Thematic Evaluation Number 2
Strengthening Civil Society in the Global South
Annex C: Case Studies

Contents

ActionAid and the Bridges of Love Alliance in Kenya	
Name of Danish CSO	ActionAid Denmark (AADK)
Name of Southern partner(s)	ActionAid International Kenya (AAIK) LGBTIQ Alliance (Bridges of Love Alliance)
Country	Kenya (with links to Uganda and Nigeria)
Relevant Theme(s)	Working with non-traditional partners; Convening or supporting Southern networks, platforms and alliances
Project / Programme Name	Bridges of Love Alliance
Period	2017 – present
Lot(s)	Civil Society

(This case study is partly based on interviews with the staff of ActionAid Denmark and ActionAid Kenya, and interviews with three members of the LGBTIQ Alliance. The members were recommended to the evaluation team by ActionAid Kenya. However, views within a social movement such as the LGBTIQ Alliance inevitably vary from person to person, and the views of the members interviewed should not necessarily be taken as representative of the views of the Alliance as a whole.)

Background

Social norms in Kenya are hostile towards LGBTIQ people. A vast majority of Kenyans find such identities immoral, un-African, un-Kenyan, and against their religion. LGBTIQ people experience discrimination and violence at work, in schools and hospitals, and at the hands of the police, neighbours and families alike. They are constitutionally allowed to organise, but doing so is very dangerous. The LGBTIQ community is the target of attacks by the public and wanton arrests by the police for blackmail or extortion. Fear and lack of awareness prevent cross-sectoral and cross-border work between LGBTIQ activists and influential stakeholders. In 2018, the Kenyan High Court started deliberating on a case to repeal the anti-homosexual law, which dated from colonial times. However the case was dismissed on grounds of insufficient evidence of discrimination. The Court of Appeal was expected to schedule a hearing in 2020, but hearings have been suspended due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and at the time of writing the case is still pending.

ActionAid has had a long history and engagement with social movements since its inception. In 2017, AADK and AAIK initiated a pilot project, providing capacity development support to 75 LGBTIQ activists in Kenya, Uganda and Nigeria, with the partner 'All Out'. The pilot project was not designed with pre-defined aims or outcomes, but was instead designed to follow the needs of the target group. In workshops in 2018, LGBTIQ activists in Kenya identified religious leaders as powerful stakeholders who held much influence over LGBTIQ lives in terms of policy and daily life. AADK and AAIK subsequently looked at ways to bring progressive religious leaders who were interested in conversations with LGBTIQ activists together to discuss ways forward. According to ActionAid staff, the religious leaders who joined wanted to support the activists, but lacked understanding of the LGBTIQ vocabulary and identities, what support would mean, and how to advocate from their platforms. Initial workshops then led to the founding of the "Bridges of Love" Alliance.

The Kenya Alliance is comprised of LGBTIQ activists and of Christian and Muslim leaders. Participants have been trained using AADK's participatory, empowering methods in a safe space provided by ActionAid's Global Platform (GP). (Global Platforms is ActionAid's network for youth-led activism. It supports movements, youth networks, organisations and individuals who promote progressive social, political and economic change around the world.) However, since 2018 the work has been focussing on Kenya only. In Nigeria and Uganda LGBTIQ work carries increased risks for activists with only a few organisations working openly. Kenya was chosen as a hub, specifically Nairobi and Mombasa, due to a more engaged community of stakeholders (including other AAIK partners) and for safety reasons.

The overall purpose of the project is to create a critical mass of powerful advocates to demand anti-discrimination laws, and in particular the repeal of the anti-homosexual Penal code 162. The specific objectives are to challenge stigma and discrimination towards LGBTIQ people in Kenya; to amplify the voices of the LGBTIQ activists by building an Alliance between unusual but powerful actors; and to coordinate planning and advocacy efforts.

Summary of changes

After the pilot period, AADK took stock of lessons learned. One of the findings was that LGBTIQ persons are as religious as other Kenyans, and rejection by their own religious leaders is very hurtful. Religious leaders have a deep influence on social norms and influence legislation. By excluding LGBTIQ persons from places of worship such as churches and mosques they can make them outcasts. However, according to AAIK staff some religious leaders are themselves LGBTIQ, some show solidarity, and some consider sexual rights as human rights. Others are simply neutral.

According to the different stakeholders interviewed, after the Alliance had been formed religious leaders of different denominations started advocating for LGBTIQ rights. This included holding workshops, sensitising congregations, mediating between parents and children, creating safe spaces at their churches and mosques, and testifying in court to repeal the Penal code 162. One of the innovative approaches of the project was to shift the focus from religious leaders being passive recipients of training and workshop participants to engaging them as proactive partners who could contribute to advocacy on LGBTIQ rights.

ActionAid staff believe that providing safe spaces and building up trust have been essential to engage with informal partners and individuals in the Alliance. Bringing religious leaders into the Global Platform has proved transformational for them as well as for AAIK and AADK. Many of the religious leaders had never (knowingly) met a gay or lesbian person, and, according to one member of the Alliance interviewed, began to see them not as 'animals' but fellow human beings. Alliance members also reported that much condemnation and talk of LGBTIQ persons as sinners was heard at the first joint session between religious leaders and Alliance representatives, but this changed over time as people began to understand each other more.

In 2018, the main focus of the Alliance project was to build skills, create confidence and strengthen networking and ties between Alliance members through the Global Platform. This was done through support groups, safe spaces, tools development, and media coverage. In 2019, the focus shifted towards developing a longer-term strategy for the Alliance, and supporting the petition against Penal Code 162 and 164 and preparing for the appellate court case. In addition, specific issues were addressed such as self-defence techniques, self-care, and developing a group structure within the loose Alliance.

A 2019 Outcome harvesting workshop (covering the period between 2018 and 2019) identified a number of changes. The main change stories reported by AAIK were as follows:

- Religious leaders had learned more about LGBTIQ identities and issues, what human rights are and how to claim them. Different religious leaders said they had started preaching acceptance to their own congregations; convened meetings with other religious leaders to spread the message of acceptance; come out as gay or lesbian themselves; sheltered LGBTIQ youth turned away from homes; mediated their return with parents; talked to school principals and the police to reduce discrimination, expulsions and arrests; made radio appearances; and appeared in court to support the repeal case.
- At a higher level, there were some reports of police officers in certain slum areas stopping discrimination against LGBTIQ persons; nurses treating LGBTIQ patients; and a school principal inviting a pastor to discuss issues of sexuality and gender identity with their students.
- Some changes were reported at the level of national authorities, such as the Kenyan national census officially recognised intersex people in 2019 when the National Bureau of Statistics accepted the category; and the Kenyan High Court hearing a petition case to consider repealing the colonial anti-homosexuality law which penalises same sex relations with 14-21 years of prison.
- ActionAid Kenya had added LGBTIQ as a target group to future programming.

The Outcome Harvesting Workshop was attended by 30 Alliance members, as well as ActionAid staff. Obviously, some reports of change are more credible than others, and require more evidence to support them. For example, individual testimonies of change could largely be taken at face value, whilst more widespread claims of changes in the behaviour of police, nurses or national authorities would require more evidence both to validate the changes and explore contribution. Some stories could not be validated because of privacy and security concerns. Nonetheless, a number of significant changes have clearly been identified.

Interviews with Alliance members in 2021 further suggest that using a human rights-based approach, with a focus on storytelling, had led to some religious leaders fundamentally recognizing that LGBTIQ persons "are human beings, not animals". This recognition fostered empathy as some religious leaders were shocked to learn about the life and suffering of LGBTIQ persons, inducing a major change in their attitudes.

However, since 2019 there have been some challenges. ActionAid staff suggested that 2020 had been a period of consolidation, further coaching and networking, the development of support groups, new member training, and public advocacy and publicity events such as equality sermons. By contrast, according to the LGBTIQ Alliance members interviewed, very little strategic support had been provided to the Alliance in 2020. This is further discussed in the sections on new forms of partnership and convening and networking below.

Results at partner level

As far as AADK support to AAIK is concerned, the Global Platform provided a venue for interaction between LGBTIQ activists and religious leaders, and was turned into a safe space for LGBTIQ persons. According to the GP coordinator, the partnership with AADK has been very good, and has been characterised by AADK mentoring and coaching AAIK whilst "putting AAIK staff at the heart of the programme supporting the Alliance" and supporting their capacity to implement the programme and fundraise.

As far as the Alliance is concerned, members have been supported in areas of mental health, livelihoods and media training. After an initial 'honeymoon' period there was a need to develop leadership capacity within the Alliance, which was considered to be low at the time. Training led by staff from both AADK and AAIK led to a decision by Alliance members to use a "snowflake" type of structure with smaller "families" of 7-10 people, each with a spokesperson. Small seed grants were introduced, spokespersons were responsible for the funds and liaising with other families/groups. This means that activists in the Alliance were the ones making decisions and deciding how they wanted to work. Unfortunately, most 'families' spent the seed grant on a one-day workshop without plans for follow-up, and today most 'families' are inactive.

The Alliance is supported by AAIK's Programme Department including the AA Global Platform. Both are located in Nairobi but in different locations. As such, the Alliance received support from AAIK's Programme Department as its dedicated project to support youth activism through the Global Platform. The Alliance members interviewed expressed dissatisfaction with poor coordination within AAIK, and suggested that one person from the Alliance should be appointed as a coordinator, under the supervision of AAIK. This follows AAIK's intention to make the Alliance an independent partner organisation.

Links to wider results

It is clear that the work of ActionAid in supporting the Alliance has brought about many changes in the lives of individuals. As stated earlier, these include a shift in social norms and practices in some faith-based organisations, with religious leaders more accepting of LGBTIQ persons. In the view of the evaluation team, the GP has worked as a conducive platform for some LGBTIQ members to gain a voice and confidence to engage with opponents, and for some religious leaders to gain perception of who LGBTIQ people are. It has also enabled some religious leaders and some LGBTIQ members to get to know one another and build some personal understanding and relationships. These are big steps in building a foundation for creating change. However, whether this later contributes to wider systemic changes in Kenyan society is unknown at present.

For individuals within the Alliances, and potentially other LGBTIQ people in Kenya, longer-term objectives could include reduced discrimination and violence, fewer arrests for blackmail or extortion, avoidance of prison (because of the repeal of the anti-homosexual law), and less rejection by their own religious leaders.

Added-value

ActionAid as a political organisation (non-party and not a charity) has realised that LGBTIQ rights is a huge human rights issue, and with strategic funding it is well placed to provide the flexibility to address emergent concerns. LGBTIQ is now recognised as strategically important within the ActionAid International Alliance.

AAIK staff highly value the unique capacity development, coaching, mentoring and fundraising support provided by AADK. Moreover, AADK funds all the governance work of AAIK and wants to work with AAIK as an equal partner, rather than just supporting a programme.

AADK has also promoted the work of the Alliance in other ways. For example, Alliance members gave a presentation on religion, LGBTIQ rights and wellbeing in Kenya as part of the virtual Copenhagen Pride in 2020. This gained the attention of a Danish / International audience, and created a sense of empowerment within the Alliance, as well as building the presentation skills of the participating panellists.

AAIK staff consider the relationship has been symbiotic. AAIK has gained experience in working with looser networks rather than formal partnerships, and these lessons could be applied in the future. AAIK has also gained valuable expertise in working with LGBTIQ people as a new target group of marginalised people. In future, the LGBTIQ project might expand to engage other key opponents of LGBTIQ, e.g. politicians and media in and outside Kenya, and with GP as a safe space for LGBTIQ community work. As part of reviewing its strategic plan, AAIK has also added a LGBTIQ component thus institutionalising LGBTIQ as a target group.

Localisation

There are two aspects to localisation: the extent to which AAIK is independent to make its own decisions, and the relationship with the Alliance. On the former, AAIK genuinely appreciates the long-term partnership and

knows it can make decisions on funds as long as those decisions are in alignment with the programme. AAIK staff stress that they find it easy to consult with AADK concerning financing and other decisions. One example provided was the handing over of the GP, which involved a re-delegation of roles and more autonomy to AAIK in decision making. The national ownership and management of GPs in different countries is part of ActionAid's localisation process.

As far as the Alliance is concerned, ActionAid staff pointed out that the Alliance is an independent social movement, whose foundation and activities are supported by ActionAid, but they are not part of the Global Platform or ActionAid, either in Kenya or Denmark. This means that ActionAid does not direct the Alliance activities, nor its choice of who they work with, but instead facilitates interventions such as capacity building, convening, the provision of small grants, mentorship and coaching.

However, according to the Alliance members interviewed, before 2020 parts of the Alliance wanted more autonomy, and did not want to simply be reacting to invitations from ActionAid. At the same time they did not feel the Alliance was strong enough to take independent action. To a certain extent this made parts of the Alliance feel like beneficiaries, receiving support from AAIK, rather than taking control of their own plans and activities. This is probably always going to be an issue when a CSO has a hand in the formation of a social movement or Alliance – some parts of the movement will want more independence of decision-making, or will want to move at a faster pace, whilst other parts would prefer to have ongoing guidance and support.

New forms of partnership

The LGBTIQ Alliance is not a traditional CSO partner, and involves Faith Based Organisations (FBOs), religious leaders and LGBTIQ activists working in a loose alliance without formal structure. Supporting the establishment of the Alliance, and formalising its further development, has been challenging, and has required a lot of support from AAIK. According to Alliance members interviewed, the GP initially provided a context for young LGBTIQ people to grow self-confidence and voice their opinions, and the loose network of the Alliance worked well at the start. However, a more sustainable structure needs to be set up for the Alliance to become a platform for wider convening with both LGBTIQ organisations and religious institutions. A potential dilemma is that building up and supporting a social movement into something that looks and feels more like an NGO ("NGO-isation") might make it easier for AADK and AAIK to manage, but would potentially delegitimise the movement through imposing more bureaucracy and compliance. The means that ActionAid has to be very agile in responding to the needs of the movement.

At the time of writing, relations between ActionAid and parts of the Alliance had entered a more problematic stage. ActionAid continued to carry out activities in 2020, including facilitation of a Mental Health and Covid-19 Forum, remote weekly mental health check-ins, cash support for Covid-19 relief, planning for outreach events, the induction of new members, training on sexual harassment training, and facilitation of a team retreat, to name but a few. At the same time, according to Alliance members interviewed, very little was done in 2020 by AAIK to support the Alliance programmatically or strategically. Indeed, those members interviewed felt that relations needed to be re-booted.

It is impossible to know whether this view is representative of the wider movement (short of surveying or interviewing all of its members) but it is clear that there are different views within the Alliance about where the relationship between ActionAid and the Alliance currently stands, and the immediate needs going forward. A complication is that there has been an incident of an undisclosed nature that has hampered the project timeline, and which requires rebuilding trust and cooperation amongst all stakeholders.

From similar case studies, it is clear that different sets of strongly held views within a social movement are the norm rather than the exception. ActionAid staff recognise that working with social movements has the potential to create conflict and give rise to tensions amongst different activists, members, stakeholders and facilitators. In addition, members of the Alliance will have had varied experiences on their engagement, particularly when convened around a clearly important and emotive issue such as the experience of LGBTIQ people in Kenya, let alone the relationship with organised religion. As one member of ActionAid staff puts it *"… the patriarchal norms that create a rift in society and intolerance against LGBTIQ individuals are the same ones that are reflected in personal relationships between members and make the collaboration complex."*

The key message for this case study and the wider evaluation is that working with new types of partnerships, such as social movements, can help reach parts of society that are hard-to-reach, or cannot easily be helped through working with traditional NGOs. Nonetheless, such relationships are difficult to manage, and require constant vigilance, energy, agility and resources. Issues will arise from time to time that need to be managed in a sensitive and professional way. And the skills of staff designated with supporting and maintaining the relationships are critical, especially when things go wrong. None of this should detract from the importance of the work, and its potential for generating real change – in this case for persecuted minorities.

Convening and networking

The original 2017 pilot project did not involve religious leaders. They only became involved after workshops involving LGBTIQ leaders. Nonetheless, the convening of religious leaders and LGBTIQ members is now an important element of the Alliance. Starting up an Alliance between two groups that AAIK had limited experience of working with (and where both groups belong to fragmented organisational landscapes marked by strong opinion makers) turned out to be a great challenge for growing a social movement. Building a network between two parties with mutually strong feelings against one another has involved encouraging positive relations between some persons, yet at the same time addressing emergent challenges that stem from different values and deep-seated opposition. In the case of the Alliance, this also coincided with the Covid-19 pandemic, which meant people did not see as much of each other face-to-face. Eventually relations between some Alliance members appeared to break down, and until the situation has been resolved it is difficult to see how AAIK can move further in supporting the Alliance.

The Alliance members interviewed stated that the small core of LGBTIQ activists and religious leaders committed to work for a common agenda genuinely appreciate AAIK's efforts to provide the platform for the Alliance. However, they feel that there are weaknesses in AAIK's management and communication, and they strongly recommend that AAIK resolves any conflict between other Alliance participants, and tries to "restart" the Alliance partnership. A 'Future Collaboration' workshop that was conducted with the Alliance in Nairobi in December 2020 concluded with a decision to resolve any major conflicts before moving forward with other programme activities.

Such challenges and tensions are probably inevitable when bringing together such diverse groups with very different world views, and where extremely emotive and important issues are concerned. Perhaps a key lesson for convening is that bringing together different groups to start with is only the start of the challenge – a further challenge is to support and maintain relationships over time. Another challenge is to know when and where an organisation's responsibility for convening stops, and when an organisation such as ActionAid needs to be proactive in helping to settle disputes. These difficult challenges need to be recognised if the Danish MFA is serious about supporting new forms of partnership such as social movements involving different constituencies.

Innovation

There was no explicit link to the Danish innovation fund.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Several of the case studies covered within this evaluation have involved loose alliances or networks involving disparate groups of people that may be very suspicious of each other, and all have unearthed challenges that need to be managed on a constant basis. ActionAid is at a more advanced stage than other Danish CSOs in working with social movements, and has generated a number of lessons learned that would be useful for other organisations. Three documents describing experiences, lessons learnt and best practices from supporting social movements are contained in the links below.

Attachments

- AAIK Safe Space Kit for Faith Leaders:
  https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TUQJS4xCZVK7YzIfo7ut24sobEdhkwgF/view
- LGBTIQ Alliance Outcome Harvesting Report (contains 32 links to photos and news coverage)
- Three lessons documents describing experiences, lessons learnt and best practices from supporting social movements are contained in the links below:
  - https://issuu.com/globalplatforms/docs/how_we_support_social_movements
  - https://issuu.com/globalplatforms/docs/sustaining_social_movements?fr=sMTVlOTkzMzI2OA
  - https://issuu.com/globalplatforms/docs/covid-19_can_trigger_revolution?fr=sOGNiYTkzMzI2OA

Danmission and the Prey Lang Forest	
Name of Danish CSO	Danmission
Name of Southern partner(s)	Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN) Peace Bridges Organisation (PBO) Cambodian Youth Network (CYN)
Country	Cambodia
Relevant Theme(s)	Working with non-traditional partners; Working with youth groups, alliances and networks; Innovative ways or approaches to working in partnerships
Project / Programme Name	"It's Our Forest Too"
Period	2014 – present
Lot(s)	Civil Society

Background

Prey Lang is the last major lowland rain forest on the Southeast Asian mainland. The forest covers over 400,000 hectares and is located in the northern part of Cambodia. It is home to 200,000 inhabitants, many from the indigenous Kuy people of Cambodia, in addition to numerous threatened animal and plant species. The forest provides the Kuy people with building materials, medicine, food, and their livelihoods.

The Government of Cambodia has designated Prey Lang as a Wildlife Sanctuary. However, illegal logging and industrial agriculture are posing major threats to the forest which, over the past 15 years, has been dramatically deforested. Conflicts are widespread in the Prey Lang area. These include conflicts between private company staff and villagers when companies start clearing the forest; tensions and clashes with local and provincial authorities when trying to protect the forest from illegal logging; and conflicts between villagers involved in illegal logging and villagers protecting the forest.

In 2014, Danmission began a project, initially funded for two years. It was called *"It's Our Forest Too – Engagement in peaceful dialogue for forest protection in Cambodia"*. The main partners were as follows.

- The Prey Lang Community Network (PLCN) was formed around twenty years ago to facilitate organisation and communication across the four provinces spanning Prey Lang. It builds on a tradition of patrolling, and consists of around 400 active members, all of whom are volunteers. It operates as a loosely structured network with a coordination committee and a core group. On regular patrols into the forest members collect data on the status of the forest, record and report illegal activities, seize logging machinery and tools used for illegal activities, and hand confiscated goods to the authorities. They provide the only real on-the-ground information about what's going on inside Prey Lang. PLCN is also engaged in advocacy and awareness-raising work around illegal logging and other illegal activities.
- Peace Bridges Organisation (PBO) is a technical partner for conflict resolution. It provides training to PLCN members, local communities, and local authorities on conflict resolution and peacebuilding. It has a strong emphasis on active non-violence and community resolution.
- Cambodian Youth Network (CYN) is a student and rural youth network which aims to increase youth participation and civic engagement in Cambodia. It is a member-based organisation, and aims to provide skills-sharing and knowledge-building opportunities to youth groups, members, and activists, as well as build networks in order to put youth issues onto the political agenda. Part of its mission is to mobilise young people to focus on the environment and national resource protection.
- The project is also supported by the University of Copenhagen. Its long-standing involvement with the project is due to the many different innovative approaches used within the project, such as communications, technology, ways of working, and citizen science. The University has helped produce and publish nine Monitoring Reports on the Status of Prey Lang, as well as a number of scientific papers and articles about the work of PLCN. Information has also been presented via international conferences, posters, TV productions, radio programmes, films on YouTube and websites.

Since 2014, the project has been supported by several donors with multiple sets of objectives over different time periods. Danmission staff believe that Danmission, along with the University of Copenhagen, has played a critical role in helping manage support to the project, and see the project as an ongoing initiative which will require support for many years. In late 2019, the EU provided a grant to Danmission for a new, five-year project in Prey Lang and two other Cambodian forests. PLCN also gets funding through a variety of other donors, including Article 19 and Earth Journalism Network. Danmission's funds are primarily used to support ad-hoc activities not covered by other funding sources, especially funding required in emergency cases.

PLCN and its partners have received five international prizes recognising the partnership efforts: UNDP Equator Initiative (2015), International Society for Tropical Foresters (2017), University of Copenhagen Innovation Prize (2018), National Energy Globe Award (2019) and Global Landscape Hero (2020).

Summary of changes

According to a variety of internal and external reports, changes since 2014 include raised awareness about illegal logging within the forest, an increased base of support, strengthened alliances between PLCN and other partners, and potentially some change in the democratic space available within Cambodia. Specifically, the project has enabled PLCN to make progress against three of its main objectives. First, local community members in the Prey Lang area are better organised and engage actively in dialogue and advocacy on forest issues. Second, there has been improved data collection and dissemination about Prey Lang. Third, there has been strengthened media outreach activities and strategic communication and advocacy on forest issues.

As far as changes to policy are concerned, PLCN is one small player, set against the power of the state within Cambodia. Yet Danmission and University of Copenhagen staff believe PLCN came close to influencing national policy when – alongside organisations of New York and Australian barristers – it advocated for the introduction of a new Environmental Code within a wider process of national legislation on protected areas. To-date, the Code has not been passed by the Council of Ministers. However, the latest draft contains articles on co-management which were influenced by PLCN, and there is some prospect of these being adopted in the future.

Danmission staff and partners believe that PLCN patrols have sometimes been able to prevent illegal logging. Unfortunately, this has only delayed deforestation, and widespread illegal activities continue. An internal report in 2019 stated that *"… in June, PLCN released a statement urging the government to combat illegal logging and poaching in Prey Lang … Subsequent to this … the government did set up a task force to crack down on forest crimes. The task force was successful in stopping some of the illegal activities for a while, but by the end of the year, things were back to normal."*

Perhaps the best evidence for an impact on illegal logging is the fact that it increased significantly immediately after the Ministry of Environment banned PLCN patrols in February 2020.[i] This was confirmed by satellite imaging, which also detected new convoys of trucks, sawmills etc.[ii] At the time of writing, PLCN is still banned, and patrols are no longer allowed to operate within the protected area of the Prey Lang Forest. There are no immediate prospects for this decision to be reversed. According to Danmission staff, other major players have tried to support dialogue around PLCN, but little progress has been made.

As far as the work of PBO is concerned, Danmission staff report that thanks partly to its efforts the number of conflicts in the community has reduced, with many examples of where people have managed to communicate in a more non-aggressive manner. Specifically, an evaluation conducted in 2016 (before the current SPA period) concluded that integrating the peacebuilding approach had helped PLCN to build bridges and greater understanding among community members, local authorities and network members; as well as contributing to a reduced climate of fear among network members.

The University of Copenhagen continues to analyse the documentation collected by PLCN for publication in Annual Monitoring Reports on the status of Prey Lang Forest. In addition, a new collaboration with the EU Joint Research Centre has greatly facilitated the use of high-resolution satellite images to complement and confirm forest disturbances recorded by the PLCN patrols.

Results at partner level

Without Danmission support in 2020 PLCN would probably have either been weakened or dissolved.[iii] PLCN activists believe that Danmission has 'walked with them' and given them moral support throughout a very difficult period when PLCN was banned by the Government, and some of its members were arrested. Danmission has also helped PLCN engage in other activities now that it has been banned from patrolling. On a more personal level, the project has helped PLCN gain international recognition, and has also helped link members to other indigenous people. For example, Danmission facilitated a study tour to Borneo, and PLCN activists also travelled to Paris to pick up an award. One member of PLCN is reported to have said *"before then I thought we were alone … now I can see we are part of a larger picture"*.

Some of the development of PLCN is down to the support provided by PBO. For example, Danmission's Annual Results report in 2019 reported that PLCN members *"increasingly use active non-violence when communicating with local authorities, dealing with illegal loggers and resolving internal network conflicts … Violent clashes between PLCN members and illegal loggers have decreased substantially and now rarely occur … internal conflicts [are] addressed and transformed before becoming destructive for the network."*

As far as PBO is concerned, staff interviewed said that having Danmission support has been very helpful, especially during emergencies. PBO are an interesting organisation as they are Christian-based but, according to staff, are shunned by the rest of the Christian community because they work on rights-based issues. This is partly because the ruling Cambodia Peoples' Party (CPP) controls the Evangelical Fellowship of churches in Cambodia. However, the fact that Danmission funds the Fellowship as well as PBO offers PBO some level of protection. PBO has also received capacity development support from Danmission, although PBO staff don't believe it needs much organisational development. PBO staff stated that Danmission understands this and doesn't interfere where it is not necessary. They also said they are happy with what they get in terms of partner support, and perceive it as a real partnership based on respect and trust.

CYN staff interviewed as part of the evaluation also stated they have received active capacity development support, and that both management and staff capacity had improved as a result. There have been lots of good learning exchanges through bi-annual learning platforms, and Danmission has helped CYN network with other similar organisations, as well as providing it with practical help. A key result for CYN staff is that they now have a means to conduct social analysis – equipping young people with mechanisms to understand issues so they don't become aggressive and confrontational.

Links to wider results

At the micro-level, the delays to illegal deforestation have probably helped saved parts of the forest that would otherwise have disappeared, which would have adversely affected the livelihoods of the indigenous people living in the forest. Although it is unlikely they would have lost their homes, some would now be much further away from the forest. The protection of parts of the Prey Lang Forest has also been important in maintaining cash income for indigenous people, particularly from resin trees and fisheries.

On a more macro-level, the mitigation of deforestation is a vital part of the Paris agreement on Climate Change and Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). Any delay in the deforestation could be of benefit if future governments invest in increased forestry protection, or begin to enforce existing policies on forestry protection. To the extent that the project has helped delay deforestation, there will be that much more forest left to conserve in the future. And there is also a potential multiplier effect, as cooperation between different forest communities, and learning about how best to protect forests, could impact on forest deforestation in other locations throughout Southeast Asia and the rest of the world.

Added-value

A number of areas of added-value have already been mentioned, including capacity development, lesson learning, networking, and linking partners' work to other national and international actors. Danmission has also supported PLCN in ways that have allowed it to absorb funding. For example, Danmission has helped PLCN with financial management, including bookkeeping and production of financial reports. It has also submitted reports on PLCN's behalf. (Nobody in PLCN can speak English, which means they aren't able to communicate on their own with larger donors). In essence, Danmission has been able to sit in between PLCN and other donors (e.g. the EU, Soros Foundation) and has helped PLCN manage the relationships.

PBO staff were keen to point out that Danmission gives them a lot of respect, unlike many other donors that tell them what to do. Danmission has also helped PBO seek other funding, including via a new Danida initiative (looking positive at time of interview). Danmission and PBO talk once a month, and deal with anything that comes up very quickly. Again, PBO staff report that this is very different from their other donors. CYN staff, too, think that Danmission are supportive and flexible, and understand the issues forestry is facing in Cambodia. The interview with CYN staff suggested they believe that Danmission was seen as working alongside partners on difficult issues, rather than fixating on compliance and reporting. In the view of the evaluation team, this is quite different from normal donor behaviour within Cambodia.

However, it is perhaps in the area of risk management that Danmission has added the most value. PLCN works in a very sensitive area, and without Danmission it would be extremely vulnerable. PBO staff believe that PLCN's relationship with key actors like the University of Copenhagen is making some government stakeholders think about how they treat people and react to issues. The fact that Danmission has put forward PLCN for international awards also makes it harder for government to oppress them. One telling quote from PBO staff is that *"In Prey Lang – it is like an elephant stamping on a mouse. Everyone knows it but Danmission are the only ones brave enough to say it."* Accordingly, Danmission staff believe that there is a need to assess risks on an ongoing basis. To an extent, the fact that Cambodia is a Buddhist country mitigates direct confrontation. However, there is always a risk that Danmission will not have its MoU renewed, or will face restrictions in the future.

Added-value works in both directions in this project. Danmission staff believe its work with PLCN enables it to better understand what is going on at a local level, and to consider how aid can help or hinder a situation. PLCN are also teachers and mentors for the University of Copenhagen. Around 50 students from the University have done MSCs and PhDs on PLCN, and all of this work filters into information on the aid industry. In addition, information supplied by PLCN has sometimes allowed major legal cases to be addressed. For example, a case on a land grab in Cambodia was recently brought to the international criminal court. This was only possible because the legal team was able to acquire vital information from a PLCN member on a motor bike going out to stop illegal logging.[iv]

Localisation

Danmission did not portray this case study as one specifically focusing on localisation. However, in an interview, PBO staff had some interesting ideas on the role an organisation like Danmission should be playing. For example, they stated that Danmission (and partners) needed to help communities learn and adapt to climate change. This means communities will need to think about different ways to survive. Investment in young people will be critical, especially around language and IT skills. A further role was in encouraging dialogue between different partners, many of which come together with very different perspectives. PBO staff believe that Danmission is doing a lot in this area with limited resources, and they respect Danmission's principles of serving and empowering.

New forms of partnership

Danmission has traditionally engaged with other faith-based organisations or churches which have a formal, NGO-like structure. Entering into partnership with a social network is more challenging, for a number of reasons. First, it is more time consuming to collect the evidence and information needed to write reports, do fundraising, etc, and PLCN has to be supported on an ongoing, day-to-day basis. Second, decision-making processes can be very lengthy as collective leadership means it can take weeks for PLCN to take decisions on certain matters. Third, PLCN cannot write their own reports as they do not speak English. Danmission therefore needs to follow the work of PLCN very closely. It does not monitor PLCN's work formally, but it accompanies and observes. Fourth, communication is a constant challenge more generally. Many Danmission staff don't speak Khmer, and PLCN members don't speak English.

Another issue concerns registration. PLCN does not want to register as an NGO because it is not an organised entity – rather it is a network of volunteers. If Danmission was able to help them build capacity and have their own bank account it would be easier for Danmission to manage the relationship. But that would then bring in a host of other problems. It is therefore more convenient for PLCN to continue to operate as an unregistered community-based organisation.

From the other direction, PLCN members reportedly think Danmission should provide more help if members are at risk of being arrested or if they have accidents.[v] Partly in response, Danmission staff are now on call, and have been more engaged in direct support during emergencies.

Convening and networking

Danmission staff believe that an important added-value of its partner approach is to work as bridge-builders, facilitating links between actors and partners who would otherwise not discover the advantages or even the possibilities of working together. At times, this can result in surprising new alliances and innovations in or between countries, sectors and types of actors. For example, through this project PLCN has opened its eyes to what is happening in other forests, both inside and outside Cambodia, and has made connections with legal entities such as the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice, which advances global justice by engaging lawyers across borders to support civil society, and a legal firm in Australia. The project has also enabled PLCN to have constant interactions with students from the University of Copenhagen.

Innovation

A mobile App was created in 2014 as part of a previous Danish MFA innovation initiative. It was further developed in the current SPA round. The App (known as the Prey Lang App) was born of collaboration between Danmission, activists from PLCN, PBO, the University of Copenhagen, and a Cambodian IT company (Web Essentials). The App enables local patrols to geo-reference, document, and upload information about forest resources, threatened biodiversity, illegal activities, and threats to environmental defenders. The data generated is then used to document and communicate the importance of the forest to local livelihoods and international biodiversity conservation, and to report illegal activities to the authorities.

The App basically enables members of the PLCN to document observations using text, photos and sound recordings with a smartphone. GPS coordinates are automatically stored, and all data is uploaded to a central database as soon as mobile coverage is available. University of Copenhagen staff and students facilitate quality control and analyses of the incoming data. The information is then published in regular monitoring reports, which are released through press conferences held in Phnom Penh, and attract wide interest from local media. As evidence of this, in 2019 the 7th Monitoring Report on the Status of Prey Lang was published, and received an immediate backlash from the Government. As a result, a Cambodian Ministry of Environment official threatened to confiscate all the smartphones of PLCN members, and arrest the App users.

Ground observations from the Prey Lang App have also been used to verify cutting edge satellite imagery in a collaboration between PLCN, University of Copenhagen and the Joint Research Center of the EU Commission (JRC-EU).

Interestingly, PLCN owns the data generated through the App, and has the final say on decisions. This means that different power structures are employed than in conventional development projects, which tend to use hierarchical power structures. The App was specifically designed to fit the needs of PLCN. To that end, numerous consultations sessions with PLCN took place during its development followed by multiple feedback sessions and workshops. Due to limited access to desktop computers in the region, data graphs were designed with mobile devices in mind. The App development is described as an ongoing process, whereby continuous feedback loops with the end-users allow for the correction of bugs and the addition of new features. Some international actors are interested in how the App can be used at an international level.

In the view of the University of Copenhagen, the type of innovation grants awarded by MFA are important because they have the potential to bring together multiple actors such as NGOs, Universities, IT development firms and private firms in a way that other innovation calls cannot.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Lessons have been included throughout the case study.

Attachments

None.

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[i] The very next week, alerts from Global Forest Watch went from a few thousands to over 20,000.

[ii] This information was supplied by University of Copenhagen staff in a Zoom interview.

[iii] Information on changes within PLCN is derived from internal and external reports, interviews with Danmission staff, and interviews with PBO and CYN. A planned meeting between the evaluation team and PLCN could not take place in Cambodia because of Covid-19 restrictions. PLCN is based a long way away from the capital, and language barriers (and internet access) prevented remote meetings from being held. Information on PBO and CYN is largely based on remote interviews held with PBO and CYN staff.

[iv] This information was supplied by a member of staff from the University of Copenhagen during a remote interview.

[v] This was reported by Danmission staff.

DanChurchAid and a Dairy Chain in Ethiopia	
Name of Danish CSO	DanChurchAid
Name of Southern partner(s)	GAIN (Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition) Arla Foods Ingredients Group Family Milk (previously Loni Dairy) Confederation of Danish Industry
Countries	Ethiopia
Relevant Theme(s)	Working with non-traditional partners
Project / Programme name	GAIN Access to Better Dairy
Period	2017 - ongoing
Lot(s)	Civil Society

Background

According to project documents, approximately 40% of all children in Ethiopia suffer from chronic malnutrition. Malnutrition in children during the '1,000-day window' – from conception to the second birthday – causes irreversible damage and can lead to reduced physical growth, impaired mental development and a compromised immune system. More broadly, this has knock-on effects for Ethiopia's economy and other development sectors.

This project therefore considers that a key to improving health conditions (and Ethiopia´s overall development prospects) is to ensure a higher level of availability of nutritious and affordable food. Ethiopia contains one of the highest number of dairy cows in the world, but with a very low milk output per cow. Dairy products are a traditional and well-established part of the Ethiopian diet and are rich in nutrients.

The partnership identified a number of challenges in the dairy value chain, which the project seeks to address. Drought, the price and availability of animal feed, lack of effective milk collection and high bacteria counts all negatively affect production. Only 5% of milk produced reaches the formal market. Dairy plants run below capacity, quality is often poor, demand fluctuates due to Christian fasting and there is limited packaging. Despite having one of the highest dairy cow populations in the world, Ethiopians consume only 19kg of milk per year – one of the lowest levels in Sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the urban poor have limited access due to cost and cultural/religious factors.

Arla Foods Ingredients (AFI), the Global Alliance for Improved Nutrition (GAIN), DanChurchAid (DCA), the Confederation of Danish Industry (DI), and several other partners established GAIN Access to Better Dairy partnership in 2017 with support from Danida.

In Ethiopia, the partnership aims to improve diets among children and mothers by introducing an innovative, locally produced, safe and fortified dairy product to the market. In parallel, the partnership is also intended to improve livelihoods among the country's smallholder farmers. The project intended to do this by improving the productivity, quality and market access of the dairy farmers through inclusive value chain linkage of smallholder dairy farmers with dairy processing units.

Summary of changes

DCA collaborated with a local CSO – Sustainable Environment and Development Action (SEDA) – that provides community mobilisation and outreach support in the target production areas. Trainings and exposure visits for model and follower farmers included the following:
- 400 (100 model and 300 followers) dairy farmers in milk hygiene and sanitation.
- 300 (100 model and 200 followers) dairy farmers in dairy husbandry management.
- 100 model farmers visited a model dairy farm to learn improved management practices.
- 200 dairy farmers trained in backyard forage and household level silage production.
- 200 (100 model and 100 followers) dairy farmers in basic business skills.

Four milk collection sheds and four shallow wells were also constructed and handed over to dairy farmers and elected management committees, thereby providing the infrastructure needed for enhanced milk production.

The project used milk to produce fortified, flavoured yogurt (a concept introduced by GAIN in partnership with Arla Foods) with added vitamins and minerals to provide nutrients. The project carried out acceptability testing

with target consumers (mothers and children), using both quantitative methods and qualitative focus group discussions. As a result of this, two flavours passed for market launch with one flavour to be improved further.

It is not yet clear the extent to which this will translate into increased public consumption and long-term viability. However, Family Milk is planning to invest in the long-term production of the fortified yoghurt, as they see the potential in market assessments and consumer response studies. Furthermore, GAIN's work at the policy level to get fortified yoghurt recognised could be an enabler for other commercial entities to engage in similar production. However, there are some operational challenges in that some of the ingredients (apart from the raw milk) currently need to be imported from abroad with potential disruptions in terms of foreign currency shortages and long lead-in times. These challenges will need mitigation.

Results at Partner Level

The partnership was a collaboration between various actors with GAIN at its centre. For DCA, it was described by an Ethiopian staff member as being unique in having both private/commercial and government sector partners. The business model initially involved a local dairy processor, Loni Dairy. Local dairy processors were motivated to join the partnership by the prospects of increasing their revenues, expanding their product ranges and optimising their production standards and processes. DCA and GAIN see the partnership as an opportunity to provide a nutrition-rich food for children and pregnant and lactating women, and to help smallholder farmers earn higher incomes. DCA, also joined the partnership to gain experience working with private-sector entities and inclusive business models, the lessons of which might be applied elsewhere.

GAIN is responsible for the overall management of the partnership. It assessed, selected and worked with the milk processors, and conducted market studies aimed at identifying where and how the fortified yogurt could be sold, and how to create awareness regarding the importance of nutritious food for children and pregnant and lactating women. DCA focussed mostly on the upstream (dairy production and market linkage) part of the project with a civil society partner, working with the dairy farmers to improve milk quality and safety and ensure a consistent supply to the processor and collaborating with relevant local government bodies (e.g. the woreda Livestock Development Office). The local dairy processors were responsible for collecting the milk and then processing it, with an emphasis on yoghurt in the first instance. AFI works closely with the local dairy processors to optimise production standards and processes. GAIN and AFI also trained the milk processors on yogurt production techniques and provided support on recipe development and product testing.

According to interviews with stakeholders, strong efforts were made to link Loni Dairy with local farmers, but there were 'ups and downs' and ultimately this partnership did not work out. When Covid struck, this had a considerable impact on the market for milk. There were rumours that the virus was affecting dairy products, which reduced demand from the public. These factors encouraged Loni Dairy to reduce its involvement in the project.

Therefore, GAIN issued a tender for a new partner and identified Family Milk (who joined the project in 2020), which is the third largest milk producer in Ethiopia. Furthermore, they are only engaged in dairy processing and have no other business ventures, which might compete for their attention. They were also interested to explore new approaches leading to products with better nutritional values according to interviews.

Links to wider results

The partnership is integral to the wider results of this project, which seeks to address the whole dairy milk value chain. The different partners bring expertise in work at their respect levels (DCA and SEDA at the farmer/producer level) and GAIN and Family Milk in processing, product development and marketing. The mutual interdependence was demonstrated when Loni Dairy reduced their participation, and it was necessary to find an additional milk processor to mitigate risks. If one link is weak, the whole chain suffers the consequences.

If successful, the project could enable improved diets among children and mothers, and improved livelihoods among Ethiopia's smallholder farmers. It will also generate other benefits at different points along the dairy value chain.

Added-value

As mentioned earlier, all the partners bring specific skills and experiences that bring value to the collaboration. DCA, working with their local partner SEDA in the targeted rural area, brought experience in working with smallholders and working with farmers in promoting sustainable, pro-poor solutions. It was a new experience for DCA in working as part of a whole value chain, which could be useful in other contexts.

GAIN's experience in Ethiopia has given it a credible presence in the nutrition sector. GAIN has provided important technical support, which was particularly appreciated according to an interview with Family Milk (and was in contrast to other collaborations Family Milk has previously participated in). GAIN has also supported the Ethiopian Standards Agency to develop a standard for fortified yogurt, which is now completed and approved.

Family Milk stepped in as an additional milk processor when Loni Dairy reduced its engagement. Its expertise in procuring and marketing dairy products is an essential element of the whole project. As a company, it has committed to earmark part of its production for innovative and affordable solutions with a lower profit margin. In this sense, the project provided an opportunity to put its principles of achieving both business and development goals into practice. Family Milk has also developed its capacity in the prototype development process, which can be used in other areas in the future.

Localisation

Local actors – the local NGO and relevant government agencies in the production areas and Family Milk as the dairy processor – are key links in the chain for this project. While international actors (GAIN, DCA etc.) have been involved in mobilisation, knowledge transfer, accompaniment and support, the emphasis has been on the production process ultimately becoming sustainable using solely local actors. Given that this is a commercial enterprise, if the dairy products can be scaled up and sold, then this will result in an entirely locally run and managed operation in the long-term (although currently reliant on some imported ingredients).

New forms of partnership

While this is not the first time that DCA has collaborated with the private sector, it was distinctive in involving a large number of different stakeholders in developing new products. According to GAIN this was a new type of partnership in that it profiles the role of the private sector in achieving social development objectives. At the same time, it can convey to businesses that working in this sector can be viable and sustainable. GAIN played a key role in bringing the different actors together, while DCA's role was focussed more on production in the rural areas and facilitating linkages with processing factories.

A review mission in 2019 found that all partners were highly appreciative of the partnership model at that point. As one respondent stated, "working in such a diverse consortium allows us to expand the network and meet and interact with stakeholders not necessarily otherwise accessible to us". However, such multi-stakeholder partnerships can be complex. The partners come with different motivations and values, even though working under the same overall objective. At the outset, GAIN said that it had to spend extensive time in dialogue with Loni Dairy before the partnership could be finalised.

A key challenge is that the partners all depend on each other. As work depends on the inputs and actions of other partners, when one element is delayed, it impacts all the others. In addition, clear roles and a division of work streams makes a partnership more efficient, but this also requires close alignment and coordination. Given the differing values and motivations of the various partners, this takes longer than when, for example, building collaborations between NGOs (DCA's more typical experience), which are more similar in nature. GAIN says it had to work hard to persuade the various actors that there was a 'win-win' to be secured if the partners could reach an agreement. Leadership clearly makes a difference and sometimes meetings needed senior staff to take the decisions necessary to overcome blockages (and not just technical staff who lack authority).

However, the reduction in Loni Dairy's participation demonstrated that, even after lengthy work to build the partnership, the private sector can take quite radical actions in responding to contextual changes, which affects its perceived interests. In this case, the onset of Covid and its consequences meant that Loni Dairy changed its priorities and the consortium needed to find a new partner.

Convening and networking

As has been described, the essence of this project has been convening different actors – civil society, the private sector and government institutions – to achieve a single overall goal.

Innovation

The project included developing the prototype of a fortified yoghurt which, if successful, could be scaled up for wider production and consumption. This fortified yoghurt is, according to GAIN, the first of its kind to be developed in Ethiopia. A high-value nutritious product at an affordable price is a new concept for the market. A related issue is that there was previously a lack of standards in terms of regulation for such a product in

Ethiopia. This is being addressed in parallel with product development through engagement with the appropriate policymakers and standard authorities.

Other interventions have typically focussed on specific parts of the value chain. This project is distinctive in taking a whole value chain approach – from primary milk production to product development, demand creation and consumption.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

This process is still in a development phase, so it is hard to come up with final conclusions as to how it has worked and its longer-term prospects for sustainability. The project only focused on two kebeles in Sululta Woreda, so the approach has not been tested in different contexts. These selected areas have more access to milk markets and, according to one interviewee, it would be interesting to learn how the approach works in more difficult areas.

Nevertheless, there are some interesting lessons that have emerged from the process so far. For example, working together to meet a funder's proposal and reporting requirements can help partners align their visions and measurement systems. Also, good marketing and communication for external purposes can help in winning internal support for the partnership by crystalising key messages. The development of a public-private dairy platform was helpful in overcoming difficulties in engaging local commercial partner and to some extent high-level government officials in advocacy efforts.

References

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Attachments

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Danish Family Planning Association and the Floriculture Sector in Ethiopia	
Name of Danish CSO	Danish Family Planning Association (DFPA)
Name of Southern partner(s)	EEF: Ethiopian Employers Federation. FGAE (Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia): a sister member in the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and DFPA's usual partner in Ethiopia. EHPEA: Ethiopian Horticulture Produce Exporters Association Farms – their members are the individual flower farms. CETU: Confederation of Ethiopian Trade Unions
Country	Ethiopia
Relevant Theme(s)	Convening or supporting Southern networks, platforms and alliances
Project / Programme name	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) in the Floriculture Industry in Ethiopia
Period	November 2019 – December 2021 (but visits started in 2018)
Lot(s)	Civil Society

Background

The project involved a number of 'firsts' for DFPA: the first time three partners were brought together for one project, the first time including a trade union (in addition to the private sector) and the first time for DFPA working in Ethiopia.

According to project documents and interviews with DPFA, floriculture was chosen as the focus as an expanding sector which employs a lot of women. Women in the industry have typically migrated from other areas, have very little education, are sexually active and have poor awareness of their rights, including on SRHR and gender equality. They face challenges including gender-based violence (GBV), sexual harassment, occupational health and safety and gender inequality.

An initial Baseline Study Report carried out in 12 farms in April 2020 found that the percentage of female workers ranged from 58-89%, there were high levels of illiteracy (17-60%), and that 2/3 of the farms offered wages below the World Bank threshold for extreme poverty. Seven farms had anti-harassment policies, while four feature GBV and sexual harassment as part of their induction training. However, even there, reporting on GBV remains a challenge, as victims are shy to report cases due to social and cultural norms.

To address these issues, DFPA felt that it was necessary to bring together a range of different actors who all are involved in this sector, but come from different perspectives and had not previously collaborated. DFPA was convinced that a comprehensive approach for addressing SRHR issues in the private sector requires the involvement of key players representing the private sector employers, the relevant trade union and an NGO with SRHR expertise.

The project objective is to institutionalise health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, gender equality and decent work for employees in 20 flower farms in the Oromia Region of Ethiopia. Related intended outcomes are that employers incorporate measures to address SRHR, gender equality, sexual harassment and GBV in their strategic plans and that SRHR and gender sensitive policies and practices are implemented in the workplace.

One of the main outcomes sought is also that this will be a well-functioning partnership, with all the partners supported in their capacity development and strengthened ability to advocate on relevant issues. Also, the Ethiopian Employer Federation have been engaged, with a view to influencing employers in other sectors too.

The first scoping visit by DFPA was in May 2018, followed by a series of visits convening the partners and going through the planning process. DFPA produced documents after each visit (Theory of Change, Results Framework etc.), which the other partners would then comment upon. The project was launched in 2020, but there was then immediately the Covid-19 crisis leading to a state of emergency in Ethiopia, which was only lifted at the end of August.

Summary of changes

Since activities had to be delayed, there was less chance to-date to achieve significant changes. According to DFPA, trainings in the first 10 farms had to be somewhat rushed and it may be useful to consolidate before moving to the planned second 10 farms.

Nevertheless, in the first Annual Report (dated November 2020), it is stated that, following trainings, some farms are developing their own action plans to implement SRHR and gender policies (e.g. by incorporating new labour laws). EHPEA and FGAE confirmed in interviews that employers have shown some commitment to review their relevant policies and implement changes, although it was rather early to see much impact in terms of concrete improvements for employees. One challenge that arose was that some of the owners are foreign and the farm managers do not have the authority to approve changes in policy. Accessing and influencing these foreign owners spread over different countries is not easy.

Nine hundred employees, according to the Annual Report, have accessed information comprising SRHR Rights, Gender, Relationship, HIV, Family Planning and GBV issues, and 584 employees had received family planning services at the targeted farms. Meanwhile, trained peer educators were carrying out awareness raising activities. CETU sees this as the main area of progress, as they then carry out grassroots activities with workers, such as on sexual harassment issues. As a result, according to the report and interviews, workers are more interested to wear safety clothing, and more concerned to take care while spraying (pesticides and herbicides) and during fertilizer distribution. According to FGAE, anecdotal evidence suggests that employee attendance has increased, but this has not yet been validated.

From CETU's perspective, another benefit has been that there has been a 10-15% increase in union membership where the project is operating. After joining, workers want to communicate many issues affecting their welfare.

Results at partner level

DFPA has invested a lot of time and resources in bringing three partners together that do not typically work together and trying to create ownership of the resulting partnership. Essentially DFPA instigated the process and has played a key role in supporting the collaboration, but with a view to progressively encouraging the partners to take more control.

Starting up required a considerable investment of time and there were multiple visits to achieve this, according to an interview with DFPA. While all align behind the overall objective, there are different values and motivations for each of the partners. For the farm owners, they can see the benefit if staff miss less work. Also, many of the farm owners are foreign and sell their flowers abroad. The farms are assessed against certain standards in order to sell produce in Europe, so this provides part of their motivation for participating. CETU said they joined as it was an opportunity to address their core mission of improving the rights of workers, who are mostly women working in remote areas. The project helped them get access to the farms, which would otherwise not have been easy. FGAE saw the potential of using their existing expertise in a new context, working with partners with which they had not previously engaged (they had previously collaborated with health workers in companies, but not directly with employers).

The financial support – while not huge – is also a motivating factor for all the partners, according to DFPA.

DFPA supported partners in developing their own budgets (they found it hard to use the format) and also their implementation plans. DFPA also came up with a coherent Theory of Change (ToC) and Results Framework arising out of discussions. The partners were consulted on the drafts, but rarely sent comments back. Part of this was due to some of participants being previously unfamiliar with processes like ToC. Language may also have been a barrier with the project materials being in English. Sometimes meetings switched to Amharic, which facilitated participation.

To some extent, as DFPA and FGAE expressed in interviews, there is an inherent conflict of interests between EHPEA and CETU (employers want to keep costs down, while trade unions want the best for their members), while FGAE is more neutral. According to EHPEA, "At the start, there were different ideas. There were initially a lot of issues. But then we came to a common understanding". CETU say their approach is to achieve a 'win-win', resolving differences through diplomacy, which has helped overcome differences. If there is still no agreement, then they suggested the government can be asked to help solve the problem.

From the reports and interviews with all the partners, EHPEA, CETU and FGAE representatives have conducted joint monitoring visits to the farms to meet peer educators and observe clinics. An internal advocacy capacity development workshop was organised by FGAE in order to lay the groundwork for SRHR advocacy. This is particularly important in the Ethiopian context as, due to recent history, Ethiopian organisations are not very familiar with advocacy.

According to DFPA, there was initially no natural leadership in the group. It had been expected that FGAE (as DFPA's counterpart) may play this role, but in practice EHPEA has actually taken on more of the coordination role. This is probably due to the experiences and expertise of the respective individuals representing each partner.

When DFPA was not present, the partners did not meet each other initially, but more recently, this has started to change. As expressed in their interviews, the three actors have begun to appreciate the benefits of working together, and there have been regular coordination meetings and joint capacity building sessions. DFPA felt that their enforced lack of visits to Ethiopia due to Covid-19 may have helped in some way as it enabled the partners to develop their relationships without mediation.

In interviews, all partners express that they will continue to work together beyond the project (and its associated funding), but this aspiration remains untested. Given the resources generated by the commercial farms, there is some potential there for sustainability.

Links to wider results

The partnership approach is intrinsic to the wider results that the project seeks to achieve. All three partners have an interest in employees in the floriculture industry, but approach it from different angles. It would be hard for any of them to achieve the project objectives and outcomes on a sustainable basis alone, as indicated in interviews and the project documents. DFPA is however convinced that a comprehensive approach for addressing SRHR issues in the private sector requires the involvement of these three key players and the partners themselves increasingly appreciate the importance of the others.

The involvement of EHPEA was essential as the employers set the terms and conditions for employees and provide key services, while facilitating access for the other partners. From FGAE's perspective, the trade union bring their experience and expertise in labour law issues, working with the private sector and organising employees to attain their rights. FGAE see their contribution in their longstanding skills in SRHR and family planning issues (they already had Ministry of Health approved training materials, which had been tested and used previously), and an understanding of advocacy in a context which had been difficult until recently.

Added-value

The partnership would probably not have come together without the instigation of DFPA, as confirmed by all the other actors in interviews. DFPA have been the facilitator and broker, both in terms of the funding and as the impetus in getting the partners to plan and work together.

DFPA also brings well recognised expertise on SRHR and different methods to address it from their international experience in countries like Kenya and Uganda, as confirmed by CETU, (even if planned visits to other countries could not occur due to Covid). DFPA also provided support on developing a three-year advocacy strategy, which was a new area for some of the partners. Administratively, they have helped with different areas of project management, with the Theory of Change, which was new for the partners, with proposal development, reporting, financial management, etc.

DFPA expect to learn about pros and cons in its approach to creating and sustaining the partnership, which will be useful in other contexts.

Localisation

DFPA has no local presence, but works entirely with local organisations (as is its general practice). The local partners are the implementers of the work, while DFPA just plays a supporting role. As EHPEA put it, "it is demand driven" – it is shaped around the wishes of the partners, rather than being imposed from above. They feel they have been involved in each and every step of the project's development (even though DFPA produced the project documents).

However, DFPA has defined and provided the momentum to the project. It is not yet clear whether it is fully 'owned' by the local partners, in the sense that it could continue under its own momentum.

New forms of partnership

As has been mentioned, this collaboration is new for DFPA and for most of the other partners too (although CETU said it had been involved in a similar project supported by USAID). It is part of a growing portfolio of engagements with the private sector for DFPA, but it is new to involve the trade unions and to convene several partners working towards the same objectives.

In a global sense, it is not completely new to bring together partners from different sectors like this, and in fact is increasingly popular as some organisations increasingly move towards a 'systems' approach to solve problems. However, it is less easy to find concrete examples which are successful, so this has the potential to add to learning in this sense.

Convening and networking

As has been documented already, the convening of the different partners is a distinctive aspect of this intervention, which has been stimulated and supported by DFPA.

Innovation

While this is not innovative in a global sense, it has various new aspects. The convening of the different partners to address an issue of mutual interest has already been mentioned. For DFPA the trade union aspect was new for them, as part of a collaboration with the private sector and their local NGO counterpart.

According to FGAE, the targeting of the workplace for SRHR is new in Ethiopia, which has not traditionally been a priority for profit-making companies. This, therefore, has the potential to have wider influence in the sector if the benefits of the approach can be demonstrated (which is why the Ethiopian Employers' Federation has been engaged, even though it is not a primary project partner).

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

This is a new type of partnership for DFPA and took a considerable effort from their side to get it off the ground. In spite of Covid-19 and the delays it led to, it has made considerable progress and there is now increasing ownership from the Ethiopian partners, even though coming from different perspectives. It remains to be seen whether and how the partnership continues post the project. One learning was that it would be useful to have engaged each partner individually to understand their particular perspective, before moving into joint meetings. It also could have been beneficial to have secured more senior level buy-in from the partners (i.e. at Director level) before working with mid-level staff on the practical implementation.

One recommendation from one partner was to have increased engagement with the government, particularly the Ministry of Women, Children and Youth Affairs.

While the different partners expressed a wish for continued (and expanded) funding from DFPA, they also indicated that there is potentially scope for financial support from the farms. This would be interesting to explore for longer-term sustainability.

In due course, it would be interesting to develop learning materials based on the experience. In doing so, comparisons with processes in countries like Kenya would be useful, where an alternative approach is to build a collaboration bringing in new partners over time, rather than starting with the whole coalition from the outset.

Attachments

None.

Centre for Church Development in East Africa	
Name of Danish CSO	CKU (Center for Kirkelig Udvikling / Centre for Church Development, formerly Danish Mission Council Development Department)
Name of Southern partner(s)	Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC)
Country	Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda
Relevant Theme(s)	Working with non-traditional partners; Convening and supporting Southern networks, platforms and alliances
Project / Programme name	"Listening to God in Society": Churches and faith-based organisations promoting social accountability
Period	2016 – 2020
Lot(s)	POOL Fund: CKU

Background

Since 2016, CKU and OAIC, through its national partners in East Africa, have cooperated on engaging clusters of churches and interfaith networks in social accountability, as a means for religious leaders and their congregations to become more vocal and active in advocacy at local and national government level. A pilot phase was originally funded through Civil Society in Development (CISU), and the present phase II is funded through CKU's pool fund.

The programme – called "Listening to God in Society" – works with ten church clusters in five East African countries (Burundi, Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda). All five countries have experienced social upheaval and political tensions during national and local elections over the past five to eight years. All score low on the Human Development Index (HDI), have predominantly rural populations, and are characterised by social polarisation (ethnic, religious, geographical) as well as embedded cultures of patronage and clientelism. Traditionally, churches and other faith-based organisations in the region are predominantly service-oriented, reluctant to take a political stance, advocate for change or hold duty bearers accountable.

In the current phase, the ten national clusters consist of OAIC member churches as well as selected strategic partners in the CKU's network. According to programme documents, these partners were selected based on their capacity, particularly in terms of outreach potential, advocacy and policy influence. Clusters of local churches and interfaith networks are a key feature of the programme, through which members and congregations are being mobilised using social accountability tools. Awareness is also being raised on Human Rights and SDGs. Close links with local and national governments are being forged, through which religious leaders and members are aiming to hold duty bearers to account.

Each cluster works via other faith communities and local networks, especially on entrepreneurship training, driven by local agents or volunteers. This work with youth and underprivileged groups is most structured in Kenya and Tanzania, where seed funding for micro-business has been important. Social accountability has been preached and used from the pulpits, thereby moving from service delivery towards advocacy, which has also been focussed on entrepreneurs and providing support for their microbusinesses.

According to CKU's 2019 Annual Report, social accountability has proven an effective and accepted way of engaging communities and religious leaders in advocacy. During the first phase of the programme, a number of advocacy initiatives were driven across seven church clusters, 4500 'enablers' were trained by 98 facilitators, coalitions and groups of religious leaders were formed, and social accountability was integrated by vicars in their sermons. Church structures and communities have been central pillars in the mobilisation of volunteers, local leaders and communities around social, political and financial issues, such as the quality of education, social and agricultural services, prices of supplies, petty corruption and favouritism, as well as local district budget tracking.

The five countries covered by the programme have very different contexts and face different challenges. OAIC has been instrumental in facilitating and driving engagement and involvement by the clusters, and the member churches have worked locally to engage in advocacy and social accountability (though the extent to which they have done so varies). The entire SDG definition and debate has been important, where OAIC's visions and agenda have been a catalyser for the clusters' work. Other national donors, including the UN, have been supportive in encouraging mobilisation around SDGs.

Summary of changes

Church leaders at local level work closely with congregations and volunteers to implement social accountability and good local governance activities. According to CKU's 2019-2020 Annual Report, the trainings, networks, and the use of social accountability tools, have contributed to the increased engagement of youth, and of a wide range of volunteers in social accountability in advocacy activities.

Based on reports reviewed and interviews conducted with CKU, the ten OAIC clusters seem to have engaged in a large number of advocacy activities, in particular at local and county level. However, there are no statistics showing the number of people reached, or the number who have benefited from improved access to health, education or food security. The Tanzania clusters appear to have been very active in influencing policies and practices (e.g. gender policy, child safety policy, girls' pregnancy, arbitrary use of fees/levies by district councils, a national curriculum conference). In Uganda and Kenya, the clusters are building alliances with Inter-Religious Councils at national level, creating a major opportunity to bring a collective voice of faith communities to national public institutions. Public budget tracking and monitoring is widely reported as one avenue of change as a result of advocacy and social accountability through churches.

Whilst social accountability capacity has been enhanced across all ten clusters, there are large variations between individual churches/members, depending on attitudes of church leaders and members, tradition, and social norms. In a 2020 survey, about 40% of members reported that engaging government (through churches) was normal or done with confidence.

Results at partner level

CKU has provided capacity building, social accountability, and cross-learning methods to OAIC's partners, as well as close communication to resolve emergent issues. Social accountability has facilitated a stronger focus on advocacy, with partners becoming more vocal, where they had previously been very reactive. CKU also noted increased collaboration and shared responsibility between pastors and their congregations and activists on advocacy.

Local partners' ability to engage with both local authorities and community members has been strengthened, and they are being more pro-active in establishing dialogue asking for change, and holding authorities accountable. Religious leaders originally feared that advocacy would bring about conflict between government and churches, but the programme has used a 'collaborative approach' to advocacy where faith communities engage constructively with local authorities on shared concerns – rather than a 'combative approach' claiming rights to services not provided by local authorities – which religious leaders have embraced. The advocacy work has at times strengthened relationships with government officials. According to interviews with OAIC staff, the national decentralisation processes and policies in place in Kenya and Tanzania were particularly conducive to engaging duty bearers at the local level.

In an interview, CKU highlighted the example of a cluster in Tanzania, where after being trained on social advocacy, religious leaders agreed to address the problem of early pregnancy. They went to the local government, which supported the initiative, and they started working with education officers to collect data in secondary schools and with the police and courts to better understand the number of cases and judgements. Based on this collaboration, religious leaders became involved in planning and working with government officers as partners on a shared concern.

CKU is relatively optimistic about the sustainability of OAIC and its cluster members, and their capacity to continue without external funding. In fact, the structures and networks existed before the pilot and partnership programme with CKU. Programme funds are used mainly for OAIC support to partners and M&E, as well as for some monitoring costs for CKU, but they are not used to cover activities.

According to OAIC staff, CKU's and OAIC's joint responsibility for project formulation, application, project documentation, and project steering committees has allowed them and their partners to further develop. The intention is that OAIC can take the social accountability interventions further at the end of the partnership.

The disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic has led CKU to pursuing new digital opportunities. According to CKU, this also allowed them to benefit from technical assistance on advocacy, Outcome Harvesting, and digital M&E and led to enhanced digital competences amongst the partners.

Links to wider results

The wider results of this programme will inevitably vary according to the country, the context, and the type of advocacy being undertaken. For example, the cluster lead in Nakuru, Kenya reported that the power of convening around social accountability had led them to plan for mobilisation of the faith community, other civil society actors and relevant government institutions to carry out political education in this low-income location ahead of the 2022 general elections, as a means to reducing the risk of violence between the gangs of

political aspirants as well as building a platform for keeping successful political aspirants accountable. Providing voters' political education proved successful during the previous general elections (2017) where the Nakuru cluster led civic education of the voters and created a platform for political aspirants to enter 'community contracts' with their constituency.

Furthermore, in Nakuru, Kenya, the strong interfaith relations led to the inclusion of Muslim leaders in a Church and Community Mobilisation Process (CCMP), a grassroots-oriented approach aimed at building resilience at the local church level by identifying local resources and growing a spirit of self-support. The programme is being implemented in ten churches and three mosques. It is innovative, as CCMP builds on Bible study; however, the interfaith partners have grown an understanding with focus on common interests that supersedes this bias to Christian scripture.

In one cluster in Tanzania, a curriculum on gender has been developed as part of a wider gender mainstreaming approach within the local partner, the Moravian Church in Tanzania. This suggests that the value of gender mainstreaming has started to be internalised and that the institution intends to spread gender mainstreaming to society. According to an interview with the Head of the Tanzania cluster, church pastors have a local leadership position with potentially high spill-over effect to other institutions. The profession of pastor is powerful, and if a woman can give sacraments, as is the case in the Moravian Church in Tanzania, then it may contribute to changed perceptions of the role of women in society.

Collaboration with local government on certain advocacy issues, such as teenage pregnancies in Tanzania, has involved strengthening working relationships between religious leaders and government officials that can be used for further advocacy endeavours. According to the Head of the Tanzania cluster, interfaith collaboration at different levels (local, county, and national level) releases the potential for more powerful advocacy on wider issues, including around political instability in Kenya related to amendment of the constitution, the 2022 general elections or the continuous increase of youth unemployment. Interfaith collaboration is also critical for ensuring cohesion and development at community levels. In this way, Muslim groups have been involved in otherwise church-based community development programmes.

Overall, according to interviews with OAIC staff and the Head of Clusters in Kenya and Tanzania, the innovative partnerships have led to impact on a broad range of issues – street lighting (safety), reduction in teenage pregnancies (reproductive health), curriculum development in Bible college (training), micro enterprises impact (financial empowerment), and community contracts (accountability of politicians). Furthermore, the innovative partnerships formed in relation to social accountability form the basis of the faith communities venturing into addressing new problems such as climate change. For example, the CCMP programme in Nakuru, Kenya, has taken first steps to integrate a climate change mitigation component focusing on adoption of clean energy technology into the CCMP programme focusing on building resilient churches at the local level.

Added-value

As documented by CKU and OAIC 2019-2020 reports, value- and faith-based organisations have proven to be a strong basis for increased citizen and community engagement, with much variation across local churches. The added-value of having CKU supporting the process is directly linked to shared values between CKU members and the Southern partners (in this case OAIC and its members). In addition, an external consultant supporting the clusters has been critical in facilitating youth and women entrepreneurship.

In the future, the Tanzanian partners would like to gain more refined advocacy skills for national level engagement. OAIC staff point out the need for more support on organisational development. The Heads of the Tanzania and Kenya clusters view their own role as providing learning to CKU on how to use the faith community, especially churches, as trustworthy partners for both community and country development.

In Kenya, strategic OAIC partners, like the Nakuru cluster, are also members of national church alliances, such as the National Council of Churches of Kenya and Evangelical Alliance of Kenya. These church alliances work closely with the Muslim alliance (Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims) and the Inter-Religious Council of Kenya, thereby keeping CKU abreast of dynamics and developments within the wider faith-based organisation "sector" including in relation to SDGs, governance, and social accountability..

Localisation

CKU considers that by definition, its Southern partners are locally rooted and part of the national structure of churches and context. The process of transferring responsibility to partners is embedded in CKU's practice. In this case, OAIC has been in charge of all local implementation, administration and set-up. Their members are driving and implementing local social accountability and advocacy interventions, participating in local budget hearings, making petitions etc.

According to OAIC staff, local partners highly appreciate the capacity building, and the participatory, respectful working relationship with CKU. As stated by the Head of the Nakuru cluster, Kenya, "We feel that we are in an equal partnership" and "as a partner to CKU, if you think the partnership is not good for your development, you should speak up". There also seem to be good communication and consultation with room to adjust and address issues as they emerge. For example, whilst working on SDG 5, one cluster in Tanzania identified the development of a curriculum on gender equality in bible colleges as a key step towards institutionalising progressive views on gender relations. The cluster considered this to be conducive to the process of getting women ordained, enabling them to take on powerful positions in church and society. Despite this not being part of the initial project document, CKU agreed to include this considerable activity.

According to several interviewees, the main challenges faced by the partners working with CKU are the very modest funding and limited outreach. Some partners would like to see more decision-making at cluster (sub-national) level.

New forms of partnership

The establishment of ten clusters of member churches in five countries has shown OAIC a new way of working with member churches across and within countries. OAIC has learned 'new ways of talking' with member churches that is firmly grounded in the location of each particular cluster and, at the same time, speaks to issues across the region. OAIC is considering using this new way of learning from and communicating with member churches in other fields of work, such as climate change. According to an interview with OAIC, this is in fact an area around which OAIC wants to develop an 'African understanding' of the environment, and the clusters will form a critical part of internal conversations before opening up a wider South-South conversation.

Convening and networking

According to CKU and OAIC sources, faith communities have come together at local level to identify and push advocacy agendas. The 'collaborative approach' to advocacy has provided a good platform for networking between faith communities and government offices, including local government, police, and social sector offices. The programme has demonstrated that faith communities can drive social accountability agendas when they have the capacity to do so, and use an approach that can enhance relationships with government offices.

According to interviews with CKU and two clusters, a key feature of the CKU-OAIC programme has been the engagement of religious leaders in joint advocacy to their governments. Interfaith networks and groups have been formed, and in some areas an improvement in relations between Muslims and Christians has been reported as a result. Interfaith fora are considered an important platform for conflict de-escalation between religions and to engage duty bearers and hold them to account. Most government officials and members of the general public belong to a local church or mosque, providing a strong common value and faith reference. Building a link with other faith-based organisations, in particular Muslim organisations, has been key in addressing and working with authorities and enhancing the voice of churches and Muslim organisations.

Whilst the interviews suggest that convening and networking across faith-based organisations and in interfaith fora have overall been positive, there has been a tendency to avoid emphasising differences between denominations and faiths, and to concentrate on what unites them, such as social accountability, reducing conflicts, and the role of leaders in being good role models for youth. Some doubts were also expressed around the willingness of Muslim religious leaders to engage in the absence of future funding, as this was considered an important element in encouraging them to attend meetings.

The 'collaborative approach' to advocacy (via social accountability), seeking to engage duty bearers in a common cause (rather than claiming services not provided by duty bearers), has the potential to grow constructive relations between faith communities and government institutions. This is attractive to faith communities that want social development but want to avoid conflict with their local or national government.

As civil society space has been reduced in most East African countries in recent years, a more collaborative approach to advocacy might also further expand the space of civil society organisations. East Africa is known for peaceful coexistence of various faith communities and the strengthening of interfaith collaboration may further enhance this coexistence, and potentially contribute to expanding the space of civil society.

Innovation

There are no links to the innovation funding in this case.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Lessons have been included throughout the case study.

Attachments

None.

Danish Refugee Council and Syrian Diaspora	
Name of Danish CSO	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
Name of Southern partner(s)	Syrian Civil Society Networks Platform (SCNP) 8 CSOs operating in Turkey Voices for Displaced Syrians Forum (VDSF)
Country	Syrian refugees (through work with diaspora organisations)
Relevant Theme(s)	Localisation; Working with non-traditional partners
Project / Programme name	DRC's engagement with civil society-led networks. This includes a Diaspora Programme (DP), a Durable Solutions Platform (DSP), and DRC's Turkish Country Programme.
Period	2018 – present
Lot(s)	Civil Society

(Please note that a large part of this case study is based on an independently facilitated Learning Review, commissioned by DRC, and carried out between August and December 2020. Unless otherwise stated, the opinions and comments in this case study are taken from that review, supplemented by a group interview with DRC staff from the three programmes, and a remote interview with the coordinator of SCNP. The evaluation team has verified the quality of the Learning Review.)

Background

DRC supports Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and refugees to realise their material, physical and legal rights. It has been working in the MENA region for several decades. Partnership with civil society has increasingly become a strategic priority for DRC. In 2018, DRC began to invest more strategically in strengthening its engagement with civil society partnerships. Its work with Syrian diaspora organisations is currently carried out through three linked but independent programme strands.

▪ DRC has provided support for the establishment of the Syrian Civil Society Networks Platform (SCNP). The SCNP is comprised of 8 Syrian civil society networks, working together under an agreed Terms of Reference. The support is based on DRC's conviction that displaced people are a resource for both countries of origin and destination, and responds to a growing body of evidence calling for a more inclusive humanitarian system that integrates non-traditional actors. No formal agreement exists between DRC and SCNP, and the development path of SCNP has been partner-led. The Syrian networks themselves have been wary of public association with each other, and designed SCNP as a platform that "does not represent its members; it only facilitates coordination"[vi].

▪ Turkey is one of the main host countries for Syrian refugees, with more than 3.5 million. After four years of engagement with Syrian refugees, DRC's Turkey programme suffered from a four-month suspension in 2017. This led to a change in its programme modality from direct implementation to a partnership-based model. Most of DRC's activities in Turkey are now designed to include external implementing partners – mainly Turkish and Syrian refugee-led CSOs. About half the partners are strategic and long-term, whilst the remainder of relationships are short-term, ad-hoc, project-based, and contractual in nature. Project implementation occurs alongside capacity strengthening of contracted partners.

▪ The Durable Solutions Platform (DSP) is a joint initiative of DRC, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Action Against Hunger (AAH), Oxfam and Save the Children. It was launched in 2016 to support durable solutions for displaced Syrians through generating evidence and promoting strategic dialogue. It aims to build coalitions that jointly push for positive policy change and programme practice. DSP's civil society engagement has increasingly focused on support for the establishment of the Voices for Displaced Syrians Forum (VDSF), which is a "gathering of 36 Syrian NGOs who are active in protecting and improving the quality of life of displaced Syrians in and outside Syria".[vii] In 2019, the DSP held the first meeting of the VDSF, with participation from 30 CSOs from Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and various diaspora. DSP and DRC initiated a Partnership Coordination Group to initiate a partnership process, and select a Syrian member CSO to become the host organisation, and receive a grant for operational costs.

Summary of changes

The programme is wide-ranging, with results at multiple levels. Specifically, DRC supports work within the three programme strands dealing with issues such as protection, economic recovery, humanitarian mine

action, education, camp coordination and management, shelter and WASH. Each area of work contributes to results that affect refugees directly.

As far as this case study is concerned, perhaps the most interesting feature concerns support for partners to engage in advocacy. For example, SCNP conducted an advocacy tour in November 2019. A small team went to Paris, Berlin, Copenhagen, and Oslo to meet with policymakers and present talking points and 'asks' based on the situation in Syria. The team were able to hold meetings with the foreign ministries of each country, as well as other officials and INGO stakeholders. As the first of its kind, the advocacy tour was perceived as successful in both reaching decision-makers and yielding learning that could be addressed in future tours.

With mandates ranging from human rights to humanitarian response, the Syrian networks do not always see eye-to-eye on issues. The fact that they agreed that three individuals would convey the advocacy messages of the eight networks revealed a large degree of trust amongst them, as well as with DRC, and is an indication of success. DRC believes that supporting the tour was a highlight of its support for SCNP over the past year, and showed how it could play a constructive, neutral role. SCNP 'owned' the tour, and made decisions on discussion topics, activities, and advocacy issues, whilst DRC provided access to European decision-makers.

Another example of advocacy support concerns VDSF. Over the past two years, while the majority of VDSF's member CSOs were fully engaged in providing relief to displaced people, some have gained exposure to how the international humanitarian system works, and, following some initial distrust, have grown to appreciate advocacy as a means of amplifying their collective voice. As a result of support from DRC, the CSOs have slowly started to advocate on durable solutions in a more coordinated and effective way. One CSO representative interviewed as part of DRC's Learning Review said that "helping Syrian civil society understand the legal frameworks, e.g. of UNHCR – who is responsible for which decision, how do Turkey's agreements differ from international law, etc – this allowed us to engage based on understanding".

As is often the case in advocacy work, it is hard to identify tangible, short-term gains. Successes to-date have been incremental, and have mostly been based around increasing the representation of displaced people. However, with VDSF and SCNP increasingly being seen as key actors, it is hoped they will be able to have a more significant effect in the future. Indeed, DRC staff believe that given the disparate state of Syrian civil society, one of the most significant achievements of the three programmes has been to mobilise Syrian civil society around common positions, whether on refugee return or, more latterly, on Covid-19 responses.

Results at partner level

The Learning Review conducted by an independent facilitator based its overall assessment on the capacity outcomes most valued by the Syrian partners. For the networks engaged as part of SCNP, this included improved networking capacities, which enabled them to contribute to an "amplified, coherent Syrian civil society voice, with coordinated positions on key issues". CSOs engaged in the VDSF network were more likely to note their more effective engagement in decision-making fora, related to durable solutions. Both SCNP and VDSF members felt that capacity improvements were at least partly related to the strength of the network platforms (SCNP and VDSF). Contrastingly, DRC's Turkey programme partners were more likely to point to their improved capacity to survive in the Turkish regulatory environment.

When interviewed about what they believed the main changes had been at partner level, DRC staff involved in the three programmes opted for the following.

- For SCNP, DRC has helped build trust, and partners regularly come together to coordinate on advocacy. Although they still have different views and approaches, the 8 member networks have a more systematic way of talking and coordinating. They now engage in strategic planning (including developing their own SCNP strategy) and increasingly wish to engage in the political sphere. Recently, they have developed and disseminated to EU and UN decision-makers three topical documents, covering refugee return, detainees and civilian protection. This shows how they are beginning to deliver tangible products through their collaboration. SCNP has expanded to engage with other Syrian voices, and DRC staff believe it will be in a position to stand on its own feet as an independent organisation very soon, indicating that change has the potential to be long-term and sustainable.[viii]
- For the Turkey programme, DRC staff believe that small refugee-led organisations now have more of a voice, as they are included in DRC-organised platforms, can participate in advocacy activities, and have access to policymakers. As well as training, DRC has also provided informal capacity strengthening through continuous communication with partners, providing advice on organisational and technical matters, as well as reviewing and revising internal policies and systems to ensure compliance with international standards and/or Turkish regulations. The Learning Review reported that this type of capacity strengthening has been highly acclaimed by partner CSOs.

- DRC staff believe that a key change for VDSF is that partners now know what durable solutions are, and when and how to engage in discussions around them. Concrete results at partner level include the establishment of VDSF and its governing structures, including the General Assembly, a Steering Committee, and several working groups. The DSP has facilitated a process to select a hosting organisation for the Forum and initiate the transfer of responsibilities. As a result, VDSF is now gaining legitimacy within Syrian civil society and the international community. As evidence, the Syrian Networks League, representing 167 Syrian CSOs, has recently invited VDSF to lead its working group on refugees and displaced people. Another example of progress is VDSF's co-authorship of a paper called "Into the Unknown: Listening to Syria's Displaced", representing its members alongside numerous leading INGOs.

The Learning Review did identify some areas where partners expectations had not been met. These included connecting with other Syrian partners across the three different platforms, and facilitating relationships, particularly with donors. The latter is a consistent theme that has emerged throughout this evaluation.

Links to wider results

A key motivation of Syrian diaspora partners – many of whom are staffed by volunteers – is to improve the lives of refugees. Clearly, the tangible gains for displaced people in areas such as safety, livelihoods, shelter, WASH and health are vitally important. During Covid-19, DRC staff believe that having reliable, local CSOs with the capacity to understand refugees' rights and claim their entitlements was a life-saver, especially in the initial period where professionals could not access the field. It meant that refugees had somewhere to go for support. DRC staff believe this would not have happened without its earlier support to partners.

On a wider level, when asked how its support to the networks had improved lives for refugees, DRC staff said they believed that without DRC's support there would have been much more frustration with the overall situation. Now, even if the refugees cannot directly change the policies that affect them, they can at least say something and know that someone outside is listening. Reduced frustration may in turn help reduce conflict and radicalisation amongst disaffected people. On a more tangible level, DRC staff believe that advocacy on behalf of some refugees has helped avoid the worsening of their situation. For example it has helped delay or prevent the development of laws and policies that are not in the best interest of refugees.[ix]

In response to emailed questions, the coordinator of SCNP stated that "the greatest way that DRC's support to us has benefited Syrian civil society is by increasing their representation … in important meetings and demonstrating that INGOs can collaborate with local and diaspora organisations in a manner that is mutually beneficial. Additionally, I believe that more EU policymakers and donors are aware of the important work of Syrian civil society in a large part thanks to the work of DRC".

Added-value

DRC staff believe it has been able to add-value to its partners in many ways. For example, due to its presence in the region DRC is easily able to connect with other large organisations. These networks are open to its diaspora partners. Indeed, the coordinator of SCNP mentioned that DRC had helped connect the network to diaspora and technical experts, and open doors to many important stakeholders. Another key issue is that DRC is seen as neutral. This makes it easier for organisations to get into partnership, as there is more trust that DRC does not have an external agenda. DRC has also been able to provide logistics support through its network of offices in the region. Although this may seem to be a minor matter, it has made it much easier to transport people around. Overall, DRC staff feel that without its involvement it would perhaps have been possible to support the Syrian partners with direct grants, but there would be huge risks involved, and it would be impossible to do all the required due diligence (see also section below on new forms of partnership).

As far as exit strategies are concerned, DRC staff feel that ultimately DRC needs to work itself out of its direct support role. All three supported networks want to be Syrian-led but also Syrian-owned. However, DRC staff believe that the networks still want DRC to remain there in an advisory role. This will mean the partners managing the money, whilst still being able to call on DRC as a trusted ally.

Localisation

Much of DRC's support to the advocacy work of partners is carried out under an explicit or implicit localisation agenda, in recognition that ownership is vital for Syrian-led organisations. However, the three programmes are different. The recent Learning Review concluded that the highest proportion of agency and influence was seen in support for SCNP where support was nearly unconditional, thereby allowing members to create the platform according to their own needs and desires. By contrast, support for VDSF was directed towards durable solutions, whilst still allowing members to become effective advocates in international fora.

In interviews there was some discussion around the potential risks to organisations through greater transference of resources. DRC staff strongly felt there was no reason to assume that Syrian diaspora organisations would be any more likely to misuse money than INGOs. However, they felt that compliance and sound management of funds requires a sufficient structure. On the one hand, CSOs may be very close to their communities, but may not have sufficient support in place to ensure sound implementation of a project or grant. On the other hand, larger organisations may have the systems and structures in place, but may not represent the local communities as well. A certain amount can be done to support smaller organisations through capacity development, but it is impossible to reduce risk entirely. Essentially, the fewer restrictions DRC place on the agenda and resources for civil society engagements, the greater the opportunity for self-led and self-accountable civil society development, but also the less influence DRC can exert over that development.

As far as the broader localisation agenda is concerned, DRC staff believe it is always important to justify why you are doing things. However, in the last resort localisation needs to be *localised,* and cannot be reduced to top-down directives. For example, the situation is not the same in Syria as in a new crisis. In the current Syrian context, 10-year old NGOs exist that can meet the requirements of donors whilst still supporting displaced people. 10 years ago that would not have been the case. It is clear that most of the DRC staff involved in this programme are supportive towards the localisation agenda. However, they believe that in order for support to be effective, and power to be transferred to local organisations, there needs to be a lot of ongoing engagement, such as that provided by DRC within this programme. The coordinator of the SCNP supported this view and commented that "… from the beginning [DRC] has made sure that our joint efforts were being led by Syrians and Syrian organisations and has done a great job at ensuring that we fulfil the obligations of our grant while providing us the agency to grow in our own directions".

New forms of partnership

Working with diaspora networks, brings about a number of challenges. One is around capacity and resources. The SCNP coordinator pointed out that finding and securing funding was a huge issue for SCNP. DRC had helped by facilitating funding, and supporting oversight and reporting for grants. However, it would have been even better to have had more support to build financial sustainability. Another challenge for Syrian networks was being identified as a strong source of information and expertise from Syrian civil society. Again, DRC was able to support by advocating on behalf of SCNP for attendance at important meetings.

Trust at the start of the relationship was also a challenge identified by both parties. For example, early on, some Syrian CSO representatives expressed concern that DRC maintained a presence in Damascus, and sought assurances that their work with DRC would remain confidential. Trust was also a key challenge for work with VDSF. This was partly because of the large variety of CSOs engaged in the Forum – for example, Damascus-based NGOs, CSOs with civic or human rights backgrounds, humanitarian CSOs, and CSOs representing very localised communities all within the same network. Agencies needed to work together under the assumption that there was no hidden agenda. And of course there was an ongoing challenge of finding consensus within the platforms, as priorities and goals naturally shifted over time.

As with other cases covered under this evaluation, the sheer amount of staff time and resources needed is a huge issue when dealing with any newer forms of partnership. Whilst complimenting DRC staff on the 'incredible' work they have done, the SCNP coordinator also reported that DRC staff are often stretched very thinly, and have too much to do, hampering them from providing their full support.

There are also risks when working with networks. On the one hand it can foster increasing levels of agency and ownership. On the other it requires a higher appetite for risk on DRC's part. Indeed, some DRC staff felt that at times DRC has been too risk averse. Initially, some DRC staff expressed concerns that its engagement with Syrian civil society, governed only by the trust built up between DRC staff in the region and the network coordinators, could jeopardise DRC's operations inside Syria. Current programme staff believe that DRC's commitment to increasingly work with civil society means it may need to become less risk averse.

Apart from networks, DRC has worked with a number of different kinds of organisation on this programme that are not necessarily standard NGO partners. This includes various diaspora organisations and grassroots organisations, including community committees established by DRC to address the protection needs of refugees in Turkey. These are informal community structures, embedded in the community-based protection programming modality, and involving members of both refugee and host communities on a voluntarily basis.

Convening and networking

The whole of the case study is concerned with networking and convening.

Innovation

There was no explicit link to the Danish innovation fund.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Key lessons were discussed in interview with the DRC staff involved closely with the programmes. One lesson is that it can take many years to build up a partner to the stage where it is possible to exit the relationship. Whilst it might be good to think about exit strategies at the start, that kind of long-term planning is easier said than done, and is usually missing. In retrospect, staff said it would have been very useful to at least try to chart out the entire programme, with a proper exit strategy. Networks take time to develop, as does trust. Not all programmes are 4 years long, and it is hard to do anything in shorter time periods. The kind of long-term, predictable funding provided by the Danish MFA is therefore key.

Another member of DRC staff interviewed said he would have liked the visibility of the programme to be higher. He felt DRC had done a lot but is sometimes averse to being linked to controversial partners or certain advocacy positions. A slightly higher-profile stance on some matters, and more risk-taking, would have been ideal. However, he acknowledged that it remains important for DRC to maintain low visibility inside Syria, so it is a difficult balance to keep. The networks also saw this as an issue sometimes. For example, Denmark has recently stripped away residency status for Syrian refugees because it says Damascus is 'safe'. There was a perception from the networks that DRC didn't stick up for the refugees enough during the debate.

One key lesson from the Learning Review is that, rather than committing up front to a specific result, different stakeholders in a network need to take the time to discover the value of working together. The evolving relationship between DRC and the Syrian networks can be seen to have passed through three stages: exploration, trust and relationship building, and then responsive operational support.

A great number of other more detailed lessons are contained in the Learning Review. These are available on demand.

Attachments

Three very detailed case studies on the three programme elements, developed as part of the Learning Review, are all available on demand.

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vi This is taken from the SCNP Terms of Reference, developed in 2019.

vii https://scm.bz/en/rotator-en/paper-from-the-voices-for-displaced-syrians-forum-vdsf-on-the-impacts-of-covid-19-on-displaced-syrians-and-the-response#:~:text=The%20VDSF%20is%20a%20gathering,Syrians%20in%20and%20outside%20Syria.

viii As supplementary evidence, The Learning Review concluded that DRC's support has "illustrating how an INGO can provide vital support to a national civil society apex organisation without compromising its independence."

ix It should be noted that this kind of advocacy is almost always impossible to prove without a great deal of effort. Specific examples of policies were not provided (and were not asked for) during the interview.

IMCC support to the Medical Students' Association of Kenya (DUF)	
Name of Danish CSO	International Medical Cooperation Committee (IMCC): a member of Danish Youth Council (DUF)
Name of Southern partner(s)	Medical Students' Association of Kenya (MSAKE)
Country	Kenya
Relevant Theme(s)	Working with youth groups, alliances and networks; Working with non-traditional partners
Project / Programme name	Reproductive and Sexual Program for Kenya Teenagers (RESPEKT)
Period	2018 to 2020
Lot(s)	POOL fund: DUF

Background

In 2003, the Kenyan government developed and launched an Adolescent Reproductive Health and Development Policy, aimed at improving reproductive health and the quality of life among adolescents and youth. However, it has not been effectively implemented due to limited awareness of the policy, limited resources, low youth involvement and general poverty levels. While the policy emphasises all aspects of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), IMCC/MSAKE highlighted in their application to DUF the limits of the policy and an urgent need for implementation of more inclusive and comprehensive SRHR education.

As stated in IMCC/MSAKE's project application, Kenyan school youth still have inadequate and unequal access to SRHR education, as well as sexual and reproductive health services, despite their SRHR being entrenched in the Kenyan constitution. Young women and children continue to suffer at the hands of healthcare practitioners and "quacks" with inadequate knowledge on SRHR, and poor service provision. Unmet sexual and reproductive health needs among youth contribute to unwanted pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections and HIV. Socio-cultural norms and traditions, as well as stigma and taboos, make SRHR a difficult issue to address in Kenya. Teenage pregnancies have adverse outcomes such as unsafe abortion, obstructed labour, fistulas, and death. Teenage mothers are often unaware of their legal and constitutional rights. Moreover, inadequate SRHR education among youth makes it difficult for them to know about their legal rights and responsibilities, or be able to influence policies in this area.

MSAKE and IMCC met through the International Medical Students' Federation around 2014-2015 and agreed to cooperate on SRHR. In 2016-17, IMCC and MSAKE, with DUF support, implemented a pilot project aimed at strengthening the volunteering and outreach capacity of MSAKE, training and equipping volunteers with skills and tools, and conducting SRHR education amongst school teenagers. The main follow-up project – RESPEKT – was implemented between 2018 and 2021, and focused on capacitating 70 new MSAKE youth volunteers at nine different universities as trainers of trainers, so they can then go on and conduct SRHR training and events at local secondary schools in four different regions. Regional team building events and a comprehensive SRHR curriculum have also been developed. A range of awareness-raising events and workshops have involved a wide range of stakeholders, including school management, teachers, health officials and leaders. Jointly with a local organisation, the Gender Based Violence Recovery Centre, RESPEKT has also facilitated gender-based violence training and campus festivals to increase capacity and awareness on SRHR for University students across Kenya.

Summary of changes

During an internal DUF monitoring visit in October 2020 (carried out as part of DUF's internal M&E system), which focused on the status and progress of the partnership, gender equality and Covid-19 challenges, IMCC and MSAKE reported a number of significant changes that had been influenced through the project. Firstly, the creation of interactive learning spaces amongst project volunteers (medical students) has led to their stronger ability to advocate for SRHR, as well as encouraging active involvement and participation of school youth. Secondly, youth-to-youth facilitation has had positive effects on the relationships between teachers and students, after SRHR training. Some students expressed feeling freer to talk about difficult or taboo issues with teachers, compared to before the training. Some students also reported higher self-esteem and feeling freer to discuss sensible SRHR subjects amongst themselves. Many students also mention having gained greater respect for other individuals. The number of teenage pregnancies has reportedly dropped among the students in targeted schools, which could indicate a change in social practice or norms due to students' higher level of knowledge and better self-confidence around SRHR.

Wider effects of the project include enabling and motivating volunteers to become active changemakers, starting their own initiatives beyond RESPEKT to develop greater awareness about SRHR and gender issues in society. This includes, for example, drives for menstruation pads for schoolgirls, local town hall meetings on Gender Based Violence (GBV) and engagement within their personal networks.

MSAKE/IMCC project reports also describe an SRHR curriculum development participatory process and wide application by activists and trainers to the target group and beyond, even to other schools and local government. Both the communication models and curriculum on SRHR have been co-written with students and MSAKE volunteers. However, it is important to note that SRHR curriculum subjects are contentious and are not always well-received by people with more traditional views. MSAKE reported resistance in schools, among headmasters, and even students.

Finally, MSAKE has advocated the integration of the interactive RESPEKT teaching model, which is now beginning to gain traction in secondary schools. The final curriculum, according to MSAKE, has now been proposed to an official committee under the Ministry of Education for application in secondary schools.

Results at partner level

MSAKE is an almost entirely volunteer-driven organisation with direct cost funding only for certain projects. Capacity building of MSAKE has focussed on the outreach and training of 70 new volunteers, plus a further 47 available at the end of the pilot project. A 'training of trainers' and onward training programme with an expanded curriculum have been set up,. However, there is little quantitative data on the actual numbers of school youth reached, or on the wider involvement of schoolteachers and health staff as core stakeholders.

The volunteer-drive partnership has evolved over the years. Through interviews with MSAKE, IMCC and DUF, it emerged that the RESPEKT project has benefitted from a well-organised and highly motivated project coordination team and working group with clear divisions of labour between Kenya and Denmark. According to an interview with MSAKE, the transfer of skills, knowledge, and different ways of organising a volunteer-driven NGO from IMCC to MSAKE has been important, and was facilitated by good online platforms. MSAKE considers that the regular M&E and implementation meetings have also become deeper and more rewarding.

One significant effect on MSAKE from the RESPEKT project is that the organisation is noted to have a larger outreach. The capacity and public relations set-up from RESPEKT has created a lot of interest in MSAKE events from students and volunteers. As an example, a 10-day chat event on SRHR recently attracted 250 young people per day. The organisation has also diversified in terms of its volunteers and activists, not only in Nairobi, but also in other university cities. In addition, based on learnings from RESPEKT, MSAKE has adopted a new, less formal communication structure. Another effect is an increase in competitive applications for the MSAKE Executive Committee. In fact, in 2020, all Executive Board members were project activists.

There has also been some influence on MSAKE's political lobbying and advocacy capacity as a result of the partnership, according to some executive committee members. This is echoed by DUF's monitoring report, which states that "the partnership works very strategically […] with advocacy and networking enhancing the reach and impact of project activities". Further, RESPEKT has established several Volunteer Advocacy teams to lobby and influence decision-makers at community level, while being quite active in providing inputs and seeking influence on the formal curriculum with the Ministry of Education.

Links to wider results

Based on documentary review and interviews with MSAKE, DUF and IMCC, the support provided to MSAKE through IMCC in this partnership has helped the organisation, and the RESPEKT project, gain a much higher visibility. MSAKE has been invited on numerous occasions by national as well as district governments to present the RESPEKT project to various official functions. For example, MSAKE's Executive Board members were invited to contribute to the national Gender Equality Commission. Some of MSAKE's volunteers have also joined the UK Department for International Development's Youth Advisory Council. County politicians and officials have also invited RESPEKT to represent the SRHR project, and even paid for transportation and expenses.

The support provided has also helped MSAKE increase its advocacy capacity and influence on duty bearers, such as school officials and local government officials. According to MSAKE, some teachers have been calling on school directors and other teachers to acquire life skills training using the RESPEKT model. As an example, the Head of Kenya Private Schools Association has reached out to the RESPEKT team, inviting them for two consecutive years to its national conference. RESPEKT has enabled MSAKE to network outside the original target groups. For example, headmasters at several secondary schools have requested the roll

out of the RESPEKT method. It has also been possible to reach out to counsellors in non-target schools, providing a safe space for counselling and allowing volunteers to work on SRHR education in the schools.

IMCC and MSAKE report that this is beginning to impact the behaviour and attitude of teachers and teenagers, and has contributed to a reduction in teenage pregnancies. This has been documented in a number of targeted secondary schools. Research on the prevalence of pregnancies and SRHR behaviour was done by volunteers using IMCC-MSAKE questionnaires and focus group discussions (FGDs) among school youth. MSAKE believes it has seen a correlation between providing basic SRH education / information and the teenage pregnancy rates. MSAKE also tested pre-and post-knowledge and behaviour among students. It is hoped that any reduction in teenage pregnancies will also help reduce adverse outcomes such as unsafe abortion, obstructed labour, fistulas, and death. As a more direct impact, RESPEKT volunteers have referred some cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) among teenagers onwards to recovery centres.

Added-value

As far as capacity development is concerned, IMCC's support has helped improve the quality of project management and MSAKE's general administration, including conflict resolution, as informed by RESPEKT project steering group members (some of whom are also MSAKE Executive Committee members). A change in MSAKE structures has also led to increased youth participation across the organisation, since the CSO is active in several universities, and has better outreach and communication means as a result of RESPEKT. More young volunteers with RESPEKT have been seen engaging in International Federation of Medical Students' Association (IFMCC) conferences and more widely African representation in such events.

MSAKE and IMCC intend to apply for more funding through DUF. The intention is that a 'RESPEKT II' does not become a new project in itself, but is embedded in MSAKE and includes other organisations, like SHEBA in Ethiopia (see under localisation below). In addition, thanks to the collaboration with IMCC, MSAKE has been able to attract additional funding, such as another project on SRH and a mental health project, using RESPEKT as a main reference.

As far as the added-value of MSAKE is concerned, IMCC volunteers say they have learned a lot from MSAKE about managing and administering a project. New IMCC volunteers in the project note that it is very rewarding working with the experienced MSAKE members (as well as working with more experienced IMCC members).

As an interactive learning model for engaging volunteers to tackle sensitive SRHR issues, the RESPEKT project has definite potential for replication, and has thereby demonstrated its value to IMCC. IMCC volunteers have also gained valuable insight in the role, living conditions and culture of Kenyan students and volunteers.

Localisation

As the partnership is based on volunteerism, the perspective of IMCC is that localisation is an end in itself – the funds are used for the large majority in Kenya by MSAKE, while a smaller part is used for exchange visits, monitoring and a nominal administration fee for IMCC. The Project Steering Group is reported to make all decisions jointly, including on the use of funds. The intention has been to capacitate and empower MSAKE to have increasing independence. MSAKE has partially confirmed this, although the extent to which it has actually happened is unclear. Through interviews with IMCC and MSAKE, it appeared that conflicts relating to keeping deadlines, respecting the other party and cultural misunderstandings have emerged, but these have been amicably resolved over time. MSAKE volunteers report that they would like to see a deepened and expanded cooperation with IMCC, including more decision-making and more funds being managed locally.

MSAKE has been very active in applying the RESPEKT models and methods, especially in wider youth learning events and conferences in Kenya. MSAKE considers this to be driven entirely by the volunteers and RESPEKT project staff, with some support from IMCC, including physical attendance at some events. The IMCC-MSAKE partnership has enabled the participation of Kenyan youth volunteers in international fora (e.g. the International Federation of Medical Students' Association), DUF global partnership events, and an international AIDS conference in Amsterdam in 2018.

IMCC has further initiated cooperation between MSAKE and EMSA (Ethiopian Medical Student Association) on a new partnership, called SHEBA. EMSA is larger, more experienced, and works in the same field as MSAKE.

New forms of partnership

There are no examples of new forms of partnership in this case.

Convening and networking

The partnership has actively used volunteers (medical students and peer educators) and self-organising to engage a wider audience in secondary schools (students, teachers, and headmasters). While IMCC has been driving the process, the volunteers have certainly gained wider traction in secondary schools by mobilising a wider network of potential, interested students and teachers. A loose type of network of school youth activists can be said to have emerged around MSAKE's RESPEKT school clubs in the target area, with wider potential for replication of the SRHR peer education model.

Innovation

There are no links to the innovation funding in this case.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

MSAKE activists report that capacity building has been key, in particular on how to write applications. SRHR is a core key subject in medical studies, where the "RESPEKT method" (communication models, education on SRHR) is seen as a very useful tool. The set of social and communication skills has enabled MSAKE activists to move from project and stakeholder engagements to internalising these methods and insights, which is seen as a big asset, both at individual as well as organisational level.

Staff hired for the project have been the main vehicle of implementation, and there are some concerns around MSAKE's capacity. The entire partnership is based on volunteerism, which may be short-lived. Challenges like burn-out amongst volunteers, dependency on a few leading individuals, and institutional weaknesses in the MSAKE set-up raise the question of long-term sustainability.

The RESPEKT interactive learning and youth mobilisation model has the potential for further replication and scaling up. As relevant, DUF should seek ways of applying variations of RESPEKT in other countries and even beyond IMCC – or involving them more actively. The model is not only applicable to medical students but could be more widely applied to other DUF member organisations.

Attachments

- RESPEKT webpage (testimonials and videos): http://respekt.or.ke/%20.
- REKORD magazine: https://issuu.com/respekt_publications/docs/rekord_july_2019?fbclid=IwAR1wboIEMZMWMcL6FQuGJFVyxcJUSwexzmZ5KYtfv-Rc1jXPIQMZDXNAfyI
- Video with adolescent students: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVJdlEApMRI&feature=youtu.be
- MSAKE Podcast on Covid-19 response for volunteers: https://anchor.fm/rekord-podcast

Global Aktion in Mozambique (CISU)	
Name of Danish CSO	Global Aktion (through Civil Society in Development [CISU])
Name of Southern partner(s)	Justicia Ambiental (JA!) – Cabo Delgado Province Associacão de Apoio e Assistencia Juridica as Comunidades (AAAJC) – Tete and Niassa Provinces
Country	Mozambique
Relevant Theme(s)	Working with non-traditional partners; Added-value of working with international advocacy
Project / Programme name	"Say No to Gas!" Dziwani
Period	February 2020 – January 2022
Lot(s)	POOL Fund: CISU

Background

This case study covers two distinct projects implemented by separate partners of Global Aktion (GA) in Mozambique. They both involve empowering local communities who are affected by the extraction of natural resources, linked with international advocacy. These are presented separately, but drawing out joint learnings as appropriate.

1. Say No to Gas! – JA! – Cabo Delgado Province

According to GA project documents, the natural gas rush in Cabo Delgado Province in Mozambique involving several trans-national corporations has negatively affected the human rights of local communities living in the area. To enable gas extraction, 556 families from the villages of Milamba and Quitupo were forcibly removed without receiving proper compensation. Other communities are at risk of removal in the future. Furthermore, the gas produced from the project will not improve the energy welfare of the population of Mozambique, since the gas will be exported to other continents. GA's Mozambican partner JA! initially collected information on the consequences of the gas industry as experienced by local communities. The current phase (disrupted due to recent conflict) focuses on mobilising and empowering those communities to stand up to the gas extraction industry and secure proper compensation. Based on this, the campaign 'Say No to Gas!' seeks to pressurise actors in the gas industry and Danish pension funds to stop existing gas projects as well as a second wave of projects with further damaging consequences. The focus of the advocacy is outside Mozambique, as this is where the extractive industries are based.

2. Dziwani – AAAJC – Tete and Niassa Provinces

Dziwani takes a similar approach but with respect to coalmining around an existing coal mine in Tete Province and a proposed new mine in Niassa Province. According to GA and its Mozambican partner AAAJC, local populations gain no jobs nor 'trickle-down' in terms of benefits. The project aims to empower communities (emphasising women's participation) affected by the extractive industries to defend their legal and human rights through establishing and strengthening Natural Resources Management Committees (NRMCs). Linked to this, AAAJC seeks to pressurise the Mozambican government and extractive industries to act in accordance with Mozambican law and human rights. GA supports AAAJC in its work on the ground and seeks to support international advocacy efforts, with a particular emphasis on Denmark.

Summary of changes

1. Say No to Gas! – JA! – Cabo Delgado Province

In the early stages of the project, JA! had built good relationships with affected communities in the area according to interviews with GA and JA! activists. Different communities feel differently, but sentiments have increasingly shifted against gas extraction. Fishing communities and farmers were relocated to new land – further from the sea than they had previously thought and hence their livelihoods had been disrupted. From JA!'s community level contacts, it managed to collect information and secured coverage in media outlets like the New York Times, the Guardian and Al Jazeera. There have been cosmetic official community consultation processes organised by the authorities, but they require a certain number of women signatures, and many have refused to sign following awareness raising through the project. At the international level, according to GA and JA!, pension funds had previously been unaware of local issues and were surprised when presented with evidence on local realities. At the time of the evaluation, the project was disrupted due to conflict in the

Cabo Delgado region, which was blamed on local militants known as Al-Shabab (although some claim that the way in which communities have been marginalised was a significant factor) and led to evacuations of the area. One of the largest companies involved, Total, has withdrawn staff from the Afungi site and the company has declared *force majeure*. Consultations were taking place between GA and JA! on how to proceed in the light of these events.

2. Dziwani – AAAJC – Tete and Niassa Provinces

Through interviews with AAAJC and GA, it emerged that the main changes are the establishment of the committees, and registration of many of them with the government, conferring them with a proper legal status. Members have also been trained, so they know their rights. Previously very few female members were involved in decision-making in the NRMCs, and they are now more vocal in meetings. An important aspect is instilling confidence in the community that it is possible to do something: 'It's your fight, but we are fighting with you' has been the message from AAAJC. According to AAAJC, under Mozambican mining law, 2.75% of revenue from mining concessions should go to communities. In practice, money is transferred to local government, which tends to use it for things that are already part of its statutory responsibilities. Through workshops on revenue usage, the issue has been raised, even if it is not yet possible to point to concrete changes as a result. In Denmark, following pressure exerted by the project, two pension funds (MP Pension [now called Akademikerpension] and P+) divested from the Brazilian mining company Vale. Others are thinking of doing the same and Vale has become increasingly aware of the issues. However, Vale are now trying to sell out and the focus is moving to Indian companies such as Jindal, who are structured differently and are harder to influence.

Results at partner level

GA considers itself to work in 'solidarity partnerships', built on a shared vision of a more equal world order, working together on issues which carry a degree of risk. Its structure and approach differ from many other INGOs in having a small secretariat of four staff, but with around 100 activist volunteers who manage projects through working groups. In practical terms, GA aims to support the capacity building of its partners in such areas as organisational development, democratisation, monitoring, documentation, financial management and administration based on the needs. GA also supports partners to participate in networks with other organisations internationally.

For both interventions, project design is based on an extensive process of discussion between GA and its partners JA! and AAAJC, as confirmed by all the parties. Activists develop the proposal and then GA 'interprets' plans into the language needed by CISU. The local partners are responsible for day-to-day implementation on the ground, while each partner engages in advocacy in their respective spheres. GA monitors the financial management and makes sure that partner staff are aware of the remaining budget for each key activity. Reporting to CISU is carried out jointly by both partners until there is an agreed draft. GA manages the relationship with CISU (and through them to MFA).

1. Say No to Gas! – JA! – Cabo Delgado Province

JA! is a longstanding partner and, according to an interview, highly values the relationship with GA. From JA!'s perspective, they appreciate the shared values and solidarity. JA! recognises the youth and energy of GA's activists. While there is a frequent turnover and volunteers sometimes lack experience, they do bring capacity and get up to speed quickly. From interacting with some of these activists, their 'day jobs' are also in the sector, they are keen to advance their careers and hence they do bring expertise from their other work. At the same time, JA! acknowledges it would be ideal to have one person as the main contact for at least three years.

Clearly the funding is an important aspect of the partnership, and it has enabled JA! to develop both this specific campaign and itself as an organisation, which would not otherwise have been possible. GA sees JA! as having considerable administrative capacity (in comparison to some of their other partners), which is helped by them being part of the Friends of the Earth international network. In recent times, it has not been possible for GA to visit Mozambique due to Covid-19 and the relationship has mainly been focused on administrative issues. This has made the collaboration more difficult and GA has not been able to work so much on advocacy recently, but this is the intention going forwards.

2. Dziwani – AAAJC – Tete and Niassa Provinces

During the implementation of Dziwani I and II, according to reports, it was clear that AAAJC activists had strong capacity in terms of informing communities about the law and training them in claiming their rights.

During this period, AAAJC appreciated how GA helped them to develop a strong proposal, which provides a good basis for an advocacy strategy. GA visited Tete to understand AAAJC as an organisation, including the gaps and where it needs to improve. There was a lack of capacity to monitor the implementation of the laws, which is essential to generate the evidence needed to raise public awareness and hold companies and authorities accountable. Again, the funding has been very important in a context where most financing has to come from international sources. This phase has helped AAAJC set up an office in Maputo (it was previously just in Tete), from where it can relate to ministries, and participate in the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and other meetings related to natural resource management. GA has also helped in providing international linkages and platforms on which AAAJC could advocate.

The main challenge has been around communication. Sometimes GA can take some time to respond (as confirmed by both parties), unsurprisingly given the nature of its structure, relying on volunteers, who often work in the evenings after finishing their day-time occupations. AAAJC is concerned that it is dependent on GA and would like to have more ownership of its own future. If something happened to GA's funding, then they would not be able to proceed. They would like to have different sources of funding, but are not sure how this can be achieved.

Links to wider results

The strategy underlying both GA-supported projects works at several different levels. Both interventions seek to mobilise, empower, and organise affected communities, so they can represent their own case with respect to fossil fuel extraction. This movement-building approach chimes with GA's philosophy, linking to its roots in the Anti-Apartheid struggle. However, as one GA interviewee mentioned, it is hard to partner directly with community level civil society, which is why it works together with Mozambican NGOs, who play an intermediary role, as well as carrying out advocacy themselves. AAAJC seeks to use Mozambican law and policies (e.g. on allocations communities should receive from extraction) to secure benefits for affected communities. JA! has less of a focus within Mozambique – partly because the key players on gas extraction are based internationally, and partly due to the associated risks of working on such a sensitive issue.

A key aspect of both interventions is the international advocacy – both in Denmark and more widely. From GA's perspective, engaging in such advocacy corresponds with its nature as an activist organisation, as well as being seen as an essential part of the strategy to influence the key actors (through pension funds to exert pressure on oil and gas companies). Obtaining reliable information from the ground – from communities and the NGOs is a vital element of this. In practice, international advocacy is carried out by both GA and its partners, JA! and AAAJC. The two Mozambican partners are well networked but appreciate the contacts and linkages that GA can make in international fora.

Overall then, wider results are very much linked to the partnership approach through the different levels. There are some concrete indications of progress (e.g. raising awareness by disseminating information, influencing pension funds), even if the fundamental problem of extraction negatively affecting local communities remains largely unresolved.

Added-value

One partner said that GA understands the unique nature of the industry they are seeking to influence, which is inherently unpredictable and carries the threat of violence. Both partners appreciate the solidarity of GA as they work in these difficult conditions. Clearly the financial support provided by GA is of major importance to both JA! and AAAJC. There is currently very limited scope to mobilise resources within Mozambique for such work, so external funding is vital. There have now been several rounds of support for both partners, and there has been value addition throughout the period in various ways, depending on the organisation. Capacity needs are discussed with partners as part of planning and addressed as far as possible (e.g. on financial management and organisational capacity). For AAAJC, there was more capacity building in the first two phases, but now they have reached a higher level. The process of proposal development itself, helped develop advocacy strategies. AAAJC particularly appreciated the recognition its partnership has helped bring it, in being accepted as a significant actor by the mining company Vale in Tete, in developing a national profile in Maputo and providing access to international platforms. The connections that GA staff can bring were recognised by both.

GA in turn appreciates the information and legitimacy provided by its links with what is happening on the ground. They are able to quickly and accurately verify a claim (e.g. that community members have been allocated new land), which even some of the companies have appreciated.

Localisation

All the activities in Mozambique are implemented by JA! and AAAJC, so in this sense the work is fully localised. In fact, with just four full time staff in Copenhagen, GA is set up to work in such a way. The volunteer activists take on work that would otherwise be done by staff in other organisations (e.g. liaising with partners), but this involves very occasional visits.

In terms of proposal development and financial management, both Mozambican partners felt that they were fully involved in determining their priority areas of work within an indicative budget framework. They certainly did not feel that projects were imposed on them and appreciate GA for its 'solidarity' approach. The partners feel recognised for their knowledge of the local context, people and system. The role of GA is more to ask questions and facilitate the process and then render the proposal into an acceptable form for CISU. Of course, this takes place within certain constraints and not everything can be supported. One case where an issue could not be addressed was a raise in staff salaries, which was not considered feasible. Both GA and its partners undertake international advocacy work, so this is planned jointly.

What did emerge from both partners was a wish for more support to enable them to diversify their income sources, so as to be more sustainable in the future.

New forms of partnership

GA has worked in a similar way for a number of years, so its approach cannot be said to be entirely new. But it is distinctive from many other Danish CSOs in a several ways:

- There is emphasis on movement-building to enable local communities to argue for their rights.
- The partnership involves joint advocacy at the international level. For GA, the information produced at community level directly feeds into their campaigning (e.g. with Danish pension funds). In fact, the choice of programme is linked to the opportunity to play this role.
- GA has very few staff and uses activist volunteers to manage relationships and carry out work that would be done by professional staff in other organisations.

There are advantages and disadvantages to this latter point. The Mozambican partners appreciate the energy of the activists and feel they have the capacity to learn quite quickly, as well as leading to a more equal relationship based on shared values. But there is a high turnover resulting in a lack of continuity and activists lack some skills (e.g. knowing less about some of the issues, not being fluent in Portuguese).

Convening and networking

Since GA is not present in Mozambique, it does not play so much of a role in convening in country. The partners undertake most of this themselves, based on their local knowledge. However, funding from GA has helped them develop their presence and linkages in Maputo. At the international level, GA's extensive contacts and support has enabled partners to participate more in international platforms.

Innovation

While campaigning on fossil fuel extraction is not a new issue, it is being given a new lease of life in the light of current debates on climate change. The message of 'Say No To Gas!' is obviously not just asking for benefits to be shared, but for it not to be extracted at all – at least until it is used for Mozambique's own needs. Using pension funds to influence corporates and raising questions at company Annual General Meetings (AGMs) is a growing area in advocacy in recent years.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Both GA and its partners are driven by a passionate commitment to their cause and see themselves as activists. While the approach may at times be lacking in some ways (e.g. the capacity of activist volunteers, being slow to respond to communications), the powerful commitment they bring is important when faced with the powerful entrenched interests opposing their positions. There is a clear link between the work on the ground and advocacy at the international level, which contrasts with many other interventions carried out by civil society. This gives the partnership energy, although would not be applicable for every issue. An interesting learning is that if pension funds are so influenced that they divest, and if companies decide to pull out, then leverage is lost, and more difficult alternatives can move in.

Attachments

- Say No to Gas! Project Document, undated
- Pipe Dreams: Investing in a Dirty Industry – The Case of Mozambique, GA, 2020

Mission East in Iraq	
Name of Danish CSO	Mission East
Name of Southern partner(s)	Project funded by German Ministry of Foreign Affairs (GMFA): Engineering Association for Development (EADE); and Justice Center (JC) Project funded by Brandenberg State Government (BRAN): Various youth groups, with which Mission East works directly
Country	Iraq
Relevant Theme(s)	Localisation; Working with youth groups
Project / Programme name	"Support to conflict-affected populations in Ninewa and Kirkuk Governorates of Iraq through Shelter, NFIs, WASH and Protection" (GMFA) "Bringing People Back Together: Women and Youth Community Service Centre in Sinjar" (BRAN)
Period	GMFA: February 2019 to May 2021 BRAN: May 2018 to February 2020
Lot(s)	Humanitarian

Background

Although Iraq is transitioning from post-conflict to recovery, affected populations still face significant problems. An estimated 4.1 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance, and around 1.4 million people are internally displaced. In August 2019, the Government of Iraq closed several Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps, with the stated goal of all IDPs returning home by the end of 2020. IDPs are increasingly returning to their areas of origin, including areas where Mission East works. Among returnees are many who have experienced trauma resulting from conflict, massacres and other acts of extreme violence. Most have lost family members, or have family members that have been badly affected by the situation. Many children and youth were displaced from their homes, and lived a precarious existence in temporary settlements. Their experiences have often been deeply harmful to their social, emotional and cognitive development.

Mission East relaunched activities in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) in August 2014, as an immediate response to the IDP crisis following the fall of Mosul to Islamic State (IS). Much of its current activities are based around supporting youth and youth groups. Youth in humanitarian settings face risks that are different from those faced by younger children or older adults. They often live in the least safe neighbourhoods, where crime is high and police routinely harass, beat and detain them. They may be recruited into armed forces and armed groups. Their only livelihood options may be in the informal sector, where rates of crime and violence are very high. Adolescent girls often suffer from Gender Based Violence (GBV). And young people, particularly girls, are often sexually exploited or abused by those with the responsibility to protect them, including humanitarian staff, law enforcement and military personnel. In response, Mission East tries to provide protected, welcoming spaces, which can be entry points for offering young people help and support, especially adolescent girls and young women who may otherwise be confined to their homes, unable to access needed information and services.

At the same time, Mission East believes that in every humanitarian emergency the world over, young people step up and respond. Their assets include skills; motivation; ingenuity; energy; creativity; a strong sense of justice, fairness and equality; an aptitude for technology; and a capacity for peer mobilisation. However, there is a danger that adolescents and youth can get lost between programming for children and programming for older adults. In recognition, development organisations, including Mission East, are increasingly tapping into youth's potential for 'building back better'. Mission East's programme in Iraq is not just about serving their basic needs, but is also concerned with reinforcing and building on the contributions they can make to humanitarian programming, community protection and social cohesion.

For example, community-based programming around protection, with a strong focus on youth participation, aims to enhance local capacities and strengthen local protection mechanisms. As part of this programming, experienced field staff from the local community form community protection groups with active youth groups in the area. This enables youth to play an active role within the protection mechanisms that support, inform and protect their peers and families.

Mission East operates several different projects in the region, under an overall strategy. However, needs change from year to year, and programme approaches have to change accordingly. Whilst Mission East is

trying on one level to move from needs-based support to a more transitional approach, a large part of the logical frameworks for the current projects are still concerned with the delivery of basic needs such as increased access to water, improved hygiene, the provision of psychosocial support, enhanced livelihoods, and the provision of safe, secure and habitable houses.

Summary of changes

Mission East's latest internal reports[x] list many changes that have occurred as a result of the programme, especially around the provision of basic needs. In addition, Mission East also engaged in legal services for people who had been traumatised or assaulted. Most of the cases included emotional and psychological abuse, forced marriages, and denial of resources. A key initiative is providing legal documentation and information for vulnerable families with missing civil documentation, such as birth or marriage certificates. Many families lost these documents during displacement, and without them they cannot access basic services offered by government or humanitarian agencies, such as livelihoods opportunities, education and health.

In Sinjar, reported changes included access to protection services, profits from cooperative group savings, access to recreational or psychosocial support activities, and enhanced livelihoods through grants, job placements and agricultural support and inputs. Whilst the provision of recreational activities such as football, basketball, art and music classes, and relaxation classes may not appear to be amongst the most pressing needs facing communities, they formed the basis of the outreach services in Sinjar which enabled people to be reached both within supported centres and in more hard-to-reach communities. This then opened the door for teams to raise awareness of important psychosocial support topics such as child marriage, child protection, positive parenting techniques, health and wellbeing. The outreach team also played a significant role in identifying and referring cases for case management in areas such as domestic violence, poverty, disability, illness, mental health issues, GBV, lack of educational opportunities and coping after the stress and trauma of the ISIS insurgency.

One of Mission East's main partners – the Engineering Association for Development (EADE) – was asked via email to say how the work they had done with the support of Mission East had most benefited the communities they represent. An example they provided was a protection project implemented in three very poor areas of Mosul. The areas had previously only received support such as food or hygiene kits. In the programme supported by Mission East, a Centre was developed, and psychosocial support was provided to children and their families, as well as non-formal education. EADE reports that some children grew so attached to the Centre they did not want to go home afterwards!

In common with many other Southern-based CSOs across the world, Mission East's local partners also stepped up during the Covid-19 pandemic to distribute hygiene material and kits, particularly in areas it was difficult for other agencies to reach. For example, in Ninewa and Kirkuk, over 30,000 people were supported to meet primary needs during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Results at partner level

In Iraq, Mission East works with several local NGOs. These include long-term partners, as well as non-formal community-based organisations (CBOs). Programming is designed to build on the specific background, target groups, reach and mandate of the NGOs and CBOs, while at the same time attempting to build their capacity in project management, leadership and humanitarian aid delivery.

One of the partners previously mentioned is called EADE. As far back as 2014, EADE was working with Mission East to distribute food. However, according to Mission East staff its capacity has grown over the years, and it is now providing quality services at an almost international standard in areas it would not originally have considered, such as protection. Staff further state that Mission East has helped strengthen EADE's capacity through formal capacity development methods (such as training), but has also accompanied EADE throughout the process – walking "hand in hand" with it. When questioned via email, EADE stated that it had acquired a lot of resources and enhanced capacity through working with Mission East. However, in common with many other Southern partners interviewed as part of this evaluation, EADE stated it would like to receive more support around fundraising and writing proposals.

For the legal component of the GMFA project, Mission East engaged a local partner – Justice Centre Iraq (JCI). JCI has recently set up a permanent office, and full-time staff are now established in the region, whereas previously the legal team were based in JCI's Mosul office. JCI stated in an email response to questions that it has a strategic plan to enhance its capacity in areas such as technical and staff administration. It also said that "Mission East has been supportive for some of the staff capacity building through trainings. However, JCI is expecting more technical support." As with EADE, JCI is hoping to receive

more support from Mission East in the future to help diversify its funding base, including help with proposal writing. JCI would also like to see more support to develop its systems and operating procedures.

Both EADE and JCI stated that they found a special value in working with Mission East. Their reasons were that Mission East does not require complicated procedures, it is flexible, and its staff are friendly and reachable. EADE, in particular, works with many international NGOs, and finds working with Mission East much easier than working with others.

However, working in partnership has not always proved easy. At least four longer-term partners have worked with Mission East over the course of the programme, but no longer work with them. There are a number of reasons for this. An initial interview with a key member of Mission East staff revealed that one supported partner chose to move from distribution to mental health activities, so started to work with another donor. This meant it did not have the capacity or personnel to work with Mission East. Another partner failed to match up to the required international standards and expectations. A third underwent a restructuring in 2020, and then decided it wanted to develop in a different direction. However, later comments received from Mission East's team based in Iraq stated that it had decided not to work with two of the aforementioned partners following government instructions, as they are currently under investigation by the federal government of Iraq.

A general point made by one Mission East staff member is that organisations always start off wanting to build and develop a relationship with each other but, particularly in difficult or complex environments, can grow apart. Sometimes relationships can be salvaged, and sometimes it is best to part ways. "When relationships work well they can be very beneficial – they are worth investing in – but they are messy!"

Links to wider results

In essence, the work of Mission East is trying to achieve different things over different timescales. Over the long-term it is important to help develop strong NGOs that are capable of working within Iraq for years to come. At the same time, Mission East is trying to harness the full potential of youth so that they can both benefit from, and contribute to, solutions to the challenges faced within Iraq. This will hopefully help develop a cadre of young people who will remain active in developmental efforts in the future. And on a third level, some of the work involves the provision of basic needs such as water, sanitation and housing, as well as psychosocial needs and community-based protection. In a sense, the provision of basic needs often serves as the entry point for Mission East and its partners to do the other things they want to; in this case addressing issues such as domestic violence, disability, mental health issues, GBV and coping with trauma.

As far as the more informal groups are concerned, Mission East staff point out that reducing barriers to enable young people's engagement and meaningful participation, applying an inclusive approach, investing in mitigating risks, building capacities of young people to be strong advocates and agents of change, and allocating resources to address their needs, are all ways in which humanitarian actors can harness implementation efforts, and help bridge silos between humanitarian, development and peace work.

Added-value

According to Mission East staff, the kind of capacity development it offers is not available locally. Many of the older generation and youth in the regions in which it works have not had continuous education, which means it takes longer to get them to a level where they are able to contribute significantly. In addition, local organisations do not normally work according to accepted international standards (some are not even aware these standards exist). The kind of capacity support that Mission East can provide is therefore very valuable.

Mission East staff also feel that its focus on protection is important. There is a lot of GBV and other infringements of rights in the areas in which it works, and staff feel that in the absence of international organisations, many issues could go unnoticed or unaddressed.

When asked about the benefits they received from Mission East other than funding, EADE staff said that capacity development was the most important. However, they also highlighted the fact that Mission East were able to provide recommendation letters to other organisations, thereby enabling EADE to build partnerships with other agencies. When asked the same question, JCI staff focused purely on capacity development, in particular advances made to JCI's financial reporting and procurement policies.

As far as the added-value of partners is concerned, EADE states that it was one of the first NGOs that was able to access Mosul and open an office after its liberation from Islamic State, and hosted Mission East and other NGOs freely afterwards. It also facilitates access to areas where Mission East faces challenges. In addition, it provides information about local people which would not otherwise be available to Mission East, such as which claims and needs are valid, and which are not. Ultimately, EADE hopes to remain working in the area and, with Mission East's help, is seeking alternative funding opportunities. JCI also pointed to its

good relationships with community authorities and community leaders, and emphasised that this helped it to be an effective implementer, thereby supporting Missions East's mission and objectives in the region.

Localisation

There has been much talk within Iraq about moving from emergency activities to development, so NGOs can be less reactive and more strategic. But, at the same time, Iraq is a very volatile place. In addition, long-term plans made before Covid-19 had to be adapted based on the immediate needs, and post Covid-19 issues. Just as people were beginning to talk about transition and localisation, everything froze.

From their point of view, Mission East staff say the organisation has the desire to hand over power at a local level, and wants to develop autonomous organisations, but it is simply not that easy in the context. In addition, whilst Mission East is comfortable supporting EADE and JCI, which they describe as highly professional organisations, staff point out that localisation is also about working with government agencies, and that can be very difficult to do in the current environment within Iraq.

From the point of view of the institutional partners, both EADE and JCI appear to respect and enjoy their current relationship with Mission East. Nonetheless, both expressed a desire to expand the relationship in the future. For EADE this was partly about increased participation in future proposals, and increased sharing of information around donors and fundraising. For JCI, it was about seeking to be more of a genuine partner, rather than simply a project implementer. These views echo the views of many Southern partners contacted as part of this evaluation.

New forms of partnership

Since 2018, part of Mission East's programme in Iraq has involved increased cooperation with informal youth groups (this can also be seen as contributing to the localisation agenda). Part of this cooperation involved supporting youth-led initiatives with micro-grants and capacity development. The youth groups are not legal partners of Mission East, but they work in close coordination. Three examples are described below. In each case the groups have been involved in numerous projects and/or have been trained by actively working alongside organisations such as USAID, Welthungerhilfe (WHH), Handicap International, International Rescue Committee (IRC) and other established local organisations working throughout Iraq.[xi]

- Helping Hands is a volunteer youth group based in Khanasor, Sinjar district. Mission East has partnered with Helping Hands in implementing two youth-led community initiatives. In the first, it mobilised communities to transform a vacant plot of land into a garden for elderly people in Khanasor. In the second, it facilitated construction of seven pathways and planted trees to enhance community surroundings and improve safety and protection.
- Future Generations is a volunteer youth group of 12-15 youth, based in Khanasor, Sinjar District. Its partnership with Mission East started in 2018, when it implemented a youth-led community initiative including awareness-raising activities, and distribution of school-kits to students. It also supported Mission East by successfully facilitating participation in assessments and distributions in hard-to-reach areas such as Sinjar Mountain. In 2020, members of the group worked as community outreach volunteers to deliver small workshops and initiatives around protection and inclusion awareness-raising.
- Another youth-led project was designed and implemented to address access to resources for youth whilst at the same time building skills associated with planning, organisation and team collaboration, and delivering much-needed services within the community. Activities ranged from construction of a bus stop, street-light rehabilitation and school rehabilitation, to an awareness campaign about the environment.

Mission East has developed a series of recommendations and principles for engaging youth in projects throughout the project cycle. These include empowering young people through meaningful engagement, recognising and developing their capacities and skills, supporting their physical and emotional wellbeing, and involving them in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes.

However, Mission East staff also point out that working with youth groups can be challenging. For example, they can be transient in nature. One year there could be a big youth group base with lots of members, but the next year these could be lost, for a variety of reasons. Regularly, Mission East works with a core group of 6-7 youth within groups. Sometimes this is because these are the only people that can speak English (which is required for reporting and budgeting). Consequently, Mission East often attempts to raise capacity within a group (e.g. leadership training) but then finds participants get a job, or move on in other ways, and the capacity is lost to the youth group (although not of course to the wider environment).

Another challenge is that youth groups can have different agendas, which can often cause serious security concerns. Mission East staff state that they are intentionally careful while working with youth groups. Recently, Mission East has decided to work with youth groups who have been formally registered by the government, in

the belief that this will help it to hold them accountable and formalise the partnerships. The implications of this are yet to be worked through.

Convening and networking

The youth groups Missions East works with know each other, and there is official and non-official cooperation at times. However, there is no formal networking as such for youth.

Innovation

There are no links to the innovation funding in this case.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

The main lesson Mission East wished to highlight was the difficulty and complexity of working in partnerships. As one staff member put it, "When it comes to partnerships, it is like any relationship. There is an expectation that they will all go well, but there needs to be an acceptance that things will not always work. People develop in different ways, and sometimes things don't work out."

Attachments

A brief case study on working with informal youth groups was prepared by Mission East as part of this case study. This is available on demand.

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[x] GMFA Report 3, November 2020; BRAN Narrative Report Final, April 2020

[xi] This section of the case study is based on a case study especially written for this evaluation by an outgoing member of Mission East's staff in Iraq. The case study is included as an attachment.

Oxfam Uganda's Work with South Sudanese Refugees	
Name of Danish CSO	Oxfam IBIS
Name of Southern partner(s)	Five refugee-led organizations (RLOs) • Youth Social Advocacy Team (YSAT) • Community Empowerment for Creative Innovations (CECI) • I CAN South Sudan • South Sudanese Refugees Association (SSURA) • Save Humanity Africa (SHA)
Country	Uganda (with links to Turkey and Ethiopia)
Relevant Theme(s)	Localisation; Working with non-traditional partners; Convening or supporting Southern networks, platforms and alliances
Project / Programme Name	A number of projects and cross-cutting activities under the theme of refugee-led organisations in Uganda
Period	2018 – present
Lot(s)	Civil Society and Humanitarian

Background

Since 2018, Oxfam has supported a growing number of organisations led by South Sudanese refugees in the West Nile, Uganda. The support includes peacebuilding, social cohesion, effective humanitarian responses (including responses to Covid-19), resilience, refugee leadership and meaningful participation. Oxfam currently supports five refugee-led organisations (RLOs) (YSAT, CECI, ICAN, SSURA, SHA) with collaboration due to be extended to a further six in 2021.

The programme can be seen in terms of two main strands. One consists of straightforward support packages to refugees, covering issues such as income generation and livelihoods support, along with a Covid-19 response. The other includes the 'voice and access' elements, which are the main areas of interest for this case study. Specifically, Oxfam helps RLOs and refugee activists access regional and global advocacy spaces and events, which would otherwise have been unlikely or impossible. The two strands are bridged through the work of the RLOs.

Within Uganda, RLOs are also supported through the Unyoke Foundation, which is based in South Africa. Whilst money channelled to Oxfam Uganda by Oxfam IBIS is often devoted to capacity development for RLOs, the Unyoke Foundation instead works with individual refugees to support them to carry out peacebuilding initiatives in the community, thereby supporting them to identify and achieve their own goals. By taking this emergent approach to accompanying and supporting young peacebuilders, Oxfam hopes to transfer the shaping of peacebuilding efforts to those who are most directly affected by conflict.

Although the work started in Uganda, there have recently been attempts to link experiences from Uganda to other parts of the world, including Ethiopia, Turkey and the HECA (Horn, East and Central Africa) region. However, work with RLOs remains highly contextualised. For example, in Uganda refugees are allowed to register and work, whereas in Ethiopia they are not.

Oxfam IBIS's contribution to Oxfam Uganda is to support thinking and action around RLOs – an area where Oxfam IBIS has specific competence. Oxfam in Uganda has a strong localisation lens, and Oxfam IBIS was attracted to the Uganda programme because of the enhanced voice and role for RLOs. Oxfam IBIS is also supporting Oxfam's South Sudan programme. This enables synergies as many of the refugees in Uganda come from South Sudan. Although five Oxfam offices support Oxfam Uganda, Oxfam IBIS is one of the few that has multi-year funding. This allows the flexibility to go beyond a project approach. In turn, this enables Oxfam IBIS to leverage Oxfam Uganda to engage more on policy and advocacy around RLO agendas.

Summary of changes

According to Oxfam IBIS staff, the key change since the start of the programme from a peacebuilding perspective is that more attention is now focused on refugee-led efforts to resolve conflicts, and there is no longer a 'kneejerk' reaction to get external people involved. Instead there is acceptance that the capacity and potential to resolve conflicts exists internally. This trend was reinforced during the Covid-19 pandemic. NGOs were restricted under the pandemic, so RLOs were often the ones providing timely responses to communities.

Changes resulting from the 'voice and access' elements of the programme are covered in the section under localisation below. It is important to note that in addition to any changes resulting from better RLO and refugee representation, as well as peacebuilding efforts, there have also been tangible benefits to refugee communities through direct support in areas such as health, livelihoods, income generation and WASH.

Oxfam IBIS staff believe that the 'voice and access' and direct support strands go hand in hand. If people see RLOs achieving things on the ground, it helps ensure a seat for them at the table. For example, if RLOs do hygiene-kit distribution well, they get invited to coordination meetings, which means they get access to decision-makers. The higher profile of RLOs also means there has been more reliance on local initiatives. For example, refugees and RLOs were able to build their own simple toilets during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Results at partner level

Oxfam IBIS staff have witnessed three major sets of changes within the RLOs. First, there has been organisational development, especially around core elements such as planning, finance and M&E. For many RLOs, the initial support they received through small grants was the first grant they had ever received. The small grant support and the activities they have been able to carry out since have helped increase the visibility of the organisations, and raised their profile within the settlements. Now they have begun to receive larger grants, which is a clear indicator that they have managed to successfully navigate the smaller ones.

Second, there has been a big change in the way RLOs have engaged within their communities (as covered in the previous section). Third, some of the Directors of the RLOs have participated in national and international events, which has contributed to a growth in their individual capacity to speak and write on issues affecting refugees. One person, for example, was asked to contribute to a national conference as a refugee leader.

When interviewed, Oxfam Uganda staff stated that the partners they started with in 2018 are now starting to compete with national level organisations in Uganda. Specifically, staff pointed to an increase in the ability and enthusiasm to respond to needs within refugee communities, and enhanced capacity in areas such as finance, procurement, risk management, strategic and project planning, M&E, advocacy and resource mobilisation. Indeed, Oxfam Uganda staff were so confident in the increased capacity that when the Covid-19 pandemic happened they didn't feel they had to put out an open call for proposals for partners to deliver work in refugee settlements. Rather, the existing RLO partners took on the responsibility to spread awareness and deliver key materials in communities that Oxfam could not access.

Interviews were also conducted with representatives of six RLOs supported by Oxfam. The main areas of capacity change mentioned included the number of staff employed; the reach of projects; internal planning, management and control systems; better governance systems; policy development; staff skills and knowledge; and the ability to register as NGOs. Oxfam Uganda was recognised as the main contributor to these changes in all but one case. With one or two notable exceptions, RLO representatives stated that other donors had not sought to support their organisational capacity, but had instead only funded project activities.

Internally, Oxfam IBIS staff feel that the programme has helped increase the acceptance of, and commitment to, active refugee participation amongst Oxfam Uganda staff. They feel that Oxfam Uganda staff have had the opportunity to directly witness the capacities of RLOs to improve social cohesion among refugee communities, and now recognise that refugees are often much more receptive to messages and interventions that come from fellow refugees. Oxfam IBIS staff also feel that Oxfam Uganda has been good at providing support to RLOs, and taking risks in engaging with them. In turn, Oxfam Uganda staff recognise that Uganda, as a hosting country, is favourable to refugees, and provides an enabling environment for engagement with RLOs.

Links to wider results

As far as direct support is concerned, many results for refugees are tangible and immediate, e.g. enhanced income, better sanitation and improved health. For the 'voice and access' work (covered under the section on localisation) it is harder to draw direct links with results at community level. For example, a refugee leader recently spoke at a very large event. This is clearly a good thing within the context of localisation, but does it directly translate into improved resource allocation or power dynamics?

According to Oxfam IBIS staff, one tangible gain from the 'voice and access' work has been increased media attention within Uganda on refugees, because of their involvement in different events. This can be a 'virtuous circle', although it requires a lot of ongoing support. Oxfam believes it can facilitate this support well, partly because of its networks and connections. It is plausible to assume that enhanced media attention might lead in the future to better attitudes towards refugees, and eventually enhanced living conditions.

From the point of view of the RLO representatives interviewed, direct benefits to refugees have included more awareness of conflict resolution methods and processes, less transmission of Covid-19 in the early stages,

and the greater reach of projects (and therefore material benefits to greater numbers of refugees). Two of the RLO representatives provided quotes regarding reduced conflict within their communities. One said that there had been " … increased community awareness of conflict resolution mechanisms and increased trust and peaceful coexistence between groups (including host communities)". The other said, " … we have seen impact in conflict resolution with refugees now better able to peacefully resolve conflict". It is hoped that some of these new skills can be taken back into South Sudan, and applied there to reduce community conflict.

Added-value

Added-value can be considered at more than one level. There is the added-value provided by Oxfam IBIS to Oxfam Uganda, and the added-value provided by Oxfam Uganda to the RLOs. As far as the former is concerned, Oxfam Uganda staff stated that Oxfam IBIS has constantly encouraged them to move towards working with RLOs. This has enabled Oxfam Uganda to use funding in areas such as peacebuilding, Covid-19 response, livelihoods and advocacy, crucially, with RLOs taking a lead role. Oxfam Uganda staff further report that as a result of Oxfam IBIS support there has been an increase in Oxfam Uganda's commitment and motivation to build RLO capacity. Now, they consider RLOs as key allies to be included in Oxfam Uganda proposals, rather than merely implementors of projects. Oxfam IBIS has also helped Oxfam Uganda with their thinking around the triple nexus, and has helped improve their gender action model at the household level.

From the point of view of RLO representatives, training and other forms of capacity development support have clearly played an important role in their development. All six RLO representatives interviewed reported receiving training from Oxfam directly, sometimes as part of an Oxfam project called ELNHA – Empowering Local and National Humanitarian Actors – and sometimes as members of an Oxfam support platform – the West Nile Humanitarian Platform.

Financial leverage has also been an important area of added-value. Both RLO representatives and Oxfam Uganda staff believe the development of RLOs under Oxfam has opened doors to other agencies, such as the World Food Programme. Oxfam Uganda staff are keen to ensure that any growth is sustainable, and have tried to build up the RLO capacity needed to attract and handle funding. Two RLO representatives interviewed stated that as a result of Oxfam's capacity development support they have been able to receive increased funding. This is because funders such as the EU are now confident that the RLOs can manage larger funds.

Two other key added-value areas mentioned were networking and advocacy. Five RLO representatives reported that they had been encouraged to work in partnerships and consortia, and three specifically mentioned the benefits of tapping into Oxfam's wider networks. Advocacy was also mentioned as a key area needing support. This is covered in the section on localisation.

RLO representatives also feel that partners have added-value to Oxfam.[xii] Key areas mentioned included enabling Oxfam projects to be delivered to hard-to-reach groups; contributing to Oxfam's peacebuilding work; increasing Oxfam's visibility with local partners and communities; providing stories for communications, reporting and fundraising proposals; and providing information to contribute to strategy development. One representative also mentioned supporting Oxfam's advocacy on the Charter for Change.

Localisation

As stated previously, Oxfam has tried to identify opportunities for refugee-led organisations and refugee activists to access regional and global advocacy spaces and other events which would have otherwise been unlikely or impossible. As an example, a video was provided to the evaluation team of Oxfam passing space on a panel at a Global Refugee Forum (GRF) conference to a refugee leader. As another example, the GRF in December 2019 contained an exhibit called "Refugees as Agents of Peace". This was organised collaboratively by HECA, Oxfam Uganda, and nine partner organisations doing peacebuilding work with South Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Victoria Nyoka, a South Sudanese refugee living in Uganda and working with an Oxfam Uganda partner organisation, travelled to Geneva to host the exhibit. At the exhibit, she shared information about the nine participating organisations and the activities they are supporting, such as: music, drama, sports, art, community dialogues, and awareness about the peace agreement. The exhibit provided an opportunity for Victoria and the participating organisations to share their work within a global platform, and increase awareness of the importance of refugee peacebuilding.[xiii]

Oxfam has also sought to engage refugee leaders in other kinds of international fora wherever possible. For example, when Oxfam IBIS (in collaboration with ActionAid Denmark and Save the Children Denmark) organised two Localisation in Practice workshops for all Danish NGOs in 2019, representatives of YSAT were invited to attend. Led by Oxfam's HECA Advocacy Advisor (funded and supported by Oxfam IBIS), Oxfam have also supported South Sudanese activists to document and publish their own experiences. Examples include articles written in Al Jazeera and African Arguments, and a recently published anthology of poetry and

short stories called *'No Time to Mourn: An Anthology by South Sudanese Women'*, which was the product of a writing workshop organised by Oxfam and FEMRITE (funded via Oxfam IBIS). (This is available to buy, as a way of supporting income generation).[xiv]

Another example concerns the Africa Refugee Summit. Oxfam's RIC (Rights in Crisis) adviser played a lead role in organising an Africa Refugee Summit that took place in Addis Ababa in late 2019. It was convened by the Global Refugee Led Network, with support from Oxfam and Independent Diplomat, and was partly funded by Oxfam IBIS. 72 refugee leaders participated in the meeting. For many refugees, it was their first time leaving their host countries since they had sought asylum. According to Oxfam IBIS staff, this kind of convening of refugees has never happened before. The participants had extensive discussions and were able to identify challenges, propose solutions, and create an initial draft advocacy strategy.

Oxfam Uganda has also supported the Uganda Refugee Engagement Forum (REF). This is a body of refugee leaders, established in 2018 to facilitate engagement of refugees on national policy issues. The third REF meeting was held in June 2019 in Kampala, bringing together 33 refugee leaders. This meeting was again supported by Oxfam through IBIS funds. Many other examples were supplied to the evaluation team.

As well as encouraging voice and access, resource mobilisation is another important component of localisation. In this context, Oxfam has supported RLOs to raise funds in many ways, including an Oxfam IBIS Christmas Campaign in 2020; supporting YSAT to develop its own campaign around facemasks; and supporting RLOs to apply for grants outside of Oxfam. These activities have all been carried out in order to help RLOs become more financially sustainable. This is not easy as RLOs cannot access EU funding because they are not registered in a member state. Oxfam IBIS staff stated that they would like to be able to do more to support resource mobilisation, but have no particular ability to open doors on philanthropic funding.

Another aspect of localisation concerns how far Oxfam IBIS and other affiliates are willing to commit towards greater autonomy of local Oxfam offices. Oxfam Uganda staff stated that they see a notable difference in the way Oxfam IBIS behaves compared to other affiliates, and they appreciate Oxfam IBIS staff's passion and commitment to RLOs and the localisation agenda. This contrasts with some other affiliates which prefer to work with national-level NGOs. From their point of view, Oxfam IBIS staff say they work with other like-minded affiliates, such as Oxfam GB, which are also pushing the localisation agenda. Oxfam as a confederation has globally committed to the Grand Bargain, and Oxfam Uganda staff have also been keen to push the localisation agenda. This means there is a fair momentum behind localisation within the programme.

In the future, Oxfam Uganda staff would like to provide RLOs with increased funding, and support longer-term interventions. They would also like to see more strategic relationships develop, and would like to provide further support for RLO representatives to act as advocates for refugees within Uganda, as well as networking with other RLOs in Southwest Uganda and across the border into South Sudan. Ultimately, strengthened RLO networks may enhance refugees' ability to act as advocates with government structures, donors and INGOs.

New forms of partnership

It is part of the remit of the programme to work with local structures such as women's groups, youth groups, churches, and PTAs, in order to promote community ownership and mitigate conflict. This can create problems for Oxfam, which finds it much easier to partner with well-established NGOs that mirror its own organisational structure. Oxfam Uganda has struggled with this at times, because the local structures it wants to support have legitimacy, but are not necessarily registered. Oxfam Uganda staff still see big risks in involving Oxfam with small organisations.

When working with RLOs, some of the same challenges apply. In the past, Oxfam has tended to implement humanitarian work directly. But if it wants to transfer power and resources to local organisations it needs to work in different ways. However, this can be difficult. For example, RLOs speak different languages and have different cultures, which makes it hard for them to work directly with donors. Equally, Oxfam Uganda staff do not necessarily know the language and culture of RLOs. Other challenges included weak internal compliance systems, particularly around finance, high turnover because staff are voluntary or on low pay, bureaucratic issues required by government (e.g. permits needed for official operation in refugee settlements), and limited ability for RLOs to match funding if this is a condition of the donor.

Consequently, in the initial stages of the programme, a lot of effort was focused on learning about ways of working with RLOs, understanding how best to handle accountability (and balancing this with values such as empowerment and inclusion) and thinking about how to take advantage of the environment within Uganda. Now, Oxfam Uganda staff believe Oxfam has learnt that it is possible to work in partnership with RLOs and build their capacity, and want to think about how this learning can be scaled to their work with refugees in other areas of Uganda, such as Congolese refugees in Southwest Uganda. They also want to influence how

other donors and/or INGOs can better support RLOs. As one member of staff put it, "When we began, we were sceptical. RLOs were mainly just getting activity-based funding. We were not sure of their systems and felt there was risk of misuse of funding. After initial engagement we felt they could do good work. We … are now confident that they can compete for funding on national level."

However, the formalisation (NGO-isation) of community activists, although sometimes a good thing, can sometimes swamp well-intentioned people in mountains of paperwork, and in one or two situations that has happened during the programme. On the peacebuilding side Oxfam has tried to enable flexibility, but the RLOs want even more. As a large confederation, Oxfam is not necessarily set up for that degree of flexibility. According to staff it sometimes resembles an oil tanker rather than a speedboat.

When asked what specific challenges they faced, virtually all the RLOs pointed to delays in receiving funding, and the nature of small-scale funding for short projects, making it hard to recruit and keep high-quality staff. The delays in funding disbursement – often of up to two months – can prevent RLOs from completing activities on time. Other issues raised included the lack of flexibility of funds, limited feedback on reports, the desire to be in a strategic relationship rather than a project relationship, and (in one case) the occasional tendency of Oxfam staff to act in a superior manner.

Convening and networking

Networking is considered a big part of the programme (see also comments under added-value) and takes on different dimensions. For example, there are regular partner learning events, especially around the current partners, who are close geographically. Support is also provided via a national umbrella organisation, with some advocacy in Kampala. There is also a lot of informal networking around partners. This is an area where Oxfam feels it could improve, specifically learning about the dynamics between partners, and tapping into existing networks and relations. Oxfam is also trying to network across borders (Ethiopia, South Sudan etc.) but this can only be virtual at the moment because of the Covid-19 situation.

Innovation

The programme was not funded through Danish MFA innovation money. However, the Unyoke accompaniment program is funded through a separate Danida innovation fund, also channelled through Oxfam IBIS. Working closely with a cohort of 13 young South Sudanese refugees living in Uganda, the Unyoke Foundation is engaged on a long-term process of accompanying and enabling young leaders to identify, devise, and advance peacebuilding initiatives that aim to transform their societies, without being bound by formal institutional approaches to peacebuilding. According to a learning and reflection document produced during the project, *"the initiative has some characteristics of innovation … young people are rarely afforded the opportunity to identify, devise, and lead peacebuilding initiatives, whether at local or national level. Typically marginalised in or from formal processes, or not provided the space or resources to reflect and chart their own way forward, there are a variety of examples which show that standard practice is to limit youth involvement to a range of tokenistic approaches. This marginalisation is often compounded by other factors, including experiences of displacement and gender."*

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Lessons have been included throughout the case study.

Attachments

None.

[xii] In practice, RLOs are unlikely to distinguish between Oxfam Uganda and Oxfam IBIS.

[xiii] This and other examples were confirmed in discussions with the RLOs.

[xiv] Links and URLs to all these documents and audio-visual materials have been supplied to the evaluation team.

Oxfam's Support to Peacebuilding in Mali	
Name of Danish CSO	Oxfam IBIS
Name of Southern partner(s)	Council and Support for Basic Education (CAEB) Association of Youth for Active Citizenship and Democracy (AJCAD) Action Mali Youth Association (AJA)
Country	Mali
Relevant Theme(s)	Localisation; Working with youth groups
Project / Programme name	"Young people's rights to education and participation in peacebuilding in Mali"
Period	January 2018 to December 2021
Lot(s)	Civil Society

Background

Since 2012, the political and security crisis in Mali has weakened social structures in many parts of the country due to the insecurity caused by attacks, robberies, targeted assassinations, and abductions of individuals. While insecurity started in the North, it has now spread to the centre, and the security situation is unpredictable in many regions of the country. The crisis has slowed democratic, governance and decentralisation processes and the situation is characterised by limited political dialogue, weak or non-existent citizen involvement and control, and a lack of accountability of government.

A peace agreement was signed in June 2015 between the government and rebel groups, and the Committee for Truth, Justice and Reconciliation (CVJR) was established. Globally, there are commitments to implementing the peace agreement, but major implementation challenges are occurring. The CVJR is criticised by Malian CSOs, amongst other things, for excluding civil society. Specifically, young women and men under 25, who account for 65% of the population, are excluded from participation in democratic and peace building processes.

The *"Young people's rights to education and participation in peacebuilding in Mali"* project aims to put education at the centre of building sustainable peace with social justice. Education, vocational training and skills development are believed to be key entry points for enabling and strengthening youth rights and capacities to contribute to peacebuilding and economic, social and political development in their communities, municipalities and at national level.

The project supports youth under 30 years of age to build capacities for peacebuilding in secondary schools, engage in accelerated learning and vocational training, and engage in economic activities within their own organisations, such as savings groups. The overall objective of the project is to support young people in Mali to realise their full potential and become active citizens, enhancing their rights to quality education, participation in peacebuilding and influence over decision-making processes that affect their lives.

The project was formulated through continuous dialogue with Oxfam in Mali, relevant ministries and CSOs. The local partners, CAEB, AJCAD and AJA, are experienced Malian NGOs working in education, community-based approaches, young people's employment, conflict prevention and management, and advocacy:

- CAEB is a recognised Malian organisation with expertise and experience in citizenship education and strengthening women and young people in matters of citizenship. It works within the framework of the protection and promotion of women and young people's potential to enable them to be part of the dynamics of influence for development.
- AJCAD works with women and young people to strengthen their capacities in the fields of citizenship and human rights, and promotes young people's participation in professional lives.
- AJA is an association which supports vocational training for young people, including supporting professional skills.

Partner organisations work closely with youth representatives locally and the relevant ministries to strengthen vocational training and qualifications that are linked to meaningful employment opportunities. In addition, youth organisations at local and national levels are supported to identify advocacy interventions and strategies for taking youth participation in peacebuilding processes from community and municipality levels to the national level.

Summary of changes

On the education side, the project aims to bring about transformative education. Teachers are trained in secondary schools, lower secondary schools and accelerated centres, where young people can catch up and be re-inserted into the formal education system. Teachers are trained to support children in critical thinking. This is very different from what is normally seen in education in Mali. Oxfam Mali feels it has influenced the Ministry of Education in some areas so that it is now making more monitoring visits to schools, and is encouraging children-focused approaches, gender-sensitive approaches, and peacebuilding.

Oxfam's advocacy has also contributed to a new module on peace education being introduced by the Ministry in Mali's national curriculum. The module was first developed by UNICEF prior to the project, but it was not a complete module. When the project was developed, Oxfam Mali, together with AJCAD, AJA and CAEB, took on the module, and adapted it, introducing key elements around the active citizenship and participation of young people. Once the module was complete, training of trainers was conducted, and the modules were rolled out in schools, with the active support of the Ministry. Through this module, students have been taught about good citizenship, peacebuilding, governance, respect for the public good and democracy.

As part of this work, 32 Citizen Action Clubs (CLACs) have been formed, made up of 3,200 young men and women. They are encouraged and supported to take small-scale advocacy actions in their communities, relating to their rights and their participation in peacebuilding. These often make use of the involvement of young people in local groups, such as management associations, community health centres, local conflict management communities, and water resources management committees. For example, Oxfam Mali staff report that in one commune, young people have taken action with the City Council to develop an agreement defining pastoral corridors in order to avoid conflicts between breeders and farmers. In another example, youth advocated to acquire a space within the Town Hall that can house youth leisure initiatives.

Another aspect of the project involves encouraging women – who traditionally do not have much voice as part of Mali society – to talk amongst each other, support each other, and help reduce conflict within their own families and at community level. The whole project is designed to maximise the involvement of women and girls within the youth groups.

According to Oxfam Mali, a key rationale for the project is that young people are always actors in conflict. Even if they do not generate conflicts, they will fight in the conflict stage, often against their will. Frequently, the consequences of the conflict weigh more heavily on young people than on the elderly. Through this project young people are being supported to recognise that they can assert their rights and find their own solutions to conflict. According to Oxfam Mali staff, this is beginning to be acknowledged by wider communities, and people are starting to enrol young people in mediation bodies for stabilisation and conflict management.

Results at partner level

A central tool in Oxfam IBIS' approach to capacity development is the Change Triangle which links strengthening thematic competences, organisational capacity and advocacy skills right from the planning phase with civil society partners. Partnerships and programme initiatives start with a thorough context and risk analysis made in close collaboration with partners and allies in order to identify clear change objectives. Based on this, capacity development needs are identified and jointly agreed upon, distinguishing between local fragile partners and strong national or international partners.

According to AJA and CAEB, their capacity development needs were discussed with Oxfam Mali from the outset of the project, and the training, coaching and advice received from Oxfam IBIS has been very beneficial for their organisations and contributed to the positive results achieved by the project so far. They would however have liked to be offered more in-depth trainings, including on specific technical skills relating to video editing.

From Oxfam Mali's point of view, the main change observed in the partners is increased confidence. This partly comes from their role as managers of the project at community level, and also due to their important role as influencers of decision-makers at both national and international level. This was corroborated by CAEB and AJA during interviews (the third partner, AJCAD, was not available to interview[xv]). Both said they appreciated having been given the opportunity to lead on their area of expertise from the planning to the delivery of activities.

Links to wider results

By addressing the root causes and the need for social and professional integration of young people, the project addresses wider issues of insecurity and mobility. According to one of the partners, the context has changed in recent years: young people used to leave to look for a job, save some money and then return home. Now things are different. Young people leave for big cities or to other countries but there is also an

additional risk of jihadist groups offering them money to join them. The temptation can be great, and some are ready to risk their lives thinking that if they do not die, they will return home with a lot of money. One partner told us that they hear from people in the villages where activities are conducted that thanks to the project an increased number of young people are now choosing to stay.

In addition, based on interviews with local partners and Oxfam Mali, a number of conflicts in the communities have been resolved thanks to the actions and mediation carried out by young people involved in the project. For example, in the case of a land dispute at the community level, a group of young people who had received training through the project went into negotiations with concrete proposals, which helped to resolve the conflict. For young people this meant their point of view on a specific issue in their locality could be taken into account, while generally contributing to reducing tensions at a local level.

According to CAEB, local authorities have also reported that the project has helped them build better relationships with young people. By increasing dialogue and trust, better relationships with local authorities can benefit young people, enhancing their participation and influence on decision-making.

Added-value

According to Oxfam Mali and local partners interviewed, Oxfam IBIS added value to the programme through its expertise in peacebuilding and gender-sensitive approaches. On the former, the main Oxfam 2019 report states that there has been a lot of demand from partners and country offices across Africa to strengthen their capacity on peacebuilding in the face of challenges related to violent conflict. This is an area that Oxfam IBIS specialises in. Oxfam IBIS promotes peacebuilding integrated into programmes. There is a peacebuilding team with specialists (who have helped in this project) and they elaborate different tools for conflict sensitive analysis and contextual analysis. They also worked with Oxfam Mali to develop outcomes and conflict sensitive indicators and to build the capacity of partners on peacebuilding. AJA felt this had added value to its work and said it now integrates peacebuilding approaches in other areas of its work. On the latter, CAEB mentioned Oxfam IBIS had played a key role in ensuring a gender-sensitive approach to the project and activities and had organised a workshop with partners on the topic.

CAEB and AJA, both mentioned that Oxfam Mali had added value to their work through the visibility it provided them at a national level: "Oxfam has many local partners, and all these partners now know [us]".

As far as the added-value of partners is concerned, CAEB and AJA thought they had added value to the project by bringing in their own approaches to their area of expertise. CAEB was at the heart of the initiative of the Citizens' Learning Spaces, that provides accelerated training to young people and trains teachers to deliver the training module in classrooms. The vocational training strategy and of the 'tutoring format' was developed by AJA. In the current context of insecurity, it is not possible to organise gatherings of large groups. AJA's strategy was to strengthen the capacity of a 'resource person' in the villages or communities (selected based on their skills), who then delivers the training to small groups of 5 people. This created a more secure environment for young people to attend the trainings.

Localisation

To the extent that two of the main objectives of the project are to enable young people to be *"represented in influential organisations, bodies decisions and movements related to the consolidation of peace in their communities, municipalities and at regional and national levels"* and to *"strengthen their rights to education quality, vocational training, participation in peacebuilding and influence in decision making that affects their lives"* there are clearly important elements of localisation down to community level in the project.

In the Theory of Change for the project, Oxfam states that it promotes partnership as a *"mutual relationship based on trust and joint commitment and, above all, aiming at achieving impact and change"*. Based on conversations with partners, this seems to be reflected in the partnership in practice. The two partners interviewed felt their relationship with Oxfam was one of equals, and that Oxfam always "comes in support but never in contradiction". Partners would have however liked there to be more direct exchanges between Oxfam IBIS and them as a lot of the communication is currently done through Oxfam Mali.

Localisation can also be seen in the way Oxfam sets up steering committees for the project and encourages decision-making. The Head of Oxfam Mali worked for Oxfam in Pakistan between 2007-12, and thinks that Oxfam IBIS has quite a different approach to other Oxfam offices. On re-joining Oxfam in Mali, she sees a key difference in the fact that Oxfam Mali works with local partners on proposal development, rather than asking for proposals. Partners are being actively involved in the identification of needs as well as solutions. This was confirmed by partners who said they were involved at all stages of the project.

According to partners, their roles and Oxfam's are very complementary. Local partners have been involved in all the planning and strategy development meetings and have been given a lot of autonomy in the design and delivery of activities: "The trust we have been given; this is really the difference [with projects' funded by other donors]".

However, based on interviews, partners have experienced consistent issues linked to delays in the transfer of funds. This has impacted activities and slowed down the delivery. This is a particularly important issue because of the lack of flexibility in terms of budget spending, with unspent funds not allowed to be carried over from one year to the other. Because of that, partners said they had seen the overall budget allocated to the project decrease year by year.

In response, Oxfam IBIS explained that the process that precedes the transfer of funds includes a number of steps involving various levels from Oxfam IBIS to the partners. They said there was a slight delay compared to Oxfam's normal procedures due to delays in budget development and approval, which were probably linked to change in staff in Oxfam in Mali and in Oxfam IBIS, lockdown and staff working from home, both in Denmark and in Mali.

New forms of partnership

According to local partners a key difference in this programme is that young people were put at the centre and were encouraged to defend their own rights. This created a very different dynamic. In the past, advocacy projects for young people have always been run by adults.

Two of the partners – AJCAD and AJA – are primarily organisations of youth (defined as between 14 and 30 years old). According to Oxfam Mali, it is important to work with youth and youth organisations because young people are much more aware of their living situation today: "It is not out of cheerfulness that these young people often set off on the roads to Europe."

With young people in Mali making up nearly two thirds of the population, working with them so that they can change their situations helps the whole community. If this type of project prospers and many young people in Mali manage to benefit from these skills and capacity building this will hopefully result in more sustainable development.

Regarding the challenges, sometimes young people can be instrumentalised. According to Oxfam Mali, young people who are in the grip of politics and political parties can try to move an agenda forward. One of the challenges of working with them is that they think that everything is about political action. Another challenge is that that there is a limit to the number of people that can access the services offered by the project. Young people who fail to enter the program may be jealous, and this can create frustration.

Convening and networking

Convening and networking is not an explicit aspect of this project. However, the two local partners interviewed mentioned that their organisations' network in Mali had been strengthened thanks to the visibility provided by Oxfam. One partner mentioned that working with Oxfam on the project allowed them to expand their work to geographical areas where they had not worked in the past and to expand their network of trainers.

Innovation

This project does not form part of Oxfam's innovation work under the 10% rule. However, some of the ways in which the project worked was described by partners as innovative. For example, a study was conducted on the perception of young people on citizenship, conflicts and issues of social cohesion, and young people themselves collected the data. This was suggested by Oxfam and the young people concerned received the support of a consultant to develop questionnaires.

Lessons learned, conclusions and recommendations

Partners state that the complementary of the activities they conduct has been key to the success of the project so far. In their views, it is necessary to work upstream on the aspects of peace and security because the vocational training and integration of young people cannot succeed if there is no security. The advocacy on the leadership of young people is key to strengthen their capacities and their interest. According to a representative from AJA, the Citizens Learning Spaces provide a strong basis for young people taking part in the vocational training: "They are already engaged, ready to change their life and to be an actor in the consolidation of peace and social cohesion."

The partners believe there is great potential in scaling up the project to reach even more young people in other regions. Additionally, one partner believes more could be done to strengthen the professional integration of young people. Limited resources are currently allocated to professional integration and the partner believes that this could improve the impact of the project.

Attachments

None.

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xv The case study only includes the views of two of the three partners. AJCAD was not available to interview.

Save the Children in the Horn of Africa	
Name of Danish CSO	Save the Children Denmark (Red Barnet)
Name of Southern partner(s)	Horn of Africa Youth Network (HoAYN)
Countries	Horn of Africa (Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia and South Sudan. Later Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somaliland and Tanzania were added too)
Relevant Theme(s)	New forms of partnership; Working with youth groups; Localisation
Project / Programme name	Regional CSOs and youth networks contribute to children and youth's rights to protection and participation
Period	2018 – 2021
Lot(s)	Civil Society

Background

According to project documents and interviews, the Horn of African Youth Network (HoAYN) came into being as the result of a perception that there was a gap in the region. Save the Children (SC) had previously primarily focused on children (defined as below 18 years old), but there has been a growing realisation of the importance of the group older than that (youth are defined as up to 30 or 35 years old), which is reflected in global and regional SC strategies. According to one interviewee, youth number 270 million in the region, representing a large demographic in a context where population growth rates remain high.

In 2018, SC scoped organisations working on youth issues. They found that the Horn of Africa (HoA) lacked a platform for youth-focussed CSOs (including youth-led organisations) to share learning with each other and to advocate with regional bodies like Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the African Union (AU).

At the same time, IGAD itself did not have a framework for engaging youth ("IGAD is a very closed space for youth" according to one Kenyan member). Previously, CSOs reported they had written some emails to the IGAD Secretariat, but had no contacts there and did not receive a response. At the individual country level, some countries were signatories to the African Youth Charter, but there was a lack of awareness, following up on implementation and holding governments to account on youth-focussed issues.

This programme was expected to influence policy processes and outcomes making the HoA a better place for youth, who face pressing issues in terms of education, employment, migration and conflict. Ultimately the programme aimed to enable youth in the region to engage in decisions that affect them and to thrive. According to the Theory of Change (ToC) the programme intended to achieve this by:

- strengthening the advocacy capacities of regional CSOs and youth networks;
- generating gender-sensitive evidence;
- capturing youth priorities in AU, IGAD and HoA governments' decisions and policy outcomes; and
- strengthening state accountability around children and youth rights at the regional level.

In practical terms, this meant establishing HoAYN itself and engaging with CSOs and youth networks in countries of the region, originally including Kenya, Uganda, Somalia, Ethiopia and South Sudan, to which Sudan, Eritrea, Djibouti (home to the IGAD Secretariat), Somaliland and Tanzania were later added.

Save the Children Denmark (SCD) supports the programme through the Save the Children International (SCI) Regional Office in Nairobi. SCD's overall funding through local partners has been at relatively low levels in recent years – the MFA Review and Capacity Assessment of SCD in 2019 estimated it at just 6% of total expenditure. SCD feels the real figure was somewhat higher, but recognises that is has been low and wants to support the localisation agenda, of which this programme is one example.

Summary of changes

As the annual programme report states, and confirmed in interviews, HoAYN and youth network partners have supported the development and lobbied for the adoption of the IGAD Youth Engagement Strategy, which is a framework for driving youth empowerment in the Horn of Africa region. Once adopted, the Strategy is intended to provide a practical guide and framework for accountability for key stakeholders, including IGAD Partner States, IGAD departments and organs, CSO partners and others working on youth empowerment in the HOA region. HoAYN is now recognised in IGAD meetings (and secured a meeting with IGAD's Executive Secretary), and have been brought in to discuss such issues as migration. Where youth participation was previously tokenistic, there is now more scope for more meaningful engagement.

Another important initiative that was mentioned in an interview was producing Guidelines for Youth on Peace Processes. This is significant in a region where there is damaging conflict (e.g. South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia), where youth are often belligerents, while also having the potential to bring about positive changes. One informant in South Sudan noted that youth (who are often unemployed) have become a destabilising force and need to be positively engaged.

An observer from the Danish Embassy (who has followed the programme since its inception) felt that HoAYN has been good at forging partnerships with intergovernmental and governmental bodies, which youth agencies had previously found hard to do, particularly in relation to influencing legislation.

Actual policies which directly affect youth are implemented more at the national level. In Kenya for example, members were able to come up with a position paper on the African Charter, through which the voice of youth could be articulated in the national parliament. They also enabled youth to participate in public consultations during election campaigns (virtually, due to Covid-19). According to the Mid-Term Learning Workshop Report, members also lobbied for the review and adoption of the Kenya National Youth Development Policy, which was subsequently passed by cabinet ministers.

In South Sudan, the African Youth Charter has not been ratified, and engagements with government bodies has revealed that there is little awareness of youth issues and a lack of implementation of official policies and initiatives focused on youth (even though various commitments to youth featured in the Revitalised Peace Agreement in South Sudan). While advocacy will take time to yield results, the collaborative HoAYN approach is creating an environment where youth can become more aware and youth organisations can exert more influence.

Another example featuring in a Learning Workshop Report is from Somaliland, where local youth networks successfully lobbied for the review and adoption of the National Youth Policy, which addresses issues around youth unemployment and recreation (amongst other issues) and was passed by cabinet ministers in 2020.

It was not possible to verity nor assess the contribution of the programme to these reported achievements, but participants certainly felt that SCD-supported intervention had played a significant role.

Results at partner level

According to interviews, the Save the Children regional office essentially created the network. The first step was to convene likely youth organisations in Nairobi, following which HoAYN was established in November 2018. Since its foundation, it has expanded from five countries to ten countries (as already mentioned), while its membership has grown from nine to thirty organisations. According to interviews, members joined for a range of reasons, both in terms of wanting to scale up the potential for advocacy, while also hoping to secure more benefits for themselves.

HoAYN was originally under another organisation (according to an interview with HoAYN itself). However, there was a wish to create a lasting institution, going beyond a project. Although it is now three years old, one interviewee described it still being at a nascent stage, with heavy reliance on SC funding, although another donor is now also on board (Terres des Hommes Netherlands). It has a Secretariat in Nairobi with 5-10 staff (including interns), and an Advisory Board to which the Secretariat is accountable. HoAYN has now developed its first strategic plan with the support of the programme and is working to expand its funding base.

Capacity building initiatives targeted the regional CSO partners and HoAYN was focused on two thematic areas in 2020: child safeguarding and advocacy in restrictive environments. It yielded positive results according to reports and interviews, with an increase in capacity on the part of the network and its members to undertake effective advocacy on youth and child rights.

HoAYN in turn established the Inter Agency Working Group (IAWG) on Youth Empowerment through Regional Mechanisms in 2019. This brought together international donor partners which are implementing children and youth programmes in East and Horn of Africa, such as Oxfam, ActionAid, ACT Alliance, Plan International, Terre des Hommes Netherlands and Saferworld, as well as SCI. HoAYN provides a Secretariat for the smooth functioning of the IAWG.

Links to wider results

From interviews, as well as programme documents, the partnership approach is intrinsic to the wider results that are being sought. Previously, it was hard for individual CSOs in the region to engage with regional bodies, as confirmed in several interviews. This has only become possible by creating a regional body, backed up by the contacts and influence of the donor to help open doors.

Practical impacts for youth will be manifested more at the national level. In addition to the leverage regional process can provide in national contexts, HoAYN is also linking and supporting youth-focussed organisations in each country (some in Kenya and South Sudan confirmed this in interviews), while the regional platform facilitates learning between countries.

Added-value

As has been described, SC has created HoAYN, so in this sense its added-value is clearly evident. Beyond this, the funding has undeniably been a vital factor, which is particularly appreciated in the current climate (with the cuts from donors like the UK having a strongly negative impact for the sector in the region). HoAYN has been highly dependent on SC funding in its early years, which remains the case despite some (partially successful) efforts to diversify its resource base.

SC has also played an important role in supporting capacity development in such areas as project design, proposal writing, advocacy, internal processes and systems, including strong financial management as well as resource mobilisation (which is particularly appreciated by members). An external observer noted that there had been a lot of 'handholding' from SC's side, but not in a way which has diminished the agency of HoAYN.

From the partner perspective, they appreciate the support that SCD has provided, which enabled a new network and advocacy initiatives that would not otherwise have been possible. According to interviews, they have experienced some issues in terms of when funding is released (sometimes late in relation to workplans), reporting, and getting timely feedback (e.g. on the strategic plan).

Another benefit cited by HoAYN members is their ability to relate to each other. For example, Kenyan members stated that they had now established useful contacts with counterparts in Somalia and Uganda.

Localisation

While SC instigated HoAYN from the outset, the declared intention (from documents and interviews) is to establish a local institution, which is able to stand on its own feet. As part of this, HoAYN has established an Advisory Board to which it is accountable, with key experts on child rights as well as SC itself. This provides guidance on policy and issues like safeguarding.

For planning the next phase, SCD has provided some parameters (e.g. they want to see impact supported by evidence, and is less keen on salaries alone without impact), but within these, design is being led by HoAYN itself and the partner organisations. One interviewee described how all participants want to see their own objectives incorporated, but are able to resolve their priorities through a process of dialogue and compromise. One challenge is that with advocacy work, it is hard to track impact, particularly over a relatively short timeframe. There are monthly meetings to give feedback on how the partnership is developing, as well as an annual partners meeting.

New forms of partnership

SC has previously engaged with and supported other regional bodies focused on children. However, this is the first time that it is working in this way to create a youth-focused regional network (which was lacking in the region).

Convening and networking

The essence of this intervention is to support convening and network, as has already been described. It is bringing together organisations focused on youth issues at the regional level in order to influence regional bodies, while also encouraging them to collaborate on priority issues at the national level.

Innovation

The intervention is not new in global terms, but is clearly trying to fill a specific gap – the lack of a regional network of youth organisations, able to advocate with regional bodies like IGAD and then support national level processes. This was new for SCD too, but reflects increased emphasis within SC as a whole on this slightly older age-group – as reflected in SC's global and regional strategies.

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

This initiative is still at an early stage, but has certainly managed to attract the interest of local organisations, and has successfully been established at regional and national levels. This has led to constructive engagement with IGAD, which has the potential to yield concrete results for this important demographic.

SCD is appreciated by partners for its approach as a donor. It is seen as similar to SC Sweden in that there is a lot of support for building local organisations, considerable flexibility and is genuinely focussed on localisation, with children and youth meaningfully participating. One interesting approach that emerged in interviews was that there is now a plan to provide (limited) core grant support, which is untied to specific activities and outcomes. SC Sweden (with encouragement from SIDA) is going further and seeking to expand its core grant support to local organisations in the latest round of funding.

Linking with the Danish Embassy has been useful, particularly since an important aspect of the programme has been seeking to build relations with governmental and intergovernmental bodies, where official contacts can help open doors.

A key learning has been the importance of finding ways to adapt programming during the Covid-19 period for continued delivery on children and youth rights, while keeping people safe. Technology has been an important tool to continue trainings and other engagements through the past year. But as the SC learning workshop discussed, it does hamper direct engagement with local communities and grassroots partners, which are not tech-savvy or lack internet connectivity.

Assessing and attributing the impact of such interventions is hard since governments and intergovernmental bodies already have (on paper) youth-focussed priorities and policies. This makes it hard to determine what the programme achieved as compared to what might have happened anyway. Also, the nature of advocacy work is that it usually needs long term pressure, and can be put aside when more pressing official concerns (e.g. dealing with Covid-19) emerge. This is not to bring into question claims that informants have made about outcomes, but to underline the challenges in proving them in concrete terms.

As this programme involves a number of new aspects, it will be important to document learnings as they emerge, which will be useful in other spheres. Sustainability is an issue in the sense that the cost of such regional bodies is substantial, and it is likely that continued external support will be necessary for the foreseeable future.

Attachments

- CRG IGAD Youth Engagement Strategy – One of the results of HoAYN's work.
- Save the Children (2020), Danida Funded Lot CIV and Lot Hum in East and Horn of Africa Region: Mid Term Learning and Reflection Workshop – 8-10th September 2020.

WWF Denmark support to WWF Kenya	
Name of Danish CSO	WWF Denmark (WWF DK)
Name of Southern partner(s)	WWF Kenya (WWF KE)
Country	Kenya
Relevant Theme(s)	Innovation; Working with non-traditional partners; Convening or supporting Southern networks, platforms and alliances; Localisation
Project / Programme name	Kenya Innovation Programme: Greenhouse Sessions (GHS)
Period	2019 to 2020
Lot(s)	Civil Society

Background

Since 2018, WWF Denmark (DK) has been supporting an Innovation Programme in Kenya under its Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) with Danida. WWF DK has adopted an Innovation Ecosystem Approach, which entails an end-to-end process of problem identification through to solution implementation. The approach commences with a "Create" phase which aims to build an enabling environment to support innovation, particularly through connecting 'unusual allies' with shared goals to address specific socio-environmental challenges. One methodology used in the first phase of this innovation approach has been the Greenhouse Sessions, which were launched under the Kenya Innovation Program in 2020, led by WWF Kenya (KE) and implemented by Amani Institute Kenya with support from WWF DK.[xvi] The Greenhouse Sessions (GHS) were conducted with a dual aim of establishing WWF KE as a thought leader in innovation to address socio-environmental challenges, and fostering long- and short-term partnerships and collaboration between WWF KE and a range of local partners (e.g. corporates, innovators, start-ups) which could lead to novel approaches to address priority socio-environmental challenges.

Between July and December 2020, six Greenhouse Sessions were organised. Each session included the showcasing of innovation solutions, a panel debate, a Recognition / Acceleration Series (presenting start-ups and innovative solutions), next steps and follow up, and, finally, the publication of blog articles on the GHS website. In total, 463 participants from a range of backgrounds (e.g. business, academia, think tanks, CBOs, CSOs and government), as well as WWF staff, took part in the six sessions. These covered topics such as the future of plastics, food, cities, education, forests and wildlife.

Sixteen innovations were showcased at the GHS, and after each session participants could nominate 'Innovators' (i.e. companies or organisations) with the most promising innovative approaches to socio-environmental issues. A tangible action plan for participants and WWF KE was also formulated after each session. In addition, ten 'Innovators' (private mainstream companies as well as smaller social enterprises) received support in the form of tailored training and mentoring – including in leadership and management – from the Amani Institute (a social entrepreneur company).

The main challenges in implementing the GHS included a long lead-up process and the Covid-19 pandemic, which delayed the entire process while GHS had to be converted to virtual events. That said, holding virtual sessions proved conducive as the sessions had higher attendance with a more diverse range of participants than anticipated. 40-50 participants were expected, and 70-80 attended, including from outside Nairobi.

Summary of changes

WWF KE set out to position itself within the wider innovation space in Kenya as an innovation hub to address challenges affecting people and nature, in particular in Nairobi where innovation hubs focus on technology development, social enterprising and humanitarian work amongst other things. The WWF KE Innovation Programme focuses on both mindset change and technology development, and on building capacity within WWF KE and other actors on innovation. The GHS brought together more than 400 participants (though possibly some were repeat attendees) and, after each session, rewarded one or two Innovators. The ten rewarded Innovators were then allowed to choose between various leadership and business development trainings offered by Amani Institute. The support was designed to assist the organisations in strategy development, as well as developing the right people, systems and structures to support the strategy. For some of the Innovators it was the first time they had been able to call upon an external facilitator due to financial constraints. For example, Mwangaza Light, a clean energy distributor nominated for innovative education on environment conservation, was able to take part in a Design Thinking training. Following the training, Mwangaza Light introduced a new approach to enhance productivity within sales, which was then

also used by its management team to grow business operations. The capacity building of Innovators is still ongoing, although this GHS component has not yet been evaluated.

Currently, four small start-up companies have been supported as part of WWF KE's acceleration track under its broader Innovation Programme. The prototypes are offered technical support as well as seed funding (one in gaming-virtual reality, two in conservation using renewable energy, and one in social impact change (plastic waste)). It is notable that these four start-ups were identified through a WWF KE project on sustainable production and consumption in the Rift Valley (an EU-funded programme) that led to the design of an innovation component on sustainable production. According to WWF, it is too early to evaluate the impact of such innovations on the identified socio-economic challenges.

Based on the success of GHS 2020 sessions, WWF KE has extended the GHS to include six sessions in 2021, and has expanded the collaboration with Amani Institute to involve co-creation and co-facilitation of these sessions. All participants and Innovators from the 2020 sessions will be invited for the 2021 sessions.

As a key feature of the Innovation Ecosystem, GHS has been important in branding and establishing WWF KE as a leading CSO in local innovation, involving the private sector as well as leading entrepreneurs and thinkers around conservation, and aiming to resolve specific challenges related to urban development, food security, forests, plastic waste etc.

Results at partner level

The Kenya Innovation Programme is part of WWF KE's Biodiversity, Research and Innovation (BRI) Department, and has been supported by an Innovation strategist, two project officers (part-time on innovation), an intern (full-time), as well as the heads of BRI and Conservation. According to WWF DK staff, this small team has helped build capacity within WWF KE and has created a more innovative lens on project design. This has led to some inspiring results, such as prototyping and co-creation. This has manifested, for example, in the design of two new DMDP funded projects which have introduced innovative solutions to create value from plastic waste and provide access to new off-grid refrigeration solutions to communities in coastal areas.

Some other specific changes stemming from the WWF KE's Innovation Programme include a broadening of the scope of work within conservation (such as development of an agritech App for small-scale farmers); the scope of partners (for example plastic waste recycling companies); and the way of addressing socio-environmental challenges (for example promoting waste recycling to create income opportunities and decent jobs in collection, sorting and processing of plastic).[xvii] Further, in 2019, the Kenya Innovation Programme supported two innovators to develop Apps for small-scale Kenyan farmers to enhance productivity in sustainable ways. WWF KE believes it has also managed to convene quite talented actors around innovation on conservation. According to WWF KE, this has created a lot of interest across the WWF network in reaching out to WWF KE on issues related to innovation. This work relates broadly to WWF's mandate on conservation.

WWF DK is starting to see that WWF KE's mindset and culture has changed, and that it is demonstrating more confidence in engaging with the private sector. For WWF KE, innovation is about mindset change and technology, and it believes multi-disciplinary teams are necessary for innovation.

WWF KE innovation interventions have, in the view of staff, become more or less independent from SPA funding. They have attracted other funding sources, and are currently co-funded through WWF International, with several donors pitching in. Notably, WWF KE has made innovation part of its strategic plan for 2021-2030.

Links to wider results

WWF KE is the local partner to WWF DK, and is responsible for the Innovation Programme activities including GHS. These sessions spurred a lot of interest from social and non-profit enterprises, which are new partners to WWF KE. Several of the solutions are being promoted as start-ups and are also relevant to WWF KE's ongoing work. The GHS have also expanded the collaboration between WWF KE and Amani Institute, including plans to work closer with the Innovators trained by the institute. There is an intention to build closer linkages between WWF KE, the institute and other actors, with the potential to scale up innovative environmental conservation.

If some of the innovations are successful, they could lead to more widespread scaling of novel approaches to conservation, and eventually sustainable impacts in peoples' lives resulting from changes in areas such as urban development, food security, renewable energy, forests protection, and treatment of plastic waste.

Added-value

WWF DK reported having commenced its innovation journey in 2018. WWF KE has now started to mainstream innovation into its organisational culture, and is interested in continuous capacity building by WWF DK and shared lesson learning. WWF KE particularly values the capacity building by WWF DK on designing and implementing the GHS, including close communication with the project officer in WWF DK on emerging concerns of a programmatic or budgetary nature.

WWF KE has also appreciated WWF DK's flexibility. In an interview, WWF KE staff gave as an example WWF DK's flexibility when it came to reprogramming the in-person GHS sessions into virtual sessions during the Covid-19 pandemic, with attention being put on the opportunities of virtual sessions rather than complaining about the required change in the original project document. WWF KE staff believe that the partnership has led to the development of a flexible and more valuable approach to innovation, in which WWF KE has taken a leading role.

WWF KE staff also emphasised the ease of working with WWF DK and Danida funding in comparison to other European donor agencies. Because of this, the disruption caused by the Covid-19 pandemic did not bring the project implementation to a halt, and WWF DK encouraged reprogramming based on justification and conversation. This proved to be valuable, for example with the adaptation of the GHS from the planned physical meetings of about 40 people to virtual sessions, which reached almost twice as many people as initially foreseen, including people based outside Nairobi.

In return, WWF KE staff believe it has offered WWF DK a partner with high implementation competence and outreach to try out, and report on, innovative approaches to environmental conservation.

Localisation

WWF KE staff believe that WWF DK appreciates that each WWF partner is different and "trusts that we will make the right decisions" within an agreed framework of responsibilities. Specifically, WWF KE staff mentioned their high degree of decision-making in the management of financial resources, including making budgetary changes within the agreed framework. WWF KE also notes that, in cases of delay in project implementation, WWF DK's attitude is "how can we help?" This shows a willingness to actually help understand and resolve the problem at hand.

WWF KE staff also expressed satisfaction with the extent of localisation in relation to the project design and tailoring of methodologies. For example, for the Moonshot Challenge (an annual event within WWF) useful guidelines were developed at the international level but the specific topic for the challenge was left up to the local WWF partner. Once the local WWF partner had identified the topic, they used the 'Community First' toolkit to interact with stakeholders at community level to understand their pressing issues. In 2019 the focus of a Moonshot Challenge was on small-scale farmers in Naivasha. Out of the four winners, two digital tools have been put into commercialisation, and are being used by the farmers to enhance productivity in an environmentally friendly manner.

New forms of partnership

The Kenya Innovation Programme has showcased how key socio-environmental challenges can be addressed through innovation methodologies. It has also contributed to broadening views on 'who' can contribute to environment conservation, and 'how' to make effective environment conservation: for example, looking beyond the traditional conservation partners to also include entities such as Amani Institute that can enhance innovation within WWF KE and the wider conservation space, or promoting solar cooling facilities to fishermen on the coast to reduce waste of natural resources.

The expanded scope of work and use of new technologies implemented with new partners have potential for more effective environment conservation, yet it also presents challenges. For example, private sector partners work with different rationalities and speed than non-profit organisations such as WWF KE, and new clean energy solutions may take longer to develop to a market price acceptable to the target group. Furthermore, the disruption of the Covid-19 pandemic, especially travel restrictions for WWF KE to meet with targeted communities, presented challenges to the implementation of new kinds of environment conservation projects with new partners. Both WWF DK and WWF KE appear to have taken a learning approach and resolved emergent challenges quite adequately.

Convening and networking

While the case is not about convening and networking as such, the GHS have been a good platform for networking with a range of stakeholders and potential start-ups. For example, GHS has managed to attract

start-ups such as Mr Green in Kenya (a waste recycling company), which are very relevant for different WWF programmes in the future. WWF KE has learned that having representatives from companies relevant for further piloting and innovation could be very valuable in the future. WWF KE and WWF DK acknowledge that there are also new partners (e.g. private companies, CSOs, institutes) out there that WWF needs to see and engage with.

Innovation

WWF's overall definition of Innovation is *"the implementation of a novel idea to make something substantially better for people and the planet. Ideas can be physical products, better processes, unique collaborations, or a reconfiguration of "the old" in a more impactful way".* According to WWF DK, innovation is thus more about creative problem-solving and experimentation than anything else, meaning it can potentially improve WWF's work in a variety of contexts. Design Thinking is seen as a main process as well as an approach, method and culture.

WWF DK features as a showcase in the 2019 Innovation review report by MFA. WWF DK has developed objectives, processes and tools, embedded in an Innovation Ecosystem approach, which includes acceleration of innovation process and bringing successful ones to scale. WWF DK's overall SPA Results Framework includes outcomes on Innovation Ecosystem, pilots and prototypes, partnership and scaling, documentation and learning. The WWF KE Innovation programme is modelled on this global framework (which also includes Vietnam, Uganda and Myanmar).

Lessons, conclusions and recommendations

Whilst the young Innovation Programme benefits from strong political support from the WWF leadership, for example invitations to make presentations to the Strategic Management Team, it is a major undertaking to change organisational culture. Recognising this, WWF KE decided to appoint an Innovation Champion within each department, often the head of department. Unfortunately, this approach did not lead to change. Inspired by WWF Switzerland, WWF KE is in the process of setting up an 'Innovation A-team', with responsibility to lead on the creation of a 'culture of innovation' at the workplace through collaboration with colleagues within various departments.

Designing innovation programmes and processes and introducing them in new countries requires a lot of careful planning, capacity building, and resources as well as interest locally. WWF DK has seen that it cannot drive or become experts in local business process development and innovation pilots. Instead it is critical to have community buy-in and engagement. Innovation processes are dynamic and context-specific hence require a high level of localisation. In practice this means the design and implementation by a competent national partner that is well positioned within the local innovation space with a clear lead on environment conservation, understanding of the local dynamics, project ownership, and flexibility to adjust the project according to emergent concerns and opportunities.

The Design Thinking methodology has inspired both WWF DK and WWF KE to work with innovation as an approach to project design and implementation. Innovation is perceived as an exciting journey rather than a burden, and failures are seen as opportunities to learn. As WWF DK states, "we need to fail fast and adjust". According to WWF DK, this positive perception of innovation is critical to 'win over' staff (and organisations) who are comfortable with current ways of thinking and less willing to change.

In terms of the relationship between WWF KE and 'new partners' in environment conservation, providing leadership and management training to Innovators, rather than thematic training on environment conservation, is highly commendable as SMEs lack knowledge and resources to contract external facilitators. It is also commendable that WWF KE contracted a local institute specialised in using creative methodologies to social, technological, and organisational change.

Attachments

- https://www.greenhousesessionske.com/
- https://www.wwfkenya.org/knowledge_hub/pandalabske/
- Panda Labs Global Website: https://wwf.panda.org/our_work/projects/panda_labs/index.cfm

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[xvi] Funding comes 50% from MFA Innovation funds and 50% co-funding from Finland.

[xvii] This was carried out as part of Danida Market Development Partnership (DMDP) Waste to Value project, which was highlighted through the first Green House Session of 2020 with partners like Mr. Green Africa and Jill Plastics among others.