

Annual Report 2008/09



INTRAC exists to support civil society organisations (CSOs). We seek to increase the effectiveness of civil society organisations that are committed to international human development, including gender equity, participation of the socially excluded, social justice, security and peace, in all parts of the world. INTRAC believes that civil society is key to establishing democratic societies and that CSOs play a key role in promoting sustainable development in a just society.

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Society of Jesus, Zambia

Strengthening civil society across the world



Brian Pratt

Executive Director's message

Who would have guessed how much would change during 2008/09? It has been challenging for INTRAC to continue to provide support to civil society when so many rules of the game have been changing. The vast majority of donors have had to revise their proposed spending downwards, with some forced to make severe cuts. Meanwhile major issues such as climate change, poverty reduction, and democratisation have had to fight hard to maintain attention and concern from general publics facing reductions in their own incomes and services.

INTRAC has sought to continue to provide a high quality of service through its consultancies, programmes, training and research. The rapidly changing environment has underlined how important the proactive and independent stance of INTRAC is when we are faced by unforeseen challenges to ourselves and our partners and clients. We have found an increase in demand for help with strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation, and programme reviews, as organisations seek to address the challenges facing them. Some of the effects of recession coincided with changes in policies on civil society planned well before the recession. This double set of challenges has made it difficult for some agencies to cope.

It is increasingly important that civil society is supported internationally given the pressures from governments under recession, plus the impacts of security agendas and undemocratic governments squeezing basic human rights, of rising food prices on poor people, of climate change on farmers, and of conflict on those who live in fragile states. INTRAC's role in supporting civil society helps processes of democratisation, poverty reduction, providing people with a voice, strengthening the enabling environment for civil society, and contributing to overall development. We have not been immune from some of these negative pressures but through careful refocusing on our priorities, hard work and some sacrifices we ensured that we ended this year with a balanced budget and a team ready to cope with future challenges.

Finally, I'd like to thank several outgoing members of our board: Bill Jackson and Anne Coles, both of whom have been chair of the board and put in enormous amount of time and energy into the role; Paddy Coulter, for his second term with INTRAC after being on the founding board; Janet Townsend for her help with our research work; and Derek Roebuck, our tireless company secretary and legal adviser.



Geof Wood

Chair's message

As the incoming Chair of INTRAC's Board, this is my first opportunity to contribute to an Annual Report. The Board has changed its composition recently with terms of office completed by colleagues, and I want to add my thanks to those of the Executive Director above.

The world is currently facing many extraordinary challenges, perhaps more so than at any previous time in INTRAC's history. As a consequence, there has never been a more important time to be vigilant about the role of civil society worldwide to secure improvements in poor people's livelihoods, socio-economic security and their political and social rights. Wherever we turn, globally, we find these objectives under threat, even in some rich societies. Whenever there is an economic or political crisis, it is the poor and marginalised communities who suffer before others. We see this in the context of civil wars, unaccountable governments and the effects of climate change. As challenges to the state increase among disaffected communities, alienated from the opportunities of global economic growth, with all its hiccups, so states and governments are quick to abandon the legal and

political protections for their citizens. This is an issue for the UK as well as many other societies around the world.

It is a matter of pride, therefore, to be associated with an organisation like INTRAC, which has remained steadfast in its support for civil groups, movements and organisations across the world to maintain the rights of citizens to free expression and livelihoods entitlements. To be effective, civil society organisations have to be professional and systematic in how they prioritise and organise their work. This is where INTRAC comes in. It has built a strong reputation since its formation and continues to be chosen by partners in poorer countries, as well as the transforming ones such as in Central Asia, as the preferred provider of these partner services – whether in monitoring and evaluation, advocacy techniques or project design.

During this last year, the Board and staff have taken some difficult internal reorganisation decisions to ensure that INTRAC can continue this important mission during a time of greatest challenges. On behalf of the Board, I am very grateful to the staff of INTRAC for helping in this process, and establishing a strong platform for further success.

Our work in overview

On the following pages you can read about the work that our consultancies, research, programmes and training teams have been doing in our four main focus areas:

- **Supporting civil society**
Working to clarify, improve and defend the role of civil society in development.
- **Building the capacity of organisations across the world**
Through programme partnerships, consultancy work, undertaking research, and offering training.
- **Examining the architecture of aid**
Monitoring the way international aid agencies work individually and together – and how these policy changes affect civil society organisations in particular.
- **Monitoring and evaluation**
Reviewing current approaches to monitoring and evaluation, designing M&E systems, and evaluating relief and development programmes.

Providing training

In 2008-09 we ran **16** open training courses. These were attended by a total of **214** participants from **134** different

organisations. The diversity of our training course attendees was further demonstrated by the fact that they came from **67** different countries – overall, 23% of our participants were from the UK, with the other 77% coming from outside the UK.

We strived to achieve even better quality ratings on our courses and we succeeded in this – getting the highest course quality rating in four years.

Publications and website

Over the year we continued our ongoing commitment to disseminate the learning from our research, training, consultancies and conferences to the widest possible audience – through printed and downloadable material. In total we produced seven briefing papers, 10 short notes and two longer papers, a further three issues of our ONTRAC newsletter, and three books.

Our website (www.intrac.org) continues to thrive as a key hub for development practitioners. Our resources database contains all of the material we produce plus resources from our partners and other development organisations. This is all available to freely download.

During the year, the website had **761,163** visitors, who downloaded over **250,000** resources from the resources database.

Supporting civil society

Since INTRAC began we have worked to clarify, improve and defend the role of civil society in development. The latest of a series of conferences we have held over the years on civil society was a **major international conference** in the Netherlands at the end of 2008 which gathered 140 participants from over 40 countries for three days of examples of civil society activity, debates on the nature and future of civil society, and to reframe the importance of civil society around five major functions that it performs. In the lead up to the conference our ONTRAC newsletter framed the debate by presenting articles addressing the question 'Civil society and aid – where now?', whilst the following issue presented some of the 40 case studies that were used at the conference to illustrate the key functions of civil society.

Other notable achievements over the year included:

INTRAC is a member of a consortium of organisations appointed by **DFID Nigeria** for six years to work towards helping to ensure that Nigeria's own resources are used efficiently and effectively to achieve the MDGs. INTRAC's role within this work is to assist citizens' ability to claim rights and hold government to account. This involves, in particular, working in the area of social sector reform to enhance coalitions between government and civil society, and helping to provide more effective evidence-based advocacy by civil society.

INTRAC led a **Middle East Civil Society Workshop** at the CIVICUS World Assembly 2008, in partnership with IMTI, a

Lebanese NGO and UN-ESCWA, Lebanon. This was the first such event with a focus on the Middle East at CIVICUS. It focused on identifying challenges to civil society and finding ways forward to enable people in the region to realise greater power in the future. There were participants from across the region. At the same time, INTRAC moved closer to developing a programme in the region with a series of consultancies in countries such as Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman and Saudi Arabia, all of which were related to supporting broader civil society in those countries.

We also continued our work on the **effects of counter-terrorism measures** on civil society, producing two briefing papers and publishing two books dealing with different aspects of this topic. **Civil Society and the War on Terror** drew together the debates from a series of workshops organised by INTRAC in 2006-07, and run by southern and northern civil society groups in five regions of the world. These focussed on the ways in which counter-terrorism measures have undermined ordinary peoples' livelihoods. **Fragile States: Dilemmas of Stability in Lebanon and the Arab World** dealt with some of the effects of regional instability on the development trajectories in the Arab world. The latter book leads into new work that INTRAC is undertaking on the role of civil society in different contexts where the state is weak or vulnerable. This focuses on increasing the understanding of civil society's function within fragile states, and how it can be promoted.

Building the capacity of organisations across the world

Our programme work continued across different regions of the world:

In **Bangladesh**, INTRAC continues to provide support to PRIP Trust with their EC-funded SMILING Project, which is helping small local NGOs in the 15 worst-affected and vulnerable disaster-prone districts, around the Padma and Jamuna River basin areas of Bangladesh. This work focuses on assisting these NGOs as they develop and implement projects based on health and hygiene, disaster management, and local governance. INTRAC's support activities include: training, mapping civil society organisations (CSOs), developing resource materials and developing relevant monitoring and evaluation systems.

Our **Central Asia** programme has continued its three-year programme to 'strengthen NGOs to support the self-help movement'. This supports a network of twenty NGOs working on poverty and gender issues in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, funded by ICCO through the ACT-Development consortium. INTRAC has provided capacity building support and training on staff management, resource mobilisation, monitoring and evaluation, and trainer skills. We have also continued to use a flexible and responsive service of training, consultancy and research to provide wider capacity building support to local NGO partners and social movements in the region, in order to both strengthen the participation and empowerment of vulnerable and marginalised communities, and to improve the quality of service delivery by NGOs and ensure that good practice is communicated to government agencies.

The **Cypriot Civil Society Strengthening Programme**, working across the island in partnership with The Management Centre (from the Turkish Cypriot community) and the NGO Support Centre (from the Greek Cypriot community) came to a close in 2008. The programme's many achievements included:

- Over 679 participants from 379 CSOs across the island learnt new skills and ideas through the training courses.
- Twenty CSOs took part in the capacity building module; these organisations are now working on making the capacity plans happen.
- A series of events, including the 2008 International Forum on Civil Society and Policy Influencing (European context and peace building), 11 dialoguing events (CSOs with media and local government) and 2008 Cyprus Civil Society Awards Ceremony (celebrated the dedicated hard and rewarding work of CSOs in Cyprus).
- Free Cyprus capacity building resources are available on all three partners' websites.

Our **HIV/AIDS in the workplace programme** aims to increase the organisational resilience of CSOs to the impacts of HIV/AIDS by improving the support offered to CSOs by capacity building

providers and international donors. Over the course of the year we published 10 Praxis notes on different aspects of HIV/AIDS in the workplace – giving practitioners the platform to share practical experiences and lessons learnt which can help others to develop and apply better practice.

Our consultancy and research teams have also been working to help organisations build their capacity. Examples include:

- The start of a long term process of working with Africa Humanitarian Action (based in Addis and working in several African countries), to help them draw up a new strategy, governance and management structure as they reached their 15th anniversary.
- An organisational review for Public Services International (a trade union federation of over 500 public sector unions in 140 countries). The review explored 9 key research areas that would assist PSI to ensure that the organisation will be best placed to effectively implement and evaluate their new Policy and Strategic Objectives, and support any growth strategies.
- Plan International is in the process of learning lessons from its first global advocacy campaign; a new global campaign is being prepared and Plan Africa is preparing to fully engage and implement the campaign and any subsequent global campaigns efficiently. To assist Plan Africa develop efficient strategies for these tasks, and eventually a strategy for Plan-Africa advocacy work, INTRAC conducted an analysis of its current capacity and readiness through an external, participatory organisational assessment
- The provision of ongoing capacity building support to several missionary organisations in Ireland. Two examples of this work are facilitating a strategic planning workshop on programmatic approaches with one congregation; whilst another congregation with INTRAC support performed their own internal review and began developing congregational-wide strategic plans.
- The Syrian Trust for Development (a national cooperation platform for development NGOs in Syria), facilitated by INTRAC, conducted an internal organisational capacity assessment through a fully participatory process.
- UNDP Vietnam contracted INTRAC to assist a large NGOSO in Vietnam to develop a five year business plan including a review of external possibilities for funding sources.

This year also saw the publication of **Capacity Building Framework**, the latest in our popular series of guides for practitioners. This provides a comprehensive, step-by-step guide to capacity building programming, drawing on INTRAC's considerable experience in this area.

Examining the architecture of aid

INTRAC has long been engaged in monitoring the way international aid agencies work individually and together. Our focus is on the aspects of aid policy changes which affect civil society and civil society organisations in particular. We monitor aid flows to CSOs, policies regarding civil society and development, how donors interact with NGOs, and how NGOs interact with each other. We also scan the aid environment for policies which might indirectly affect CSOs.

Particular examples of our work in this area in 2008/09 included:

Our NGO Research Programme brings together staff from a select group of European NGOs to review trends, issues, and research related to civil society. The two research forums held in 2008/09 covered issues around: accountability in the aid chain; grassroots engagement with social movements and community based organisations; and civil society in complex contexts.

Briefing papers produced on these issues included one looking at the challenges for international NGOs working with social movements, and another outlining the implications for civil society of China's increased presence as a donor of overseas development aid. The May 2008 issue of our ONTRAC newsletter also contained a series of articles examining issues around control and effectiveness in aid partnerships.

Building on our work in 2007/08 on the issues around the Paris Declaration, and how these affect civil society, several independent and commissioned reports were prepared during the year, especially in the build up to the Third High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, which reviewed the Paris Declaration. One example of these was the advocacy report that INTRAC prepared for Alliance2015, 'Fostering Democratic Ownership', to be used in advance of this forum.

We also held a meeting of official donors prior to the CIVICUS World Assembly 2008 in Glasgow, where we facilitated discussions on several areas of civil society policy amongst the



heads of 12 major bi and multilateral donor agency civil society departments.

In a changing climate, where donors are showing an increasing interest in understanding and working with faith in development, we began a new applied research programme in this area. The first published paper in this programme looked at 'what is distinctive about faith-based organisations' – the first step in exploring how European faith-based organisations define and operationalise their faith. Subsequent work in this area will take a broad view of both the major concerns about faith in development and also the potential value added of FBOs – charting the growing donor interest yet residual ambivalence towards faith in development, and considering the practical challenges and potential ways forward for donors and FBOs.

As one practical example of the consultancy research work we provided in this area, INTRAC was commissioned by the Council for World Mission (CWM) to provide both a global and internal CWM narrative to inform the development of CWM's strategic framework. The research involved interviewing 210 people in 27 member churches located in 21 different countries. The narrative document of external trends affecting CWM churches and internal narrative of CWM drew on the perceptions of a wide range of respondents – from General Secretaries to moderators and those with special responsibility for ecumenical relations or global mission.

Working at a different level of aid architecture, INTRAC co-produced the resource 'HIV in the Workplace: 20 ways for INGOs to help partners', with our Dutch partner STOP AIDS NOW!. This seeks to advocate for donor agencies to understand the issues caused by partners with high levels of HIV/AIDS prevalence in the workplace, and gives a range of practical guidance on how they can respond to help partners develop organisational resilience.



Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

INTRAC has been involved in a considerable number of **consultancies related to monitoring and evaluation** this past year - reviewing current approaches to monitoring and evaluation, designing M&E systems, and evaluating relief and development programmes.

The types of work completed included:

A large INTRAC team **helped design a new M&E system** for an international charity working on access to safe water. The system has been developed in a fully participatory process led by the organisation, through workshops and training sessions across the globe. The INTRAC team held training workshops for the organisation's staff in 16 countries, including Zambia, Burkino Faso, Malawi, India, Bangladesh, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and Nepal.

INTRAC is assisting a global NGO in the **development of a monitoring and evaluation system** for its anti-corruption programme in eight countries in **Africa**. The programme maps risk areas relating to budget allocation, disbursement and expenditure in areas of service delivery (water, education and health). The M&E system will include the monitoring of activities and the periodic assessment of outcomes. It is designed to facilitate cross programme learning.

We provided support to an alliance of animal welfare societies in developing their new monitoring and evaluation system. We initially facilitated a workshop in 2008 to explore what system was in place and how different parts of the organisation engaged with it. This was followed by interviews with regional and country offices to get a better understanding of what M&E needs would be required for the future. The organisation's staff then developed their M&E system, with periodic support from INTRAC. A series of two-day workshops facilitated by head office staff and INTRAC trainers in North America, Latin America, UK, Africa, Australia and Asia, introduced M&E theory and the new system.

Anne Garbutt, Consultancy Director, is a member of the **Tutu Foundation and British Council Learning and Evaluation Catalyst Group**. The group supports the Foundation and

Council to; improve their understanding of M&E processes, ensure all such processes are integrated into all aspects of the Foundation and Council's programme planning cycles, and to help develop frameworks and tools that can be used to assess the impact of interventions and programmes targeted at a range of young people across the UK.

Towards the end of the year, to provide support to INTRAC's consultancy and training work on M&E, we established a **learning group** which meets to share experiences between INTRAC staff and associates. The group is planning to produce several working papers on topics such as monitoring flexible funding, the M&E of advocacy, developing M&E systems and impact assessments, and the monitoring and evaluation of capacity building. Plans have been developed for taking up this issue as a new Praxis learning programme theme, leading to further learning and materials that will be freely available for practitioners to download from our website.

Monitoring and evaluation is a major focus of the support INTRAC is providing to the SMILING Programme in Bangladesh, implemented by our partner PRIP Trust. The challenge here is to demonstrate the impact of capacity building work.

We produced two **key papers** on monitoring and evaluation over the year. The first drew on the experiences of INTRAC's Central Asia programme in using participatory monitoring and evaluation systems with CSOs. The second looked at the major challenge for evaluators of the growing demand for performance-based management, accountability and quantification, making 'learning-oriented' evaluation increasingly difficult. It articulated our belief that evaluations require flexible approaches that take account of and respond to change.



Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 March 2009

	Unrestricted funds (£)	Designated funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	Total 2009 (£)	Total 2008 (£)
Incoming resources from generated funds					
Investment income	6,190	-	-	6,190	8,552
Income resources from charitable activities	1,606,984	-	472,464	2,079,448	2,203,793
Total incoming resources	1,613,174	-	472,464	2,085,638	2,212,345
Resources expended					
Charitable activities					
Programmes to assist relief and development organisations in building their capacity and investment in future projects	126,252	1,118	369,815	497,185	387,532
Research in aspects of relief and development and publications related to all aspects of the work	34,032	-	102,649	136,681	233,476
Training of staff in relief and development organisations	702,843	-	-	702,843	1,054,599
Consultancies in capacity building, management, organisational development, reviews, research and evaluations of relief and development	754,224	-	-	754,224	679,778
Total charitable expenditure	1,617,351	1,118	472,464	2,090,933	2,355,385
Governance costs	4,700	-	-	4,700	6,200
Total resources expended	1,622,051	1,118	472,464	2,095,633	2,361,585
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers	-8,877	-1,118	-	-9,995	-149,240
Gross transfers between funds	-1,118	1,118	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure) for the year/Net movement in funds	-9,995	-	-	-9,995	-149,240
Fund balances at 1 April 2008	330,838	-	-	330,838	480,078
Fund balances at 31 March 2009	320,843	-	-	320,843	330,838

Following two difficult years of operating, costs were reduced at a greater rate than the anticipated fall in income.

The recurring deficit has been eliminated and the residual in-year net expenditure can be attributed to exceptional items incurred to further reduce fixed costs.

Full accounts are available on request.

Trustees

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Rosemary Preston – Vice Chair

Graham Nixey – Honorary
Treasurer (from December 2008)

Derek Roebuck – Secretary

Anne Coles

Belinda Coote

Paddy Coulter

Patricia Holden (from September
2008)

Bill Jackson

Janet Momsen (from September
2008)

James Rowland

Janet Townsend

Pat White

Funders

We are grateful to the following organisations that have funded our work over the year:

Christian Aid

Concern Worldwide

Cordaid

DanChurchAid

Danish Agency for International
Development Assistant (DANIDA)

DFID – Pan Africa Policy Unit

Dutch Foreign Ministry

EC EuropeAid

Interchurch Organisation for
Development Co-operation (ICCO)

Misean Cara

Norad

Oxfam Novib

PRIP Trust

Red Barnet (Save the Children
Denmark)

Save the Children Federation

Save the Children Sweden

SNV Netherlands

Swedish International Development
Cooperation Agency (SIDA)

Trocaire

UNDP

WaterAid

World Vision

ZOA Refugee Care



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