

No. 33 May 2006

The Newsletter of the International NGO Training and Research Centre

viewpoint

Aid Harmonisation: Challenges for Civil Society

Is the present focus on aid harmonisation, as embodied in the Paris Declaration, yet another attempt to marginalise civil society in development processes? Is it further evidence that most multi- and bi-lateral official agencies no longer regard civil society as a major actor in development, treating its contribution as instrumental at best and marginal at worst?

In recent years we have seen many attempts to re-establish the state as the sole engine for development. This move is a counter-reaction to the 'rolling back the state' agenda favoured during the heady days at the end of the cold war when the private sector reigned supreme. What we are now seeing is an increasing emphasis on the role of the state – as the focus of new forms of international development co-operation. We have already had several such initiatives since the mid 1990s, including PRSPs, sector wide programme support and overall budget support. The latest initiative is the move towards aid harmonisation (see the article by Linda Lönnqvist in this issue).

The push for aid harmonisation seems to derive from two areas. The first is the need to improve the public administration of aid, with the recognition that external aid can weaken public administration: currently, aid presents recipient governments with an array of

different, sometimes incompatible and competing forms of appraisal, approval, reporting, and evaluation procedures. Harmonisation seeks to reduce transaction costs for both the recipient and donor governments. The second factor is the idea that aid harmonisation, through being tied to improved governance/transparency conditions, will eventually enhance the effectiveness of external assistance through reduced waste.

From the point of view of recipient governments and major donors, aid harmonisation has clear advantages. However, our concern is that there are few, if any, references to civil society in the increasingly unanimous voice from donors' materials on aid harmonisation. The only mentions are some oblique references to civil society being sub-contractors of local government, with the one exception being that in more fragile states civil society may still have a larger role.

Implicit in the aid harmonisation debates is the idea that all international assistance (including NGO assistance) should go through local governments and be a part of a unified aid programme set by government within a single and coherent framework.

Critiques of this model note that the concept of harmonisation is built on several assumptions that may well be contentious and therefore highlight the following problems:

Contents

viewpoint

Aid Harmonisation: Challenges for Civil Society	1
INTRAC Conference on Civil Society and Capacity Building	2
INTRAC Publications	3
The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: An Overview	3
The European Union and its Policy-Driven Approach to Budgetary Support	4
Aid Harmonisation and Gender Matters: The Challenges	6
capacitybuilding news	7
INTRAC Training	8
INTRAC People	8

In this issue:

Brian Pratt highlights the challenges that the adoption of the Paris Declaration and its focus on aid harmonisation present to civil society; Linda Lönnqvist provides an overview of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness; Janice Giffen outlines recent changes to the European Union's development assistance programme and the implications for civil society funding; and Indrani Sigamany explores the potential implications of aid harmonisation on gender-focused development work.

- 1 National development plans are not always the product of democratic processes, and may not represent the views of all development actors.
- 2 In light of the many unstable governments around the world, it is a good guess that some of those in receipt of budget support, and within the new harmonisation model, will come unstuck through corruption and/or undemocratic structures.
- 3 A focus on a single aid basket (harmonised aid) makes the poor vulnerable to political change engendered both by the state and donors. History has already given us many examples of populations being penalised because of their governments, but history also shows how civil society has managed to move into the space left by errant states far more quickly than the state and official donors have been able to.
- 4 Even if the host government is democratic, others feel that it is not the role, nor necessarily the priority of civil society to dedicate itself to achieving government development goals. This is because, by definition, civil society groups will have their own constituencies on whose behalf they will be working. For example, the priorities of a federation of visually impaired people will clearly be different from an overall universal health or social welfare approach from central government. It is the interchange between these priorities and stakeholders that contributes to genuine democracy and diversity. To what extent will this interchange continue to be permitted?
- 5 Civil society should not exist to assist governments to meet their targets as this reduces them to an instrument of the state, tied to a single set of aims set externally. Even where government policies are pro-poor and pro-democratic, civil society should be valued

because of its diversity and independence, not because it is an extension of the state.

Admittedly, often the response from civil society may be to provide services in the short term. But this can be crucial in a situation of crisis. Civil society has also kept open the democratic space over many years under repressive regimes, and often under extremely difficult conditions.

So, why is the issue of harmonisation of official aid of importance to NGOs? The answer to this lies in the uncertainty of this initiative in considering the role of civil society in development.

If we look for example at the new EU plans for funding, it is our understanding (see article by Janice Giffen in this issue) that from 2007 onwards there will be no co-funding mechanism for European NGOs. Instead, all funding will be passed through EC country offices (delegations) and will have to fit within the overall country strategy plans agreed between the delegation and recipient government. This would accord with the new push towards

harmonising aid and developing greater recipient government ownership over the aid programme in their countries. At stake is not only the issue of how European NGOs will cope with this withdrawal of funds, (although this may well have far-reaching implications for the many who receive a considerable proportion of their budgets from the old co-funding programmes, known as B7000); of greater concern are the implications this has for the development of a local, independent and autonomous civil society in recipient countries. For example, the policies of the Paris Declaration, as illustrated by the EU plan, show a failure to grasp the real value of civil society within a developmental context.

Written by Brian Pratt
Executive Director, INTRAC
Email: bpratt@intrac.org

Notes and references

For further information on the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness see <http://www.aidharmonisation.org/or>
<http://www1.worldbank.org/harmonization/Paris/ReviewofProgressChallengesOpportunities.pdf>

INTRAC Conference on Civil Society and Capacity Building: CHANGES, CHALLENGES AND CHARTING THE FUTURE

11th to 13th December 2006, Oxford, UK

INTRAC will be holding a major international conference on the subject of the changing environment for civil society capacity building.

Six years into the new millennium and the world feels like a very different place from the last years of the twentieth century. For those engaged in capacity building, these changes are felt as increasing pressures for conformity with the orthodoxies of the aid industry. The space for dissent, for exploration and experimentation has been shrinking as the 'harmonisation' and 'effectiveness' agendas take hold.

INTRAC believes the time is ripe to bring together those who are promoting the newer aid orthodoxies with those committed to processes of civil society strengthening through self-defined capacity development. We seek to enable a space whereby we can find some common ground and move together in ensuring that civil society actors are effective change agents in their own right rather than instruments of official agency and governmental agendas.

This conference will be based on three premises:

- A belief that quality capacity building practice does exist and does bring results
- An understanding that there are a variety of constraints to achieving the above
- A wish to search for agreement on 'bottom lines' regarding donor policies/practice towards capacity building that will hold firm whatever the future orthodoxies bring

Participants will include a global mix of invited representatives from official agencies; international NGOs; trusts and foundations; capacity building practitioners; and academics/researchers.

For further information, please contact Zoë Wilkinson, Events Co-ordinator, zwilkinson@intrac.org

INTRAC Publications

NEW: Praxis Paper 7, 'Building Analytical and Adaptive Capacities for Organisational Effectiveness' By Mia Sorgenfrei and Rebecca Wrigley, with cartoons by Bill Crooks.

Civil society organisations (CSOs) operate in a complex and constantly changing environment. This has significant implications for their effectiveness. This paper suggests that by helping CSOs to understand and strengthen analytical and adaptive capacities, we may help them increase their effectiveness. The authors offer a cross-disciplinary review of current thinking about analytical and adaptive capacity, drawing on fields such as organisational learning and change, strategic management, systems thinking and complexity theory. The paper proposes practical considerations which may guide future efforts to develop the analytical and adaptive capacities of CSOs.

Other Praxis Papers Available:

- 'Realities of Change: Understanding How African NGO Leaders Develop', by Rick James with Julius Oladipo, Moses Isooba, Betsy Mboizi and Ida Kusiima (also available in French and Russian).
- 'Building Organisational Resilience to HIV/AIDS: Implications for Capacity Building', by Rick James (also available in French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian).
- 'Organisational Learning in NGOs: Creating the Motive, Means and Opportunity', by Bruce Britton (also available in French, Spanish, Chinese and Russian).
- 'Rising to the Challenges: Assessing the Impacts of Organisational

Capacity Building', by John Hailey, Rick James and Rebecca Wrigley (also available in French, Chinese, Spanish, Russian and Arabic).

You can download these papers for free at http://www.intrac.org/pages/praxis_papers.html.

You can buy a printed copy of any of these papers for £5.95 (either online at www.intrac.org or by fax on + 44 (0)1865 201852).

For further information about INTRAC's publications please visit our website: www.intrac.org or email swindsor-richards@intrac.org to request a copy of our new 2006 publications catalogue.

The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: An Overview

*'If implemented, [the Paris Declaration] will ... reduce bureaucratic hurdles, the cost of aid delivery, irrational conditionalities, endless meetings, and misuse of high-level talents in recipient countries through aid related meetings, visits and missions. It will remove unnecessary conditionalities, tied aid, delays in aid delivery and parallel institutional setups.'*¹

*'Donors could look more closely at facilitating interactions between states and their societies, rather than being locked into fragmented approaches that support either governments or civil society groups, to the exclusion of the other.'*²

Overview and background

The stated aim of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness is to tailor large-scale development aid to the specific requirements of recipient countries, and improve ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results

and mutual accountability. Of these areas, aid alignment and harmonisation are the most relevant aspects for civil society organisations (CSOs). The impetus for the aid effectiveness agenda came from the 2002 Monterrey UN Summit on Financing for Development, where bi- and multi-lateral donors agreed to increase both the effectiveness and volume of aid. This saw general budget support and basket funding become the favoured aid mechanisms. This momentum was taken further at the 2003 Rome High-Level Forum on Harmonisation, which aimed to support the delivery of the Millennium Development Goals. The Paris Forum and Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (March 2005) followed, with more concrete goals – for example, collecting baseline data in order to sharpen numerical implementation targets, covering partner country procurement and financial management, and

implementing the action plans developed at Rome. The next milestone in the aid effectiveness agenda will be the third High Level Forum in 2008. The Working Party on Aid Effectiveness at the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the OECD is the body in charge of implementing the Paris Declaration, with implementation targets for 2010.

The aid effectiveness agenda deals specifically with aid from donor governments and large multi-lateral institutions to Southern governments – it does not refer directly to NGOs. It includes a few official civil society participants such as continent-wide NGO coalitions and large foundations. However, it is likely that the drive to centralise development funding will de-prioritise civil society development actors. It will also diminish the role of civil society as an important counterbalance to state power. A

¹ Tanzanian Ministry of Finance, The Guardian (Tanzania), 10th March 2005 <http://209.183.227.156/ipp/guardian/2005/03/10/34360.html>

² Richard Manning, Chair, OECD Development Assistance Committee, Guest Column, p. 16, Capacity.org Issue 26, September 2005 (9)

separate coalition of NGOs has published a statement calling for more ambitious Paris Declaration targets,³ which provides a CSO perspective.

Aid effectiveness: the agenda

Officially, the aim of the Paris Declaration is to lower transaction costs that recipient countries face from administering their aid flows. *Aid alignment* focuses aid delivery on partner country priorities, and ensures that the country has the strategic and financial capacity to implement them. It strives to make aid delivery more prompt, and to decrease tied aid⁴ which benefits the donor country more than the recipient. Interestingly, however, the targets and deadlines for decreasing tied aid remain extremely vague – there is only mention of ‘continued progress over time’. *Aid harmonisation* calls for donors to co-ordinate their activities and eliminate duplication.

The table below lists the most relevant targets of the Aid Effectiveness Agenda. The baseline data for performance indicators has been sharpened by collecting numerical data in 2005. This means that targets such as ‘halve’ and ‘reduce’ can be more accurately monitored. However, these targets have been criticised for building on World Bank PRSP data, hence carrying an inherent World Bank bias.⁵

The DAC recognises that progress on aligning donor programmes is likely to be cumbersome and time-consuming⁶. A seminal problem is how to translate the indicators into reality. But aside from the many possible implementation problems, the Paris Declaration demonstrates a central

tendency in development co-operation: consolidating aid flows under centralised authority. This will increasingly draw civil society into the political realm, as it becomes reliant on governments for continued funding. Northern NGOs may see their funding redirected to Southern governments and Southern

NGOs may need to subordinate their priorities to those of their state, blurring the boundaries between ‘non-governmental’ and ‘organisations’.

Written by Linda Lönnqvist
Researcher, INTRAC
Email: llonnqvist@intrac.org

Selected OECD-DAC 2010 aid effectiveness targets

INDICATOR	TARGET BY 2010
ALIGNMENT – Donor/partner country issues	
Aid flows are aligned on national priorities	Halve the proportion of aid not reported on partner governments’ budgets (at least 85% to be reported on budget)
Strengthen capacity by coordinated support (i.e. technical assistance)	At least 50% of technical cooperation is consistent with national development strategies
Strengthen capacity by avoiding parallel Project Implementation Units	Reduce by two thirds the number of parallel PIUs (management units outside ministries, supporting donor-funded projects or programmes)
Make aid more predictable	Halve the proportion of aid not disbursed in the fiscal year for which it’s scheduled
Untie aid	Continued progress over time
HARMONISATION – Issues between donors	
Use common arrangements	66% of aid (up from 43%) is provided through programme-based approaches (i.e. budget support – Basket funding and Sector-Wide Approaches)
Coordinate missions and analytic work	40% of donor missions involving meetings with officials are joint (carried out by more than one donor), and 66% of country analytic work is joint.

Source: Adapted from the ‘Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness: Suggested Targets for the 12 Indicators of Progress’. High Level Forum, Paris, 28th February – 2nd March 2005

³ NGO Statement on Aid Harmonization and Alignment, February 2005

⁴ Tied aid refers to aid that can only be used to buy goods or services (e.g. emergency food, technical assistance) from the donor country, boosting the donor country’s economy.

⁵ NGO Statement on Aid Harmonization and Alignment, February 2005

⁶ Richard Manning, chair of the DAC Working Panel on Aid Effectiveness. Guest Column, p. 16, Capacity.org Issue 26, September 2005

The European Union and its Policy-Driven Approach to Budgetary Support

The EU’s development assistance programme has evolved over a period of around 30 years, and ended up, in the late 1990s, with more than

90 different budget lines covering over 30 regulations. Within these, much of the funding for civil society and NGOs fell under the co-financing

budget line, with some ‘decentralised co-operation’ recently being available to local partners. However, with the introduction of its New Financial

Perspectives, part of the EU's re-organisation of its development policy¹, the number of instruments available for development assistance will be reduced to six. DG Relex², which is responsible for development assistance, and relations with, most parts of the world, is focusing on channelling funds through the recipient state's budget, in line with the current harmonised approach to budgetary support. However, DG Dev³ has argued, successfully, for the inclusion of other thematic instruments, which could, under specific circumstances, provide an alternative source of funding for civil society groups.

The six main instruments available under the New Financial Perspectives

Three of the instruments are horizontal: **Macro Economic Support; Stability & Security**; and **Humanitarian Aid**. The other three are geographic: **the Instrument for Pre-accession Countries (IPA)**; **the European Neighbourhood and Partnership Agreement (ENPA)**; and the **Development Co-operation and Economic Co-operation Instrument (DC&EC)**, designed to provide support for particular policies identified by the EU for the specific geographic regions.

The modality for funding under the geographic instruments will be the Country Strategy Paper (CSP) and the National Indicative Programme (NIP), which will be drawn up by recipient governments in discussion with the EC delegation. Thus the geographic instruments give primacy to developing relations between EU and national governments. They are focused on the current harmonised approach, which aims to develop

ownership and responsibility at national government level, and accords with the model required for the fulfilment of the MDGs. Under this model, local civil society groups are encouraged to enter into negotiations with their government in order to agree their role in the national development strategy and access funding within the National Indicative Programme.

Thematic instruments

If a civil society programme cannot be implemented through a geographic instrument, then – depending on which area of the world the programme is in⁴ – the organisation will be able to apply under one of the seven thematic instruments, which include:

- 1 Human rights and democracy
- 2 Human and social development
- 3 Environment and sustainable management of natural resources
- 4 Food security
- 5 Non-state actors in development
- 6 Migration and asylum
- 7 Co-operation with industrialised countries

The nature and scope of these instruments are currently being elaborated and there are planned opportunities for consultation, through various communications⁵. The first calls for proposals will be in 2007. Whilst the existence of such thematic instruments should be welcomed, it is clear from the language surrounding these that the preference of the EU is to fund civil society initiatives through the NIPs. For example, DG Relex talks of the need to demonstrate the value added of doing a programme thematically, for example by showing that it will be more efficient and/or effective for the

programme to operate outside the national strategy, and as soon as a programme can be financed geographically, then this is the strategy to adopt.

However, in the first of the communications on the thematic programmes, DG Dev takes care to stress the importance of these alternative funding streams for civil society and other non-state actors. It states that the added value of non-state actors 'lies in their independence from the state, in their proximity to and understanding of defined constituencies and their capacity to articulate their specific interests...'⁶. It adds that this thematic instrument will 'help build confidence between state and non-state actors, for instance regarding policy discussion, basic services delivery, etc. in order to facilitate their progressive integration into geographic programmes where this is not yet the case'⁷.

Despite the fact that DG Dev is promoting the need for provision of alternative sources of funding through these thematic instruments, it is expected that the proportion of funds allocated for thematic instruments will not be large. The primacy of geographic instruments fits with the current mode of budgetary support, but also fits with the EU's preference for policy-driven instruments. However, the EU's espoused values of promoting good governance are at risk of being lost in the concentration of effort on the geographic instruments.

Written by Janice Giffen
Senior Capacity Building Specialist,
INTRAC
Email: jgiffen@intrac.org

¹ The re-organisation started in 2000

² Directorate General for External Relations of the EC

³ Directorate General for Development, responsible for both development policy and assistance to African, Caribbean and Pacific countries

⁴ Only the first of these will be available to IPA countries, the first six will be available to ENPA and DC&EC countries and the seventh for industrialised countries in DC&EC.

⁵ The communications will define the scope, provide an analysis of the theme, its rationale, principles and priorities. The first Communication on Non-State Actors in Development was produced in January 2006 and the consultation process is underway. *Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the European Economic & Social Committee – on the Thematic Programme Non-State Actors and Local Authorities in Development*. Brussels 2006

⁶ *ibid* p 4

⁷ *ibid* p 8

Aid Harmonisation and Gender Matters: The Challenges

The anxiety that civil society might be marginalised in the push for aid harmonisation is part of a broader picture. The questions raised here are: where do the individual NGOs working at the grass roots fit in? and how is gender assimilated into current policy considerations? In the Viewpoint in this issue Brian Pratt argues that a 'focus on a single aid basket (aid harmonisation) makes the poor vulnerable to political change both by the state and donors'. This seems highly likely and will be illustrated here with a case study of an NGO focused on empowering excluded women in the state of Rajasthan in India. This article argues that the 'poor' are not a homogenous entity, but reflect layers of vulnerabilities including caste, class and gender. Thus working with poor people should include small and large NGOs, and especially those who prioritise issues around gender, all of whom are threatened by current shifts in aid architecture.

Astha: working with poor women

In the southern belt of Rajasthan in September 2005, 48 women from 22 Panchayats¹ who had been elected as representatives for local government participated in a six-day governance training organised at the Astha Training Centre. Of these 48 elected women, 40 were illiterate, and 37 were Dalits (socially excluded and among the poorest in India). Besides the obvious gender connotations of this kind of empowerment (where women have been elected for local government in a state where women have the lowest literacy rate in India), the training pushed boundaries not only of education but also of caste, and class.²

The women showed great potential and were highly motivated to learn. Some of them were shy, having left their village for the first time, while others had surmounted the disapproval of family at home in order to attend the

training. The courage that some of the women needed in order to participate in this training is often taken for granted in most environments, as is the creativity of the NGO undertaking this challenging task. A small, but very effective field-based support organisation called Astha organised the training for these newly elected women representatives as part of its aim to strengthen the people's efforts through organisation, networking, and advocacy.

Astha is a Hindi word that means 'deep faith or conviction', and for the team of social activists and educators who work in this NGO, it indicates a deep faith in the strength and ability of the common man and woman. It also relates to the NGO's philosophy that organisation equals strength, and knowledge equals power. Several people's organisations (with over 35,000 members in total) are active at the moment in various aspects of Astha's interventions. The NGO works for structural change and brings into being new organisations of the poor, which change the structure of society. The Astha team believes that poor people, organised and aware, can change the conditions which lead to their oppression and exploitation, and to their continuing poverty. 'We feel our role is to empower and organise people to work on the problems of their society by accessing and making use of the social laws that already exist', says Ginny Shrivastava, who founded Astha in 1986.

Some of the issues which Astha works with include land, water and forest livelihoods, migrant labour, food security, and a right to work. Their work also includes aspects such as local self governance, budget analysis, credit, and tribal policy and tribal issues. Astha is mainly funded by international NGOs.

The possible impacts of aid harmonisation

Considering the current macro-level transformations in aid harmonisation,

how would an NGO such as Astha – solid, but small – come out in the wash? It is hard to tell, but the unique and focused work being undertaken without much pomp or ceremony is likely to be seriously undermined despite the 'pro-poor' rhetoric of the aid harmonisation and budget support package.

Both central and local governments in India are under pressure to deliver on economic policies of export-oriented growth. In such a policy environment, gender policies that were beginning to take root are likely to be deprioritised. Moreover, in a recent analysis of the Beijing + 10 Review, concerns were expressed that the international climate is increasingly hostile to women's human rights, and that there are difficulties in ensuring broad representation of women from the South at the Commission for the Status of Women³. If the present aggressive direction of aid harmonisation continues, it is clear that the work of NGOs such as Astha would become vulnerable. This raises the key question to be directed at policymakers: is the current aid architecture and the debates surrounding it gender-sensitive and do they view gender issues as relevant?

The challenge for civil society is to find ways to hold governments to account on the effectiveness of their aid strategies. If the debate is mindful to ensure sensitivity towards gender issues (along with other potentially marginalised issues and groups), there would be some possibility of keeping the current global political climate from reinforcing the existing vulnerabilities and maintaining the age-old feminisation of poverty.

Written by Indrani Sigamany
Senior Capacity Building Specialist,
INTRAC
Email: isigamany@intrac.org

¹ Local governing bodies

² For further information see: <http://www.thp.org/india/rajasthan/main.htm>

³ Painter, G. (2004) 'Gender, the Millennium Development Goals, and Human Rights in the Context of the 2005 Review Process'.

capacitybuilding news

Welcome to Capacity Building News No. 21. In this edition Cornelius Murombedzi explores the impact of aid harmonisation on civil society, specifically through an analysis of Zambian HIV/AIDS organisations. He focuses on their different stances regarding aid harmonisation and the potential effects on their capacity.

Aid Harmonisation and its Impact on Civil Society: Zambia's Experience in the HIV and AIDS Sector

Civil society is a key player in the multi-sectoral response to HIV/AIDS in Zambia, with civil society organisations (CSOs) acting as key participants in the structures for planning programmes, joint review meetings for monitoring responses to HIV and AIDS, and as implementers of programmes in prevention, mitigation, treatment and care. The participation of CSOs in the multi-sectoral response has been made possible by resources that have been negotiated with bi-lateral agencies to fund the programmes and projects of CSOs. It would appear that there is a general understanding among programme and project implementers that the role of civil society is to complement the deficiencies of state structures in service delivery.

The ongoing aid harmonisation agenda is likely to have a profound impact on civil society and its ability to deliver. It will lead to more conditionalities on resources available to CSOs, as greater emphasis will be placed on tracking effectiveness and efficiency in the utilisation of resources as part of a general trend towards results-based management. Development partners from the G8 and multi-lateral institutions have been at the forefront of these discussions to determine the most appropriate mechanism of channelling funds to partner countries in the developing world, such as Zambia. The political agenda for developed countries is to move away from project approaches where bi-laterals have established relationships with CSOs, to a more programmatic approach. The GTT (Global Task Team on HIV/AIDS) report argues that a project modality may be useful for initiating activities rapidly. But this format is also likely to work against longer-term

sustainability by entrenching the vertical nature of the response to AIDS, cordoning it off from broader developmental efforts in a manner that is, ultimately, counterproductive.

Some CSOs have received direct funding through bi-lateral arrangements whereby they have become agents for supporting projects in the HIV and AIDS sector. Some of the more prominent CSOs have developed long-term relationships with international NGOs and bi-lateral organisations in implementing projects and programmes. The relationship between civil society and bi-lateral organisations and international NGOs has been flexible and based on trust. The result of this has been the proliferation of CSOs involved in small projects in HIV and AIDS.

Some examples of large-scale disbursement models for CSOs

The World Bank has an institutional framework to implement its HIV/AIDS programmes in Zambia under MAP (the World Bank Multi-Country HIV/AIDS Programme for Africa). It uses the public sector funding mechanism to channel funds to CSOs that meet the criteria set by the Bank. Whilst resources were slow initially, the Bank has relaxed some of its conditions on disbursements thus making it easier for funds to flow. There are, however, stringent accountability measures in place to track the use of the resources by CSOs. The Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria uses state mechanisms for channelling resources earmarked for CSOs' HIV and AIDS projects. Although these resources are channelled through the government systems, the projects are stand-alone, with their own reporting systems and separate accounts. The bi-laterals in a

majority of cases support CSOs directly, who report straight to them. It is clear that in Zambia projects are being carried out of which the co-ordinating body, the National AIDS Council, is not aware.

The more established CSOs which have successfully attracted significant funding feel the burden of multiple reporting and are calling for a co-ordinated response particularly from the funders. My observation is that among the established CSOs there is greater interest in harmonised funding and reporting. This will allow more time to be spent on programmes and achieving targets. However, small CSOs still argue that it is better to have direct relationships with bi-lateral agencies for it is easier to tap into the funds that are available, even though these might be small.

The multi-laterals and bi-laterals have set a new agenda on harmonising development financing. It is clear that governments in countries like Zambia will welcome aid harmonisation on the grounds that more resources will be available through the state for development. There are concerns from civil society that this will limit flows of funding to programmes and projects managed by CSOs. The focus of harmonisation discussions in Zambia has been with government officials and specifically the Ministry of Finance in negotiating funding modalities. The discussions are seen as technical and relating to the performance of the state mechanisms, particularly financial management and accounting systems, and CSOs are therefore excluded from these discussions. Concerns have been raised about budgetary support and SWAPs (sector-wide approaches) in that they could impede the flow of funds to

(continued on back page)

(continued from page 7)

capacitybuilding news

civil society, particularly for resource flows to HIV and AIDS programmes. The current structures in the budgetary process exclude civil society representation in terms of the actual decisions taken to allocate resources. In addition there are no mechanisms for holding CSOs accountable under the budgetary systems. This then raises issues of fundamental changes in government structures to accommodate resource flows to NGOs.

In Zambia, civil society has participated in the planning process (PRSPs – poverty reduction strategy papers) leading to budget allocation. The influence of civil society on the allocation was however limited, except in circumstances where resources had been specifically earmarked to support programmes and projects by CSOs. Representatives of civil society have raised serious concerns about the impact of direct budget support in

Zambia, particularly its impact on HIV and AIDS. The reality on the ground is different as there is no agreement among some of the key donors on direct budget support.

Written by **Cornelius Murombedzi**
Senior Capacity Building Specialist,
INTRAC
Email: cmurombedzi@intrac.org

INTRAC Training

Rights-Based Approaches to Development

10–12 May

Supporting Southern Advocacy

7–8 June

Financial Management for the Non-Specialist

13–15 June

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

26–30 June

NEW! Introduction to Strengthening Civil Society, Capacity Building, and Organisational Development

10–14 July

Managing Change within Organisations

19–21 July

Civil Society Strengthening

11–15 September

Advocacy and Policy Influencing

25–29 September

*For more information and bookings contact training@intrac.org or +44 (0) 1865 263040.
Also check our website (www.intrac.org) for more information on these and other courses.*

INTRAC People

As the demand for our services grows so does INTRAC and we are happy to announce that Cornelius Murombedzi joined as a Senior Capacity Building Specialist in January. The Research Department is up to strength, ready to meet interesting new challenges, with the arrival of Fran Deans and Linda Lönnqvist early in the new year, each in the role of Researcher. In March we welcomed Louise Oakley as Programme Co-ordinator and Ingrid Kamikazi. Ingrid takes over as Training and Logistics Administrator as we sadly said goodbye to Agnes Daizi when she returned to Zimbabwe. Anna Winterbottom also moved on to new things in March and we wish her well. Natalie Coward has been giving her support as a volunteer in recent months, for which we are very grateful.

Written by **Shelagh Windsor-Richards**
Resources Manager, INTRAC
Email: swindsor-richards@intrac.org

ontrac
ISSN 1476-1327

Editors: Hannah Warren, Researcher, Linda Lönnqvist, Researcher, and Jacqueline Smith, Publishing Manager, INTRAC

ontrac is the newsletter of INTRAC (the International NGO Training and Research Centre). It is published three times a year. The contents of the newsletter may be freely reproduced and translated, providing the source is acknowledged. INTRAC wishes to thank the following organisations for their contributions towards the production of ontrac: Concern Worldwide, Cordaid, DanChurchAid, MS Denmark, Novib, Save the Children Denmark, Save the Children Sweden and World Vision UK.

To subscribe to ontrac, please contact INTRAC (info@intrac.org) indicating whether you wish to receive it by email (English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Russian or Spanish) or post (English and Russian only). You can also subscribe online from www.intrac.org in the bulletin section.

INTRAC

PO Box 563 • Oxford OX2 6RZ • United Kingdom

Tel: +44 (0) 1865 201 851 • Fax: +44 (0) 1865 201 852 • Email: info@intrac.org • Website: <http://www.intrac.org>



working with **INTRAC** for a cleaner environment
International NGO Training and Research Centre
Seacourt are registered to EMAS and ISO 14001

Printed Waterless Offset by Seacourt

