not relevant in itself, other than to learn some more general lessons on why some strategies or types of organisations might be more successful than others.

Note: The full text of the Terms of Reference can be found on the CD-ROM and on www.evaluation.dk.

80 See www.powercube.net

Annex B Methodology and Conceptual Framework

Phase 1: Inception (including Scoping Study)	**Phase 2: Country Studies (Case Studies of Policy Processes)**	**Phase 3: Synthesis**
Objectives		
To understand: – different stakeholders **perceptions of policy dialogue** – the **context** for CSO action – the current **portfolio of DP support** – to make recommendations for the selection of '**policy process**' case studies which will provide the most useful insights into what policy engagement works and what does not	Review the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the selected **policy processes**; Bangladesh: – local governance – education policy – minority land rights – food security (mini review) Mozambique: – District planning & budget monitoring – Legislation on domestic violence Uganda: – Governance and Accountability – Gender responsive legislation – Forest management	– Analyse and draw lessons learned from the country case studies – situate findings within the debate on CS engagement – Identify cross-cutting findings and conclusions – present findings to broad group of DPs
Timing		
September-November 2011	December 2011-March 2012	May-October, 2012

Phase 1: Inception (including Scoping Study)	**Phase 2: Country Studies (Case Studies of Policy Processes)**	**Phase 3: Synthesis**
Main methods		
– Secondary data document review – In country participatory workshops with CSO representatives – interviews with key informants in country – workshops with University students and media (Bangladesh) – meetings and interviews with DP representatives	Review of 2-4 policy processes in each country – Document review – interviews and focus group discussions with CSOs, Government staff and DP in country – observation of CS engagement in action, including field visits – review of project proposals, strategies and evaluations – findings validation workshop with CSO representatives in each country – sharing findings with DPs in country – End of fieldwork validation workshop – Web survey (Bangladesh and Uganda)	– International sharing workshop in Kampala – interaction with International CSOs e.g. BetterAid, Open Forum – Synthesis of the three country reports and web survey – Draw on information from the 'Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness
Deliverables		
Inception Report	Bangladesh Country Report Mozambique Country Report Uganda Country Report	Synthesis Report Presentations of the findings to DPs in respective countries

Annex C Evaluation Framework

Evaluation questions	Indicators (specific evidence required)	Data sources and methods for data collection	Reporting format
2. **Enabling environment** for CSO engagement in policy dialogue and key changes over the past five years within case study countries? 2.1 The legal, political and financial freedoms of CSOs and how they have changed over the last five years 2.2 The relationship between Government and civil society in practice – including the power dynamics at play and how this has changed over the last five years 2.3 Key issues determining the enabling environment	– Analysis of factors that contribute to CSO effectiveness in the country context – Changes of the last five years – Analysis of power relations and how these affect the space for policy dialogue – **Use Checklist 3!**	– Country documents describing the legal and political framework for CSOs. – Existing analysis of enabling framework (from DPs, think tanks, CSOs) – CSO feedback on enablers and constraints	Country report (revised from scoping study)
Level 3 (Case studies) – CSO effectiveness			
CSO strategies: 6. How do the CSOs (selected for case studies) engage in policy dialogue (within the chosen policy areas)? 6.1 What strategies are used by CSOs to achieve their objectives on policy dialogue? 6.2 What is the scope of policy dialogue? What does it cover? 6.3 To what extent do CSO use networking or cooperation with other CSO as part of their strategies? Is there an advantage in having joint NGO platforms or does this rather dilute their impact on agenda setting? 6.3 What is the intervention logic behind the CSO strategies/ approach? What do they want to achieve and how?	– Types of CSO strategies (see Q4) **(Use Checklist 1)** – Theories of change for case study CSOs (Phase 2) – Analysis of policy dialogue space as part of the case study (Phase 2) – Whether NGO networks and platforms are effective for policy dialogue	– CSO strategy documents – CSO focus group discussions	Country report

Evaluation questions	Indicators (specific evidence required)	Data sources and methods for data collection	Reporting format
Accountability and Legitimacy: 7. To what extent is CSO engagement in policy dialogue supported by their mandate? 7.1 Whose interests do CSO engaged in policy dialogue represent? How do they obtain legitimacy? 7.2 To what extent are CSOs engaging in policy dialogue accountable to their constituencies? How transparent are CSO procedures and operations? What are the feedback mechanisms? 7.3 How do CSOs obtain legitimacy to speak for the people they claim to serve or represent? To what extent are CSOs' political demands supported by "numbers" (size of constituencies)?	– Whether the CSOs' mandate supports engagement in policy dialogue – Whether there the CSOs are accountable to their constituencies on their engagement in policy dialogue – Whether the CSOs have established feedback mechanisms with their constituencies – Whether CSOs have the "critical mass" to support their political demands – Whether CSOs present the interests of poor and marginal groups	– CSO mission statements – CSO institutional visits and interviews – Crosschecking through interviews with groups representing CSO constituencies – Crosschecking through interviews with independent thirds (e.g. think tanks, parliamentarians)	Country report
Results (Process outcomes and policy changes): 11. How effective are the CSOs in asserting **influence** on Government (at national and local level) through policy dialogue? How effective are CSOs in influencing policy change? How effective in holding Government accountable for policy the implementation?	– Extent to which policies changes occurred in selected policy areas – Evidence that CSOs have been substantially engaged in policy dialogue – Evidence that CSOs contributed to policy change in selected policy areas – Evidence that CSOs are holding Government to account for the implementation of policies – **Use Checklist 2!**	– Review of policy outcomes documented by CSO – Review of available analysis of policy processes (DP sources and evaluations; independent research and studies; media) – Stakeholder workshop (including Government representatives, think tanks, parliamentarians, other relevant organisations etc.) to review policy change and contributions	Country report Separate documentation of process outcomes and policy changes (with evidence) Documentation of CSO workshop Documentation of stakeholder workshop

Evaluation questions	Indicators (specific evidence required)	Data sources and methods for data collection	Reporting format
Results: 12. How effective are the CSOs in achieving their own specific **policy objectives?**	– Evidence that CSOs achieve their stated policy objectives – Cases where CSOs failed to achieve their objectives (and why)	– Review of results documented by CSOs – CSO focus groups (workshops), using process analysis, theory of change. – Crosscheck findings through stakeholder interviews/ workshop	Country report Documentation of CSO workshop Documentation of stakeholder workshop
Results: 13. What were the **unexpected results** of policy dialogue?	– Evidence that CSOs have achieved results beyond their stated policy objectives	– Same as Q11	Same as above
Enabling and disabling factors: 14. What are the **factors** influencing whether CSOs engage in policy processes or not? Why are some CSOs who – given their constituency and profile could engage in policy work – not doing so?	– Key factors (drivers, breakers) influencing CSO engagement in policy processes – Practices that have enabled CSO outcomes in policy dialogue	CSO workshops using tools such as – power cube – SWOT analysis – Force field analysis Synthesis of key factors determining outcomes of CSO engagement	Country report Documentation of CSO workshop
Enabling and disabling factors: 15. What are the main enabling and disabling factors that affect the relevance and effectiveness of CSOs in policy dialogue, both in general and in relation to CSOs own goals and objectives? (E.g. what role does aspects of the enabling environment, CSO capacity, resource constraints and degree of networking play?)	– Analysis of enabling and constraining factors affecting CSO strategies and results – **Use Checklist 4!**	– Same as Q 15	Country report Using separate template on enabling factors (from scoping study
Level 4 - DP support on policy dialogue (country level)			
DP support: 17. How responsive are DP strategies to the priorities of the CSOs and what role did this play in the effectiveness of CSOs?	– Lessons (and examples) on responsive support; Lessons (and examples) on responsive support: what worked and what didn't?	Feedback from CSOs and other stakeholders (Country web survey)	Country report (Feedback form/survey for synthesis)

Evaluation questions	Indicators (specific evidence required)	Data sources and methods for data collection	Reporting format
DP support: 18. What value do specific support strategies add? In particular, what value does support provided through different channels (Northern CSOs, local CSOs) add? What value does DP engagement in policy dialogue add?	– Whether DP strategies support diversity of CSOs – Whether DP strategies support learning, innovation and focus on results – Whether partnerships with Northern CSOs provide opportunities for networking, dialogue and information sharing?	Feedback from CSOs and other stakeholders (Country web survey)	Country report (Feedback form/survey for synthesis)
DP support: 8. What is the relevance of **DP support** vis-à-vis CSO priorities on policy dialogue? 8.1 What do DP perceive as the main needs of CSOs, particularly in relation to policy dialogue? 8.2 To what extent has DP support been driven by CSO demands? 8.3 To what extent does DP support respond to changing conditions for policy dialogue? To what extent is DP support informed by sound contextual analysis? 8.4 To what extent do DPs pursue their priorities through support of CSO engagement in policy dialogue (whose agenda)? Or where relevant: do what extent do Northern CSOs pursue their agenda through cooperation with local partners (who sets the agenda)?	– Whether DP support is aligned to CSO priorities (priorities evidenced through CSO internal strategies, planning and communication) – Whether DPs are responsive to CSOs demands – Evidence of DP analysis and response to changing framework conditions – Cases where CSO priorities changed in response to DP support – Whether DPs (or Northern CSOs) pursue their strategic priorities through CSO support in policy dialogue	– DP and CSO interviews – (Country web survey)	Country report (Feedback form/survey for synthesis)
DP support: 16. To what extent have **DP support strategies** addressed the enabling and constraining factors that CSO face?	– Evidence that DP strategies have addressed those enabling and constraining factors	Feedback from CSOs and other stakeholders (Country web survey)	Country report (Feedback form/survey for synthesis

Annex D Timeline for the Study

Date	Phase / activity
PHASE 1	**INCEPTION AND SCOPING STUDIES**
May 2011	Study commenced/kick off meetings
June	Pre-inception studies
August	Scoping Studies
September	Uganda Scoping Study Report
	Mozambique Scoping Study Report
	Mozambique Country Study (till Dec.)
October	Bangladesh Scoping Study Report
	Inception Report Final
PHASE 2	**MAIN COUNTRY STUDIES**
November 2011	Mozambique Country study
December	Mozambique Country study completed
January 2012	
February	Uganda Country Study
	Bangladesh Country Study
March	Mozambique Draft Country Report
April	Uganda Draft Country Report
	Bangladesh Draft Country Report
PHASE 3	**SYNTHESIS REPORTING AND PRESENTATION**
May 2012	Global Workshop, Kampala
June	Zero Draft Synthesis report to Management Group
July	First Draft Synthesis Report
August	Revised Draft Synthesis Report
	Final Draft Country Reports (x3)
September	Presentation of Study findings to Danida, ADA and Sida
	Final Draft Synthesis Report
October-November	Report layout and proofreading
December	Publication of Synthesis Report and three Country Reports

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Can be found on the CD-ROM and on www.evaluation.dk

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Commissioning Development Partners

The evaluation is commissioned by members of the Development Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, comprising three development partners; Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), Danish International Development Assistance (Danida) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). They have commissioned on behalf of a larger group of bilateral development partners including Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) which support the evaluation through their participation in a Reference Group, which also includes Open Forum and BetterAid.

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Andrew Lawson

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Synthesis report

Antonie de Kemp (IOB), Jörg Faust (DIE), Stefan Leiderer (DIE)

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2012:12 Joint Evaluation of impacts of assistance to Social Sector Reforms in Moldova

Final report

Elisabeth Picard, Viorica Craievschi Toarta, Ovidiu Voucu

Commissioned by Sida's Unit for Monitoring and Evaluation and the Embassy of Sweden in Chisinau.

2013:1 Joint Evaluation of Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue

Synthesis report

The evaluation is commissioned by members of the Development Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness, comprising three development partners; Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC), Danish International Development Assistance (Danida) and Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). They have commissioned on behalf of a larger group of bilateral development partners including Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) which support the evaluation through their participation in a Reference Group, which also includes Open Forum and BetterAid.

Support to Civil Society Engagement in Policy Dialogue
- Synthesis Report

Although policy dialogue is an area promoted by many development partners in various ways, there is little comprehensive knowledge of the role that CSO involvement in policy development can have on domestic accountability and ownership of the development process, including the role DPs can play in supporting and promoting it.

As this is an issue of increasing importance, an evaluation of experiences with civil society engagement in policy dialogue in Bangladesh, Mozambique and Uganda was launched in 2011. The three countries were chosen for study based on the scope of CSO support from the commissioning donors, their differing contexts and the locations of previous CSO evaluations.

The evaluation had two overall purposes. Firstly, to gain a better understanding of how CSOs engage in policy dialogue – the strategies they use, the relevance and effectiveness of their policy work, and the constraining and enabling factors affecting their work. Secondly, to analyse different development partner support strategies – both in terms of their efficiency (transactions costs involved) and in terms of their effectiveness – with a view to make support to this area more effective.

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY
Address: SE-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden.
Visiting address: Valhallavägen 199.
Phone: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64.
www.sida.se sida@sida.se

Sida