
The Development Alternative – shifting the power to youth civil society

Civil society is a powerful driver of change, yet many programmes delivered or funded by international development organisations fail to ensure that power lies with communities and Southern civil society partners, compromising sustainability. Too often, communities are not involved in programme design and delivery, accountability is one-sided, and impact is pre-defined. Young people offer huge potential – they are ready to take action to tackle big development challenges but are frequently excluded from and unable to influence solutions.

INTRAC is part of a new consortium led by Restless Development called [The Development Alternative](#), which is working with youth-centred and youth-led civil society to design approaches to development that ensure young people and their communities define, lead, and own solutions to the problems they face. Together we will create and test a youth-led model for development that can be implemented at scale – across a range of development challenges, and in different country contexts. The Development Alternative has been running since September 2018 and is in a co-creation phase until April 2019.

We kick started the process by engaging with the most important actors – youth civil society – through a global online survey (completed by 198 respondents from over 30 countries) and seven focus group discussions in Iraq, Lebanon, Madagascar, Palestine, and Uganda.* We asked civil society organisations (CSOs) working with youth what success looks like outside the current parameters set by Northern NGOs and donors, and their opinion on what needs to change if they are to achieve success in their work. Alongside this, INTRAC commissioned Recrear to undertake a rapid evidence review of the barriers and enablers to youth civil society effectiveness.

In February 2019, I spent three days in London with colleagues from across the consortium exploring the findings and assessing what we can do to respond together. We heard insights from focus group discussion facilitators from DOT Lebanon, YMCA East Jerusalem, War Child Iraq and Restless Development Uganda, plus youth civil society experts from Zimbabwe, Chile, and Europe. Participants brought different experiences into the room – from leading or volunteering for youth organisations, to having an accountability or civil society focus. Having a variety of perspectives added to the richness of discussions and helped to ensure that we didn't lose sight of context and realities in country.

Five key messages about youth civil society effectiveness that I've taken away from the process so far are:

- 1. Identity:** We shouldn't assume that youth CSOs are always able to define their role vis-à-vis the state and society. In one country, focus group discussions highlighted that CSOs are seen as businesses, existing to deliver services. In another, CSOs lacked understanding of their role linked to their lack of power in comparison to the church and private sector. This raises questions as to how we can support youth civil society to understand its strategic identity and fulfil its purpose/ mission in a given context.
- 2. Vision:** Youth CSOs are often short of human resources, capacity, time and space for longer-term visioning and strategic thinking. In focus group discussions, there were differences in the extent to which the respondents were able to imagine alternatives to the current development system, including being autonomous and independent. This led us to question how CSOs can be supported to think outside of the box and realise their vision.
- 3. Leadership:** It can be difficult for young people to be taken seriously in leadership roles, so how can we increase legitimacy, credibility, and trust of young people in the eyes of their constituents and potential funders? Part of this may be ensuring that youth civil society leadership is truly representative, going beyond the 'urban-elite'. Another question is how youth civil society can retain knowledge as leaders 'age out' (getting to 28-30 and moving on).

4. **Collaboration:** Youth civil society actors want to work together, establishing relationships on their own terms. However, they are often in competition, following the money. How can we encourage sharing and collaboration in a space of competition? There is a need for new or improved coordinating mechanisms, platforms and networks. Technology and digital offer opportunities to bring youth civil society together, but there is still a need for 'offline' engagement as not everyone has access.
5. **Funding:** The structure of development funding (short-term, restricted, via intermediaries, based on donor interests rather than needs on the ground) creates challenges for youth CSOs, including competition and a lack of long-term planning. There are calls for more flexible and core funding. Building up the evidence base on [resourcing of youth civil society](#), and facilitating better communication and partnership between donors and youth CSOs, could help to encourage them to rethink their practices (recognising that many are already aware of the need for change).

Other points that struck me were: the need to support youth civil society in its diversity (registered and non-registered, formal and informal); a lack of investment in organisational capacity, including policies and procedures, resource mobilisation and the use of technology; and the gaps in evidence from the global South on the effectiveness of youth civil society, and how we can be more creative in accessing knowledge that does exist.

For those working with and for civil society, many of these issues aren't new and resonate with long-standing, and more recent, debates around [partnership, exit and sustainability](#). We know what needs to change. Now, through The Development Alternative, we have an exciting opportunity to tackle these challenges with a youth focus, harnessing the appetite amongst youth civil society to go beyond just surviving to planning for long-term change and shifting power to young people and communities.



Celebrating a successful workshop, February 2019
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What next?

In the coming months, we will share the findings from the consultation, evidence review and workshop in a report for the wider sector. We will continue to engage with, and learn from, youth civil society to co-design a package of support to youth organisations, networks and movements, and a model for change that ensures young people are leading the development of their own communities and countries. The model will be tested initially in Iraq, Madagascar and Uganda and rolled out in the Central African Republic, Lebanon, Occupied Palestine Territories, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

Stay tuned for updates!

The Development Alternative is funded by the UK Department for International Development's Aid Connect Civil Society Effectiveness stream. The members of the consortium are Restless Development, Accountable Now, dot.Lebanon, Integrity Action, INTRAC, Keep Your Shoes Dirty, United Purpose, War Child, Y Care International. INTRAC is leading on the monitoring, evaluation and learning of the programme and providing input into the co-design process.

*Sally Hartley, independent consultant, led the design and analysis of the consultation.



Sarah Lewis is a Consultant at INTRAC, specialising in qualitative research. She is heavily involved in INTRAC's work on civil society sustainability and exit strategies, and is a member of The Development Alternative's Resilient and Effective CSOs work-stream.



Our work

Continuing our support to civil society in Ethiopia

After the completion of the [Civil Society Support Programme \(CSSP\) in 2017](#), INTRAC is pleased it will continue to work with civil society in Ethiopia. INTRAC is part of a consortium, led by ICE and also including CIDEAL Foundation and FCG Swedish Development AB, that was successful in the EU tender for Technical Assistance for the Civil Society Fund III, Ethiopia (2018-2022).

The overall objective of the CSF III is to increase participation of citizens and CSOs in the development and democratization process of the country. Specific objectives are strengthening citizens' voice for policy dialogue, reinforcing citizens' role in the monitoring of national policies and strengthening the sustainability and contribution of CSOs, including those working on gender equality and women's empowerment, and of women's groups to the development and democratization process. The approach builds on the successes and draws on the assets of the consortium's combined work delivering similar citizen-state engagement programmes in Ethiopia and other parts of the world.

The Inception Phase has been completed and implementation started. INTRAC's contribution will focus on capacity development – building the skills of CSOs to contribute constructively to policy dialogue and development – and sustainability of CSOs.

In addition to CSF III, INTRAC is also involved in the second phase of the DFID funded Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP 2, 2018-2020) in Ethiopia, led by the British Council. INTRAC's Nigel Simister recently assisted in putting in place the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning principles and frameworks of the programme.

PPIMA Rwanda update – building M&E, advocacy and research skills

Back in May 2018 we introduced new work with Norwegian Peoples Aid in Rwanda in support of the Public Policy and Information Monitoring and Advocacy (PPIMA) project. This project is focused on building trust and dialogue between Rwandan citizens and the state, through initiatives such as the Community Score Card and policy influencing on key development issues at the national and district levels.

Much of our focus has been on providing light-touch training and mentoring to NPA core staff to adjust existing practices and systems, so that they in turn can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the project.

We developed several work streams delivered through a mix of face-to-face visits and remote mentoring. Nigel Simister has been helping to improve the monitoring and evaluation system, with a particular emphasis on quality of reporting. Rachel Hayman has assisted the team to improve learning activities and events, and is currently supporting the team with learning studies on the Community Score Card and policy influencing, working alongside a Rwandan consultant, Aurore Irangenyeye. Finally, Helen Collinson spent a week in Rwanda in January, delivering workshops with partners on their advocacy strategies and with the NPA PPIMA team on theory of change.

Reviewing the function and performance of GOAL's Programme Quality Technical Team



Rod MacLeod has been carrying out a review of GOAL's Programme Quality Technical Team (PQTT), which exists to provide technical expertise and advisory services across the organisation. The aim is: 'to review the PQTT's function and performance within GOAL with a view to identifying the major options for its future development and making recommendations'.

GOAL is based in Dublin, Ireland and works in 13 countries – mostly in Africa, but with a cluster in the Middle East and also a presence in the Latin America and the Caribbean. The country programmes vary considerably in their size and nature.

The PQTT has 10 Advisors covering a range of areas: health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), food security, livelihoods, as well as five staff with the Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) team. The task was broken down into key review questions, covering the role, structure and practical operations of the PQTT. The process involved preliminary meetings in Dublin, a review of documents and interviews with 40 respondents by Skype (country programme staff, Regional Directors, Senior Management Team (SMT) members, PQTT members and other NGOs). Finally there was another meeting in Dublin to test the most likely options, before writing the report.

Tackling Water Security and Sustainable Development

Bringing together our expertise in [M&E systems design and support](#), and our interest in promoting [effective collaboration between academics and practitioners](#), INTRAC is delighted to be part of a new five-year, multi-million pound research initiative focused on tackling SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation).

The [UKRI GRCF Water Security and Sustainable Development Hub](#) is led by Newcastle University and involves partners and stakeholders spanning research institutes, utilities providers and regulators, international agencies, NGOs, private sector companies and government bodies. Key partners are from the UK (Newcastle, Oxford and Leeds universities), Ethiopia, Colombia, India and Malaysia. The Hub takes a broad view of water systems, including tackling water security from technical, environmental, social and political angles.

INTRAC is working for Newcastle University, independent of the formal Hub arrangements, to develop a monitoring and evaluation systems for the Hub, including capacity building of those responsible for M&E in each partner, and promoting learning activities.

In mid-February INTRAC consultants joined a first Hub workshop in Newcastle, helping to facilitate discussions on the Hub's theory of change, as well as ethics and safeguarding policies.

Find out more about the Hub here: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/EvAjyKwci7s>; <https://soundcloud.com/user-634032444/ukri-grcf-water-security-and-sustainable-development-hub-part-1>



UK Research
and Innovation



The impact assessment of Active Citizens South Asia

INTRAC has been conducting an impact assessment of the British Council's Active Citizens Programme in three South Asian countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) since late November 2018.



Like the impact assessment we had conducted on the Active Citizens Programme in four countries in the Middle East and North Africa in 2017-18, this one also follows a similar methodology whereby we identify, through a 'Wide Sweep,' changes that the programme may have brought about before selecting a number of them to validate in what we call the 'Deep Dives'. And, like the MENA Active Citizens programme, this too focuses on youth aged 18 to 30 years old. It is worth mentioning though that the Active Citizens programme as such can train people of all ages. It has trained citizens in over 60 countries so far.

In this impact assessment, we have been identifying changes at three levels:

1. the level of the individual trainees of the programme who, after their training, have carried out social action projects in small groups for the benefit of their communities or society at large,
2. the level of the NGOs, which have partnered with the British Council to deliver the programme and the staff of which have first been trained in the programme's methodology themselves, and then they have trained the Active Citizens and mentored them as they implement their social action projects, and
3. the level of communities or society at large, which benefit from the social actions of Active Citizens through projects in education, health, the environment, gender-related issues and many other themes.

During the validation phase (the 'Deep Dives') we will look into particular cases of change at these 3 levels and compile 17 to 20 case studies from all 3 countries on what changed, for whom, when, where, how and what the contribution of the Active Citizens programme was to that change. We will also examine the sustainability of the change. Case studies will be showing the evidence of change at different levels: the individual trainees (Active Citizens), the community/beneficiaries of the social action undertaken by the Active Citizens and the partner organisations. We will relate these case studies of change to the pathways identified in the programme's Theory of Change.

The validation phase will take place in March 2019 and our report will be ready in mid-April. The INTRAC consultants involved in this piece of work are Floresca Karanasou, who had conducted the MENA impact assessment, Nandita Jain and Dan James, who also had helped the British Council develop its evaluation strategy for this programme.



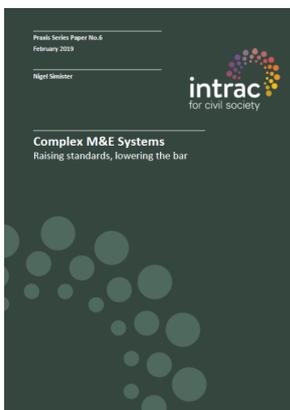
Development in Practice

The first *Development in Practice* issues of the year, 29.1 and 29.2, are now available to browse [online](#), covering a broad range of development topics from across the world.

A number of the articles are open access, available to freely read and download. Choose from '[Reproductive health services: "Business-in-a-Box" as a model social innovation](#)', '[Aid and development by design: local solutions to local problems](#)', '[Practice-based insights in developing and implementing a sport-based programme for girls](#)' or '[Not just any toilet – women's solutions to sanitation in informal settlements in Nairobi](#)'.

You can also browse the whole back catalogue of open access articles from the journal [here](#).

If you are interested in submitting an article to *Development in Practice*, visit <http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/cdip20/current> to find out more. For any queries on what and how to submit, please contact Adam Houlbrook, Deputy Editor, at ahoulbrook@intrac.org.

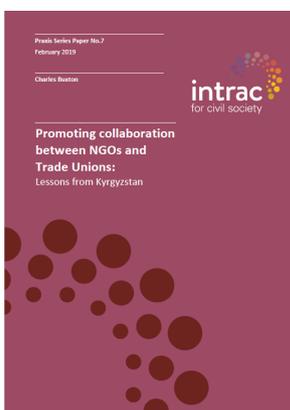


Praxis Series Paper No.6 - Complex M&E Systems

Nigel Simister brings together ideas and thinking on how M&E systems operate in organisations and complex programmes.

Drawing on a wealth of experience having designed, supported and maintained complex M&E systems for a variety of civil society organisations (CSOs) over the past twenty years, Nigel's paper should be useful to M&E practitioners everywhere.

Download your free copy here: <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Praxis-Series-6.-Complex-ME-Systems.pdf>



Praxis Series Paper No.7 - Promoting collaboration between NGOs and Trade Unions

Charles Buxton describes the work that took place between 2015 and 2018 to promote dialogue and joint activities between NGOs and trade unions around employment and labour rights in Kyrgyzstan.

Download your free copy here: <https://www.intrac.org/wpcms/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Praxis-Series-7.-Promoting-collaboration-between-NGOs-and-Trade-Unions.pdf>



In this issue we look forward and reflect back on some of the people INTRAC are proud to be associated with. We begin by introducing you to our new Board members.



Sam Bickersteth, Trustee

Sam is an agricultural economist with a background in food security, natural resources and climate change, having worked for PwC, DFID and Oxfam. He was head of programme policy at Oxfam and also held leadership positions for DFID in Bolivia, Mozambique and Nepal. Sam was Chief Executive of the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) from 2011 to 2018.



Catriona Dejean, Trustee

Catriona is currently the Director of Strategy and Impact at Tearfund, an INGO working across 50 countries, and leads the organisation's strategy, research and impact agendas. Prior to Tearfund, she was a consultant in the social enterprise sector, providing advice to UK and international clients, in Vietnam, Georgia and Croatia on social entrepreneurship, social impact assessment and business development.



Jonathan Orchard, Treasurer

Jonathan is a chartered accountant and auditor who has devoted his career to working with charities and social purpose organisations. He is a partner at charity specialist audit firm – Sayer Vincent where he leads the firm's work with humanitarian and international development organisations as well leading the firm's internal audit and risk management work.



Yvonne Taylor, Trustee

Yvonne has 20 years' experience in leadership and management of complex organisations within the UK National Health Service. She was Chief Operating Officer at Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust for three years and has been the Chief Executive Officer at Integrated Care 24 (IC24) since January 2016. IC24 is a Gold Mark Social Enterprise providing NHS 111 and urgent primary care services across the East and South of England.

Announcing the retirement of Bruce Britton



After twenty deeply satisfying years as a consultant with both INTRAC and Framework, I decided to retire from consultancy work in January. Over the last couple of months I have been recalling the many people I have worked with, the organisations that have entrusted me to support them, and the communities and countries I have visited during twenty years as a consultant. I would like to say a heartfelt “Thank You” to everyone – clients, colleagues and contacts – whose paths have crossed with mine, for the privilege of working with you over the past two unforgettable decades. During all twenty years of my consultancy career, INTRAC has entrusted me with facilitating its short course on OD, arranged many stimulating consultancy assignments and also provided an outlet for my writing on organisational learning. I am deeply grateful for my INTRAC colleagues' faith in my abilities!

One of the enjoyable things about retiring from consultancy work is that it has created more time for my other interests and particularly my work for a local community environment project. I really enjoy the practical work of going out to the homes of people who are vulnerable or living on low incomes and installing energy-saving measures to help them reduce their energy use and carbon footprint. I have been doing this work very part time for nearly seven years but now I am able to devote more time to it. In a curious way my career has gone full circle as I started my working life in the mid-1970's as a local government social worker with people living in poverty, young people leaving residential care, elderly and frail people and those experiencing mental health problems. In fact, almost exactly the same groups of marginalised people I am working with now - but in a totally different way. I feel a satisfying sense of symmetry with that!

In memory of Michele Carboni



Our colleague Michele Carboni suddenly passed away on 25 December 2018, aged 37, following a short illness. He had joined INTRAC as a Training Assistant only a couple of months earlier, prior to being diagnosed with the illness that would be fatal to him.

He was a witty, funny, truly eclectic person. He carried out academic research on the geography of tourism and on migration. He volunteered to assist disadvantaged migrants. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of pop music and would often quote lines from a song in the middle of a conversation. He co-organised events on African cinema and culture. He contributed to several blogs, always with his distinctive dry humour. He hosted a radio programme on eco-friendly sex practices.

An islander, born and raised in Sardinia, he seemed to be drawn to other islands: Zanzibar (where he worked in international development and carried out research), and Great Britain, where he had moved a few years ago. He was left handed and acted as this was a very remarkable characteristic. He was a volcano of ideas. He was all these - and many more - things. He is no more. He will be missed.

INTRAC training

Fundraising for Sustainability Online

Online, 1 April - 10 May 2019

INTRAC is introducing a new online course to provide structured training in Fundraising for Sustainability. Following the very positive feedback we received when we delivered this course as part of the C4C (Consultants for Change) professional development programme, we have decided to offer it to a wider audience.

Fundraising for Sustainability provides an essential understanding of fundraising and its role in organisational development and sustainability. The course equips participants with the key concepts, including sources of funding, purposes of fundraising, planning and monitoring a fundraising strategy, and ensuring that fundraising reflects the organisation's objectives, ethics, values and culture.

The course is built around the aim of reducing an organisation's exposure to risk whilst increasing its ability to pursue strategic goals, which makes it perfect for staff in small organisations. It is also beneficial for consultants and trainers who are involved in supporting smaller NGOs/CSOs.

Our approach to e-learning provides approximately 25 hours of training over 5 weeks. The training consists of a blend of real time "live sessions" led by our highly experienced trainer, individual and group activities, opportunities to interact with participants on the course through discussion forum on the INTRAC learning platform, and individual coaching to enable attendees to apply the learning to their work.

Here is what participants said about Fundraising for Sustainability:

"It helped me to understand the essentials of fundraising. In addition, the assignment given in the training is practical so I can use it for real implementation in my organization. Finally, it provides a handbook that can be my future reference."

"The course has given me a whole new world view about fundraising"

Meet the trainer:



Ajay Mehta

Fundraising for Sustainability Online course profile

Gender Analysis and Planning

Oxford, 13 - 15 May 2019

Gender is becoming an increasingly important issue that needs to be addressed by development planners and NGOs. However, many face challenges in its practical and systematic application to their work. INTRAC's Gender Analysis and Planning course will enable you to systematically analyse contexts and plan development and humanitarian programmes from a gender equality perspective, in any development context.

100% of participants in our most recent Gender Analysis and Planning course would recommend this course! Here are some of the things they said:

"A great introduction to gender analysis"

"very informative"

"well-organised training"

Meet the trainer:



Gender Analysis and Planning course profile

Theory of Change for Planning and Impact Assessment

Oxford, 10 - 14 June 2019

Many people make the mistake of thinking that Theory of Change (TOC) is either a methodology for planning and evaluation, or a compliance piece demanded by donors. It is so much more than this! Theory of Change is a structured form of analysis which enables more robust and "joined up" planning, implementation, reflection, and adaptation of programmes and projects at all levels.

During this course you will explore what TOC is and does, apply TOC to a specific planning task, consider how to facilitate TOC workshops with/for your partners, and use a TOC approach in the design of the methodology for an impact assessment (using your own case studies and examples).

100% of participants in our most recent Theory of Change for Planning and Impact Assessment course would recommend this course!

Here are some of their comments:

"Mix of practice and theory was very good"

"I have more knowledge, I can elaborate better and argue about the importance of using ToC"

"Maureen is an excellent facilitator"

Meet the trainer:



Theory of Change for Planning and Impact Assessment course profile

Coming soon

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning online course. 29 April - 14 June 2019

Advanced Monitoring and Evaluation, Oxford. 20 - 24 May 2019



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